

# Community Worksheet: Creating a Surveillance Impact Report

## WHY A SURVEILLANCE IMPACT REPORT IS ESSENTIAL

Before your community decides whether or not to acquire surveillance technology, it is essential to assess its potential costs, both financially and to civil liberties and civil rights. To guarantee these factors are fully considered, your community must be able to access and understand information describing how the surveillance technology would work, where it would be used, its impact on civil liberties, rights, and public finances, and how it would be overseen. Producing and publicly releasing a Surveillance Impact Report will give the community the information it needs to participate in the decision-making process.

## WHAT A SURVEILLANCE IMPACT REPORT COVERS

A Surveillance Impact Report provides information to help your community identify the costs and consequences of adopting proposed surveillance technology. It should include the following:

- Information describing the surveillance technology and how it works, including product descriptions from manufacturers;
- Information on the proposed purpose(s) for the surveillance technology and its effectiveness in furthering those purposes;
- The location(s) it may be deployed and crime statistics for those location(s);
- An assessment identifying any potential impact on civil liberties and civil rights and discussing any plans to safeguard the rights of the public; AND
- The fiscal costs for the surveillance technology, including initial purchase, personnel and other ongoing costs, and any current or potential sources of funding.

## HOW TO CREATE YOUR SURVEILLANCE IMPACT REPORT

Using the questions below as a guide, local officials should assemble a Surveillance Impact Report that community leaders and members can reference when deciding whether to acquire surveillance technology. The Report should include all information that can help the community make an informed decision about surveillance, including any materials that support your answers to the questions below.

### 1. *WHAT DOES THIS SURVEILLANCE TECHNOLOGY DO?*

- How does the technology work? What are its potential uses?
- What information does the technology collect? Does it allow real-time monitoring, capture information for future use or both?
- Is the technology capable of limiting the collection of unnecessary information? What design or technical choices can be made to enhance privacy?
- Tip: Gather technology specification sheets from manufacturers or other sources describing how it works.

### 2. *WHAT COMMUNITY PURPOSE WOULD THIS TECHNOLOGY FURTHER?*

- What community need would this technology directly address? Is that need tied to a real problem the community is facing? Does it serve the needs of all community members, or just a slice of the community?
- How would this surveillance technology help the community to achieve this purpose? What specific and measurable outcome does the community want to see?

- Would the technology be effective at advancing this purpose? Is there evidence supporting or contradicting this? How does it compare to non-surveillance alternatives?

### 3. *WHERE WOULD THIS TECHNOLOGY BE DEPLOYED?*

- Where would the technology be deployed within the community?
- Why have these locations been chosen? Are the identified community needs relevant to the proposed locations?
- What are the crime statistics for each proposed deployment location?

### 4. *HOW COULD THIS TECHNOLOGY IMPACT CIVIL RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES?*

- Could the technology collect information related to race, citizenship status, gender, age, socioeconomic level, reproductive choices, or sexual orientation? If so, what safeguards are in place to limit such collection?
- Would the technology be deployed in communities with minority residents, non-citizens, low-income residents, or any group historically vulnerable to disproportionate civil liberties violations?
- Could the technology be used on groups, public gatherings, or crowds and thus have an effect on First Amendment activities such as protests? If so, what safeguards are in place to limit this?
- Does the technology collect and retain information about individuals who are not subjects of any criminal investigation? How could such information impact those persons' right to privacy?
- How long would data collected by this technology be stored? Who would be able to access it? Would any outside parties have access to this data?

### 5. *HOW MUCH WOULD THIS TECHNOLOGY COST?*

- What are the initial costs, including acquisition, infrastructure upgrades and training and hiring of personnel?
- What are the ongoing costs, including measures to secure data and data storage?
- What are the current or potential sources of funding?
- Are there other tools capable of furthering your identified purpose that your community may wish to spend these funds on (e.g., community-based policing, improved lighting)?