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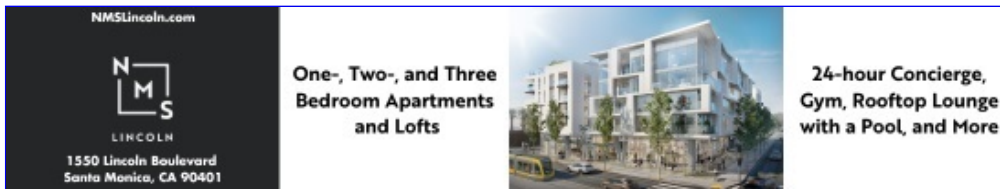
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Council Poised to Approve \$2.2 Million Contract for Parking Structure Security

By Jorge Casuso

June 12, 2023 -- The City Council on Tuesday is expected to extend for five years a pilot program that provides overnight security patrols credited with lowering crime at City parking structures in the Downtown area.

The proposed \$2.2 million contract with Good Guard Security would provide four unarmed guards, including a supervisor, between 9 p.m. and 5 a.m. at 10 parking structures.



During the pilot program launched on January 1, the guard duties "consisted of patrolling parking structures by vehicle and foot," staff wrote in a report to the City Council.

The guards "notify law enforcement of any unlawful activity, patrol adjacent areas and stairwells, and respond to emergency situations such as fire alarms, power outages, and medical emergencies," staff said.

Through May, calls for police services dropped by 48 percent from the same period last year, while calls for service specific to Burglary Theft from Motor Vehicle (BTFMV) decreased by 60 percent, staff said.

During the pilot program that ends June 30, guards are deployed at seven City owned Downtown Parking Structures, and at parking structures in the Ken Edwards Center, the Main Library and the Civic Center.

"Library staff noticed the impact of overnight security in stairwells, library grounds, and elevators," according to the staff report.

"During the pilot period, security guard schedules were adjusted to meet the changing needs of the Main Library and the Ken Edwards Center," staff wrote. "The schedule adjustment produced noticeable results almost instantly."

When there was a need for additional guards during the daytime hours on the Promenade, Good Guard Security assigned six guards and a supervisor within 24 hours' notice, according to the report.



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Good Guard uses the “SilverTrac” guard monitoring system that provides GPS-based tracking capabilities, allowing designated City staff to track the current location of guards and download activity reports.

The contract will be taken up three weeks after the City Council voted to approve two contracts totaling nearly \$2 million to beef up security at the Pier and at three Downtown parks (*"Council Beefs Up Security at Pier, Downtown Parks,"* May 24, 2023).

In April, the Council learned that the Transportation Department would be testing the use of AI-equipped cameras to monitor "unwanted incidents" at the Main Library (*"City Tests AI Cameras to Deter Unwanted Behavior,"* April 17, 2023).

The pilot program uses "strategically placed" cameras" that provide live feeds monitored 24 hours a day to "help deter trespassing or crimes such as theft or vandalism."

The moves come amid a growing chorus of calls for the City to crack down on an entrenched homeless problem that is hurting Santa Monica businesses and making residents feel unsafe (*"OPINION -- A Call for Action from the Trenches,"* June 7, 2023).



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