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Los Altos, California 94022-3087

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 5/9/23
TO: Councilmembers
FROM: City Manager's Office

SUBJECT: COUNCIL Q&A FOR MAY 9th, 2023, STUDY SESSION AND CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Study Session

1. **How do we better understand the financial feasibility: the land cost, the operating and maintenance, and staff time.**

Answer: This question was forwarded to the Los Altos Stage Company, here is the response received *"we have developed a rather detailed operating financial forecast, which has been delivered to LASC and the working group. We are unable to provide estimates regarding land costs and staff time. Those items are outside the scope of this study. City Staff would have to provide those answers to the extent they can"*

2. **How can we get the information needed to better understand the benefits of having a theatre in the City vs. a housing project?**

Answer: More information is required on the proposed project. A downtown theater as a standalone project would have different requirements than a downtown theater where housing is developed as part of the project.

3. **How will the parking spaces lost be replaced?**

Answer: More information is required on the proposed project. A downtown theater as a standalone project would have different requirements than a downtown theater where housing is developed as part of the project.

4. **How many anticipated parking spaces will be needed (including attendees, employees/volunteers, and cast members) to support the theatre events?**

Answer: This question was forwarded to the Los Altos Stage Company, here is the response received *"staff/cast/crew parking needs will vary based on production/event size, time of day, etc. As many as 15. As few as 3. (best guess??). We are open to City direction as to where/how to accommodate staff parking. We are not aware of Los Altos' specific code requirement for theater patron parking (this would be a consideration in a future iteration of planning), but generally speaking the requirement is 1 space for every ~2.5 seats. This would be in the range of 64 spaces for a sold-out performance."*

5. At what cost will it be to replace the lost parking spaces?

Answer: More information is required on the proposed project. A downtown theater as a standalone project would have different requirements than a downtown theater where housing is developed as part of the project.

6. How does this not get identified as surplus land if we are giving it to a non-profit for use?

Answer: Since the Council has not given any direction regarding the Downtown Theater use and how the City's land will be involved, we cannot provide a response regarding the application of the Surplus Land Act. The City Attorney will provide a brief background on the Surplus Land Act.

7. What City resources (staff time and funds) are necessary to determine if a stand-alone or mixed-use development approach is most feasible? (Presentation, pdf page 13.)

Answer: Regardless of the option chosen by Council, a stand-alone theater or mixed-use development, significant staff resources will be required.

8. What City resources (staff time and funds) are necessary to conduct a capital fundraising analysis? (Presentation, pdf page 13.)

Answer: The Los Altos Stage Company would lead the effort to analyze if a capital fundraising campaign is feasible. It is estimated the City would need to provide at least \$50,000 to complete the study.

9. What were the "lessons learned" from peer organizations? (Presentation, page 45.)

Answer: This question was forwarded to the Los Altos Stage Company, here is the response received *"many of the economic and activity assumptions of the operating forecast were informed by the case studies."*

10. Does City staff concur with the "key assumptions" of the feasibility study? (Presentation, page 57.)

Answer: The MOU with the Los Altos Stage Company does not allow staff time or resources to be dedicated to this project. City staff has not reviewed the feasibility study to verify assumptions.

11. Does City staff concur that the price to construct a theater will be about \$1,000 per square foot? (Presentation, page 55.)

Answer: The MOU with the Los Altos Stage Company does not allow staff time or resources to be dedicated to this project. City staff has not reviewed the feasibility study to verify this number.

May 9 agenda

1. Page 2 of the agenda incorrectly lists the Special Items as Public Hearings.

Answer: This issue has been resolved. There was a slight error in our agenda management software where the section header did not match the section details. Staff has fixed this and it should not happen in future agendas.

Agenda 4: City Hall Permit Counter

1. Why were the side enclosures for the permit counter removed?

Answer: The side enclosures were not removed. The City Hall permit counter is original and no modifications have been made. The "enclosures" consisted of a 3 ft high swinging door. Of the original counter and "enclosures" only one remained as of 2022, and the hinge and screws were warped and stripped from decades of use. The one remaining 3-foot-high swinging door

“enclosure” was removed due to it no longer being functional; the same is true for the second enclosure that broke approximately 5-years ago.

2. Why were security measures not addressed when the remodel counter was remodeled earlier?

Answer: The City Hall Permit Counter is original and no modifications for ADA Compliance have been made to date. Additionally, no security improvements have been made to date.

3. How long will the remodel take and where will the staff be relocated to?

Answer: Since the majority of work involves “casework” or cabinetry, a large part of the work to be completed will be fabricated offsite. Any interruption to regular business is forecasted to only take 4 weeks. The majority of staff will be able to work in their existing workstations.

4. Resolution: In the first line of the third “WHEREAS,” the words “is the acceptance of the work” should be deleted.

Answer: Acknowledged. This can be modified in the final resolution.

5. Attachment 2 (pg 48 of the packet), in the title of the resolution there is a misspelling, “CITY ALL” should be “CITY HALL”.

Answer: Acknowledged. This can be modified in the final resolution.

Agenda 6: Halsey House

1. How is the staff defining the project for the consultant?

Answer: The project scope is consistent with the April 25, 2023, City Council direction which approved “an Initial Study and full Environmental Impact Report, if appropriate, pertaining to two primary options: Demolition and Adaptive Reuse”. A copy of the April 25, 2023, City Council minutes can be found here:

<https://mccmeetingspublic.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/losaltosca-meet-ceb693ab2d0341be9a6cb09b6e4a7d0f/ITEM-Attachment-001-8d1f3233d203400b821cfe02f6b5a64c.pdf>

2. What is the specific description of the adaptive reuse project that will be used for the RFP?

Answer: Adaptive Reuse is not defined by the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties; there are only four treatment standards (Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration and Reconstruction). Adaptive Reuse is something that is a component of one of the four treatment standards. The following links are for the Standards and Guidelines for Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Preservation:

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/treatment-guidelines-2017-part1-preservation-rehabilitation.pdf>

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/treatment-guidelines-2017-part2-reconstruction-restoration.pdf>

3. Is the adaptive reuse scenario consistent to maintaining the building as a landmark?

Answer: This depends on the adaptive reuse that is accomplished as part of the overall scope.

4. Halsey House is scheduled to return to Council on May 23, are we expecting a CEQA and EIR then?

Answer: No.

5. How much would there be in fines if Halsey house were to be demolished?

Answer: Fines are not associated with CEQA. Any cost associated with demolition would be legal fees such as court and attorney fees.

6. Can this be paid with funds from the PIL fund instead of the general fund? If so, would it be advisable to do so?

Answer: Staff does not advise the use of Park In Lieu funds for the Environmental Impact Report. Pursuant to Section 13.24.010 (B) (4) of the Los Altos Municipal Code, *Use of and basis for in-lieu fees. The money collected pursuant to the provisions of this section shall be used only for the purpose of providing park or recreational facilities reasonably related to serving the subdivision from which fees are collected. Fees so collected shall be used to purchase land or, if the Council deems that there is sufficient land available for the subdivision, for improving such land for park and recreational purposes, buying equipment, or constructing improvements in neighborhood and district park and recreational facilities. The fee so required shall be based on the fair market value of the lands available for park purchase as determined by the provisions of subsection G of this section.*

Agenda 7: Gas Leaf Blowers

1. Is there a program that will support education of those who work in our City rather than issuing punishment or fines?

Answer: When a gas-powered leaf blower complaint is received, if code enforcement is not able to observe the violation itself and is able to cite the responsible party the code enforcement officer sends a warning notice. Contained within the warning notice is education on the prohibition of gas-powered leaf blowers within the City.

2. How did this agenda item become a priority when we had other pressing issues agendized?

Answer: This item was discussed by the Environmental Commission in late 2022 and consensus was gained by commissioners to support local efforts to update and further enforce gas-power leaf blowers. The item was originally requested to come to Council earlier this year, but due to the storm events this item was not prioritized until staff were able to accommodate the research and analysis.

3. Please provide a copy of the handout referred to in the first paragraph of the “Enforcement” section of the staff report (page 3).

Answer: The Development Services Department is currently working on an updated handout for gas-powered leaf blowers. As of today, code enforcement provides a direct letter which advises the recipient of local regulations.

4. If a homeowner (or tenant in possession) is fined, how does the City ensure that the fine is paid? What happens if the homeowner/tenant doesn't pay the fines?

Answer: All violations and enforcement actions are pursuant to Chapter 1.20 of the Los Altos Municipal Code. For example, should violations go unpaid such as these some agencies refer these fines to a collections agency which act on behalf of the City to collect any unpaid monies due; in general a percentage of the fines collected is withheld as payment for the services rendered.

5. **One of the considerations staff proposes is to create a standalone chapter within the LAMC for the prohibition of gas-powered leaf blowers. (#4.) How does staff envision that this will help solve the problem?**

Answer: The current regulations are very difficult for most individuals to find on their own. Separating this prohibition to be easier to identify generally helps the community to be better informed on regulations which has been seen in other areas of the municipal code.

6. **What parts of AB 1346 “and subsequent actions taken by the” CARB has Los Altos not integrated? (Staff Report, Consideration # 5). Why hasn’t the City integrated those provisions and subsequent actions?**

Answer: Subsequent Actions taken by CARB is language directly from the State law which enacted these requirements. There is potentially additional actions to be taken if CARB develops additional information regarding enforcement. To date the City is meeting the provisions available by CARB.

7. **Does staff anticipate that any of the considerations, alone or in any combination, will affect the rate of ongoing violations of the gas leaf blower ordinance?**

Answer: It is unlikely a substantial reduction in gas powered leaf blower use will be achieved by changes to the ordinance, increasing penalties, etc., either individually or in combination. The City would need to allocate resources and dedicate personnel specifically to monitor for gas powered leaf blowers to substantially reduce the use of gas-powered leaf blowers.

[Agenda 8: Automated License Plate Readers](#)

1. **How quickly will this program be implemented (up and running) once approved by Council?**

Answer: Funds for this project will be included in the FY23/24 if approved by Council. Project implementation would not start until after July 1, 2023.

2. **Can we add a license plate reader at Homestead/ Fallenleaf (to catch people exiting to the 85 freeway)?**

Answer: Camera location #15 (it is labeled incorrectly on the map as location #13) will be placed at Homestead Rd and Foothill Expressway, which is nearby.

3. **Do the license plate readers capture the license of multiple lanes?**

Answer: Cameras can capture up to 2 lanes of traffic.

4. **Will one reader be able to read 3 lanes wide including the right turn lanes? (E.g. all of the lanes of Homestead, Vineyard, or Foothill) How many lanes is it picking up?**

Answer: One reader can capture up to 2 lanes of traffic.

5. **Will it be focused on the back license plates of vehicles or the front?**

Answer: The cameras will be positioned to capture the rear license plates.

6. **Previously, staff proposed to measure the success of an ALPR pilot program by whether solvability rates increased at least 10%. It seems that staff has abandoned that benchmark and significantly lowered the bar to measure whether the pilot program is a success. Why?**

Answer: The new proposed benchmark is more stringent.

The term solvability does not have a definition that is well known to the public and was leading to confusion. Solvability is evidence or information gathered at the scene of the crime during an incident or as part of the investigation after the crime has occurred. The previous metric, increasing solvability by 10%, means ALPRs could have received credit for increasing solvability even if the crime itself was not processed as a complaint with the DA or no arrests were made. After the discussion with Council, staff determined the term and benchmark was too subjective and may not always measure the correct outcomes.

Using a commonly understood term (arrests) with an easy-to-understand goal (an increase arrest rates for all crimes, with a focus on crimes involving stolen vehicles, burglary, and grand theft), is easier to understand and also provides more objective criteria to evaluate. Staff is proposing an increase in arrests in three specific categories, as well as a higher arrest rate overall.

Year	Total Arrests	Burglary Arrests	Grand Theft	Vehicle Theft
2020	170	4	4	3
2021	145	1	2	2
2022	133	9	3	1

In 2022 there were:

- 148 reports of burglary, with 9 arrests
- 96 reports of grand theft, with 3 arrests
- 24 reports of vehicle theft, with 1 arrest

Focusing on an increase in total arrests (133) with a specific focus on three areas, is a more appropriate benchmark to review to determine if the pilot is successful.

7. ALPR follow up questions; #2: Please provide hard data from neighboring and peer jurisdictions demonstrating the change in arrest rates in the year after ALPR's were installed.

Answer: Reports have been included in the previous presentation to Council, however, there are no longitudinal studies that staff is aware of showing the long-term outcomes or the experiences of multiple agencies.

8. Who does staff propose to conduct the outside audit?

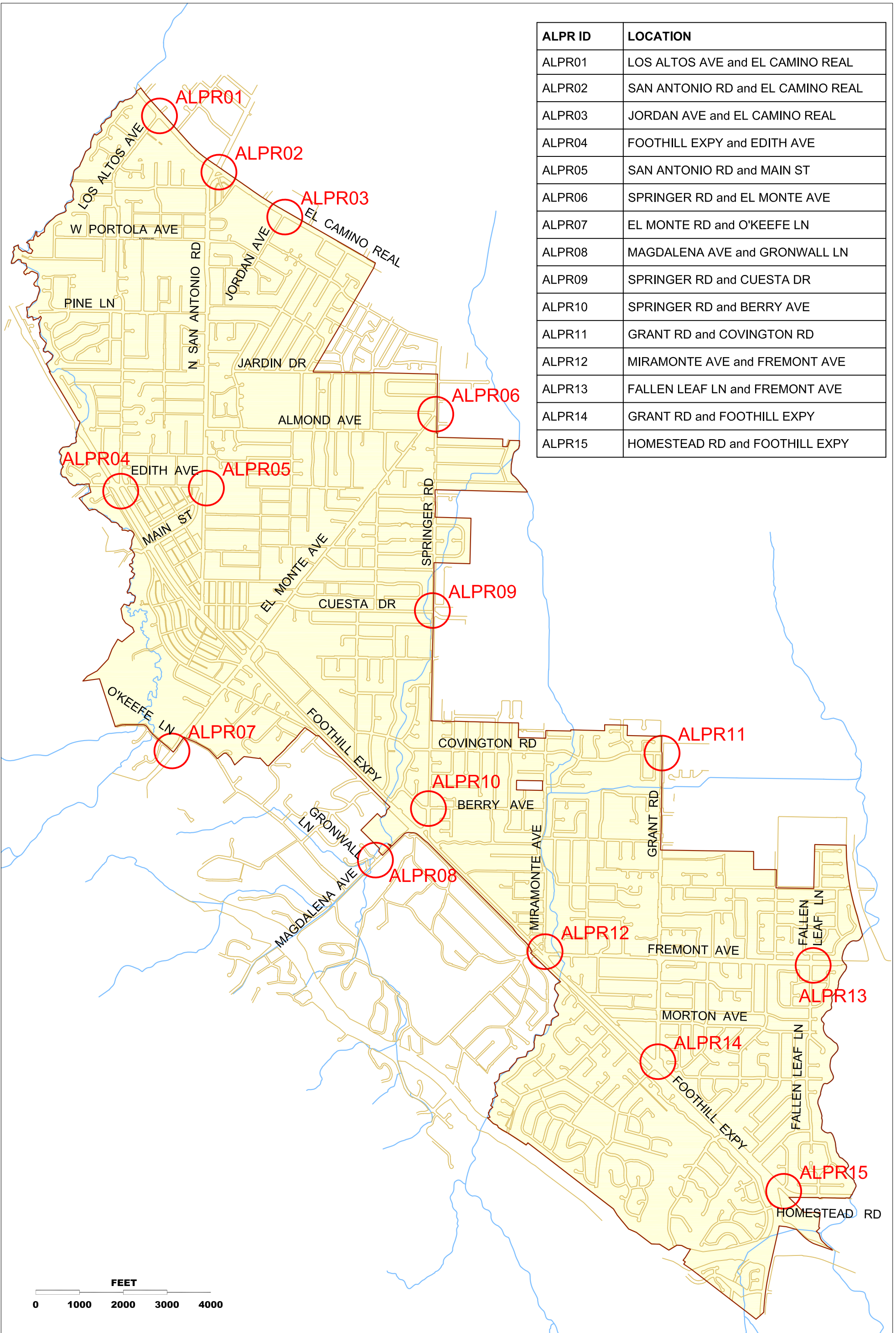
Answer: If an ALPR pilot program is approved, staff will seek agencies that meet the defined criteria to complete the audit.

9. On the map (page 84 of the PDF), the ALPR labeled on the map as #13 should be #15, and the ALPR where the number is cut off should be #13.

Answer: Thank you. This error has been corrected.

10. Attachment 4, Q13 on page 4-5 (pg 88-89 of the PDF), is the proposal for evaluating effectiveness of the pilot to see an increase of any amount in any one of the three types of crimes identified or in each of the three types of crimes, i.e. all 3 types?

Answer: The goal of the proposed pilot program is to increase arrest rates for all crimes (133 total arrests in 2022), with a specific increase in each of the three focus areas.



ALPR ID	LOCATION
ALPR01	LOS ALTOS AVE and EL CAMINO REAL
ALPR02	SAN ANTONIO RD and EL CAMINO REAL
ALPR03	JORDAN AVE and EL CAMINO REAL
ALPR04	FOOTHILL EXPY and EDITH AVE
ALPR05	SAN ANTONIO RD and MAIN ST
ALPR06	SPRINGER RD and EL MONTE AVE
ALPR07	EL MONTE RD and O'KEEFE LN
ALPR08	MAGDALENA AVE and GRONWALL LN
ALPR09	SPRINGER RD and CUESTA DR
ALPR10	SPRINGER RD and BERRY AVE
ALPR11	GRANT RD and COVINGTON RD
ALPR12	MIRAMONTE AVE and FREMONT AVE
ALPR13	FALLEN LEAF LN and FREMONT AVE
ALPR14	GRANT RD and FOOTHILL EXPY
ALPR15	HOMESTEAD RD and FOOTHILL EXPY

