



Memorandum

TO: RULES AND OPEN GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE **FROM:** Councilmember Raul Peralez
SUBJECT: Police Officer Equipment & Safety **DATE:** March 27, 2015

Approved

Date

3/27/15

RECOMMENDATION

Direct the City Manager to:

1. Conduct an immediate review of the performance and functionality of the mobile data terminals (MDT's) that our police officers use, including how often the system malfunctions, slows down, or has failures, and report back in 14 days to the extent possible; and
2. Present Council with immediate solutions that can be implemented, if the review concludes that the MDT's currently used are underperforming.

BACKGROUND

Recent media reports have described widespread failure of MDT's, and officers continually tell me their MDT's are not functioning properly, which affects their ability to protect our City. I often experienced these failures when I was a police officer. I believe the City has a responsibility to equip our police officers with proper equipment to ensure public safety as well as our officers' safety.

MDT's are the computers in police vehicles that allow patrol officers to communicate with each other, dispatch, and the Police Department. It also allows officers to look up vital information of criminals and suspects, as well as use GPS to locate other officers and upload criminal reports.

The MDT's used by our officers have been a long-time problem. On September 3, 2014, Officer Christopher Proft sent a memo to the Chief of Police outlining the ongoing issues officers have had with their MDT's. Among the concerns were that the MDT's would "freeze" unexpectedly and that the internet connection was spotty and slow. These issues directly affect response time to calls and the safety of the officer(s) requesting assistance.

Officer Proft's experiences resonate with me. When I served on San Jose's police force, it was not only frustrating but risky when a MDT would freeze on you before you could

pull up a suspect's criminal records or find the location of a fellow officer via GPS. Going into a potentially dangerous situation blind endangers the lives of those calling for help as well as our men and women in uniform. I urge Council to make sure our police officers have functioning MDT's.