



August 18, 2025

Dear Seattle City Councilmembers:

The Seattle Renters' Commission strongly opposes [CB 121052](#) and [CB 121053](#), which would greatly expand the Seattle Police Department (SPD)'s CCTV (closed-circuit television) camera network and Real-Time Crime Center (RTCC). This proposed expansion would increase SPD's CCTV network and RTCC's disproportionate targeting of renters, especially Black, Indigenous, and other people of color; immigrants; LGBTQIA+ residents; people with disabilities; and low-income households. Multiple factors contribute to this disproportionate impact.

SPD has placed cameras in areas with apartment buildings, but not in areas with single-family houses (CID, Belltown, Downton, and Aurora North). SPD's proposed expansion of cameras to the Stadium District, around Garfield High School, and around Cal Anderson Park, includes areas with both single-family housing and apartment buildings. City Council has amended the proposed camera areas to exclude streets with single-family housing out of concerns for privacy. However, SPD's cameras will still be placed on streets with apartment buildings.

Furthermore, SPD plans to [accept live video feeds from apartment buildings into its RTCC](#), but not from single-family homes. This surveillance would be imposed on renters without their consent. Renters have no control over whether their landlord installs a camera recording everyone that comes and goes from the building where they live, and whether SPD receives live video from that camera. In a city where BIPOC households are much more likely than white households to be renters and the median income of home owner households is more than double that of renter households, this expansion will deepen Seattle's existing racial and economic disparities.

Finally, renters typically have less access to private outdoor spaces than people living in single-family homes. This can make renters more reliant on public parks for outdoor spaces. Public parks, especially parks in areas with a high concentration of apartment buildings, are increasingly coming under SPD surveillance. SPD cameras already surveil

Hing Hay Park, West Lake Park, and others. The proposed expansion would bring Cal Anderson Park, Garfield Playfield, and Occidental Square under constant police surveillance.

This is not a choice between safety and surveillance: [a recent meta-analysis](#) showed that surveillance technologies do not have an effect on violent crimes. Despite this, there is an extensive track record of surveillance technologies harming communities. Recently, ICE accessed [surveillance data collected by the King County Housing Authority](#), and SPD used [CCTV footage to jail an innocent person for a month](#).

We urge you to reject this expansion of mass surveillance and protect renters' privacy, autonomy, and safety.

Sincerely,

The Seattle Renters' Commission