



# Staff Report

## City Council

Item No. {{section.number}}.{{item.number}}

**Meeting Date:** May 28, 2025

**From:** George Crum, Chief of Police

**Title:** Real Time Operations Center (RTOC)

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

For information and discussion only

### **BACKGROUND:**

As modern policing evolves, law enforcement agencies are leveraging technology to respond more effectively to crime, emergencies, and public safety threats. A Real Time Operations Center (RTOC) is a centralized hub that integrates and analyzes real-time data from multiple sources to provide comprehensive situational awareness. This technology-driven environment consolidates live video feeds, computer-aided dispatch (CAD) data, license plate recognition (LPR) information, geographical information systems (GIS), crime analytics and other critical intelligence into a single, unified platform. It also supports innovative strategies like drone as first responder (DFR), allowing rapid aerial assessments of incidents and enhancing crime analysis through a comprehensive, data-driven understanding of crime patterns.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The Regional Real Time Operations Center (RTOC), hosted by the Palm Springs Police Department, will revolutionize public safety operations across the Coachella Valley, including Cathedral City. This centralized facility will integrate real-time data from a variety of sources such as automated license plate readers (ALPRs), city surveillance cameras, police vehicle AVL systems, CAD, body-worn cameras (BWCs), and drone programs.

Participation in the RTOC will deliver the following key benefits to Cathedral City:

- **Enhanced Situational Awareness:** Access to consolidated real-time data will enable better understanding and faster assessment of incidents as they unfold. RTOC's give patrol officers and commanders real-time access to surveillance footage, sensor alerts, and incident data. This helps responders make faster, safer, and better-informed decisions during in-progress events.

- **Improved Officer Safety:** By equipping responding units with pre-arrival information, such as suspect descriptions, vehicle plates, or prior incident history at a location. The RTOC can reduce risk and improve tactical outcomes during critical incidents.
- **Improved Response Times:** By providing live operational intelligence, officers will be able to respond to incidents more rapidly and appropriately. By monitoring activity patterns across jurisdictions, the RTOC can assist in proactive resource allocation ensuring officers are deployed to areas where they're most needed before a call is even made.
- **Strengthened Investigative Capabilities:** The RTOC will allow for in-depth analysis of crime patterns, aiding in more efficient case resolution and crime prevention. The RTOC can rapidly synthesize data from multiple sources, such as video systems, 911 calls, and LPR systems to identify suspects or vehicles, shortening the time needed to develop actionable leads.
- **Proactive Community Safety:** Early identification of public safety threats will enable proactive mitigation measures, enhancing the overall safety of residents and visitors. Public safety without borders. Criminals often cross city boundaries; a regional RTOC allows police efforts to do the same, delivering consistent service levels across communities.
- **Regional Collaboration:** The RTOC fosters seamless information sharing and strengthens partnerships between neighboring law enforcement agencies, improving cross-jurisdictional coordination. By pooling financial resources, multiple agencies can share the expenses of technology acquisition, personnel, and ongoing operations.
- **Community Trust and Transparency:** Modern RTOC's often include tools to ensure responsible and transparent use of surveillance technologies. By developing clear policies and oversight, the department can reassure the community that the center is a force-multiplier for public safety, not a threat to civil liberties.
- **Force Multiplier Effect:** By optimizing resource allocation and enhancing officer safety, the RTOC acts as a significant force multiplier without requiring additional personnel. In a regional model, smaller agencies gain access to high-level tools and capabilities (ex. Advanced video analytics, real-time data fusion) that they may not be able to afford or staff independently, amplifying their capacity to serve the public.
- **Support for Special Events and Emergencies:** RTOC's enhance coordination during major events, disasters, or large-scale incidents, functioning as a central point of command to monitor developing situations and direct responses in real time. In critical incidents (ex. Active shooters, natural disasters, or large-scale protests) regional RTOC's provide a centralized command and control hub to support multi-agency coordination.

Historically, public safety operations have operated within isolated systems, hindering the timely sharing of critical information. The RTOC seeks to eliminate these barriers by providing a unified operational picture, improving coordinated responses, and enhancing service delivery.

Beyond the Police Department, the RTOC will benefit public safety agencies and City operations. By facilitating seamless interagency communication and integrating data related to fire, EMS, traffic, and public works, the RTOC will provide a unified operational picture for coordinated responses and improved service delivery. This strategic investment will enhance the City's ability to proactively address threats and ensure the safety and well-being of the entire Cathedral City community.

This strategic partnership is an investment in long-term safety, resilience, and quality of life for Cathedral City's residents, businesses, and visitors. This approach clearly shows that a Real Time Operations Center doesn't just add tools – it amplifies the impact of every officer, analyst, and patrol unit in the field.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

None

**FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:**

**Goal E: Safety**

Action E-3: Expand the use of cameras and other technology to promote public safety.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

None