



Chicago Park Districtâ??s Security Camera Program â??Riddled With Inequity and Neglect,â?? BGA Finds

Description

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April 18, 2022



[A Better Government Association](#) investigation of the Chicago Park Districtâ??s distribution of security cameras in Chicagoâ??s vast system of neighborhood parks reveals a tiny camera program with little money and riddled with inequity and neglect.

â??We found there are only security cameras in 16 parks in the city of 600 owned and operated by the park district which is less than 3% of the cityâ??s parks,â?• said Sidnee King with the BGA. â??And many times those security cameras are in parks that had negligible amounts of crime reported in the last year. â??

Through interviews, the BGA found Park District officials denied camera requests for at least five parks with higher levels of reported crimes in 2021, all in Black and brown neighborhoods.

â??Security cameras on our buildings are just one measure of park security and do not reflect the comprehensive resources devoted to park security,â?• Lemons wrote to the BGA. â??The Park District is committed to keeping our parks safe and welcoming environments in all neighborhoods across the city. It appears the data you are referencing does not reflect all security cameras covering parks.â?•

By comparison, the Park District has installed nearly 90 cameras in 16 parks since 2015, most located in more affluent white neighborhoods with far fewer reported crimes in 2021, including three parks with no crimes reported last year at all, according to the BGA investigation.

According to data provided by the Park District, nine parks in predominantly white neighborhoods with fewer crimes have cameras. Four parks have cameras in predominantly Black neighborhoods and another three parks in mostly Latino neighborhoods, says the BGA.

Read the Better Government Associationâ??s full investigation [here](#).