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May 17, 2018



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Hello Members of the Jester Farms HOA:

Julie Wright and I were in contact on May 4, 2018. I have attached my recommendation report: *Introducing Additional Technology to Enhance the Safety of Our Neighborhood* that I proposed sharing with HOA members.

The purpose of the report is to provide suggestions for bringing our community closer together and to provide options for adding more neighborhood surveillance cameras. The report will include information on the reasoning for adding new cameras and options for keeping the costs low and potentially reducing the current HOA fees.

I hope you find that this report includes the information that will be needed to help decide if you are interested in following through with my recommendations.

Sincerely,

Bryan Pickford  
Jester Farms HOA member

Encl: *Recommendation Report: Introducing Additional Technology to Increase the Safety of Our Neighborhood*

# **Recommendation Report: Introducing Additional Technology to Enhance the Safety of Our Neighborhood**

Submitted to

Jester Farms Home Owners Association Board and Members  
Round Rock, Texas

May 7, 2018

by  
Bryan Pickford

This report is intended to help share information on social media and security measures that are already in place in the Jester Farms subdivision. The report will include suggestions for bringing our community closer together and recommend low cost options for adding new neighborhood security cameras.

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# ***RECOMMENDATION REPORT: INTRODUCING ADDITIONAL TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE THE SAFETY OF OUR NEIGHBORHOOD***

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The population of Round Rock has increased from 99,987 residents in 2010 to 112,201 in 2018. Increases in population have historically resulted in an increase in crime. There have been some spikes in crime in the Jester Farms subdivision, but the population growth does not appear to have caused a significant increase at this point. Over ten thousand more people are expected to take residence in Round Rock within just one more year.

The purpose of my report is to share information on social media and security measures that are already in place. I want to make sure that the same trend of living in a safe and relatively crime free neighborhood continues.

This report is organized in the following sections:

- Jester Farms neighborhood HOA background
- A summary of how HOA dues are already allocated
- Benefits of increasing membership to neighborhood social media
- Potentially adding neighborhood surveillance cameras

The report will provide recommendations for neighborhood security enhancements, but it will also be addressing financial and privacy concerns that could be introduced by the recommended changes.

## II. JESTER FARMS NEIGHBORHOOD BACKGROUND

There are 500 homes and 1,365 residents in the Jester Farms subdivision. Current HOA dues are \$43.50 per month. Approximately 57% of the residents are homeowners. The population of the Jester Farms subdivision has not change significantly, but the population of Round Rock has increased significantly over a relatively short amount of time. The population of Round Rock has increased by over 10,000 residents in the past ten years and is expected to increase by over 10,000 more residents within the next year.

### City Profile

*City Population*

#### City Population

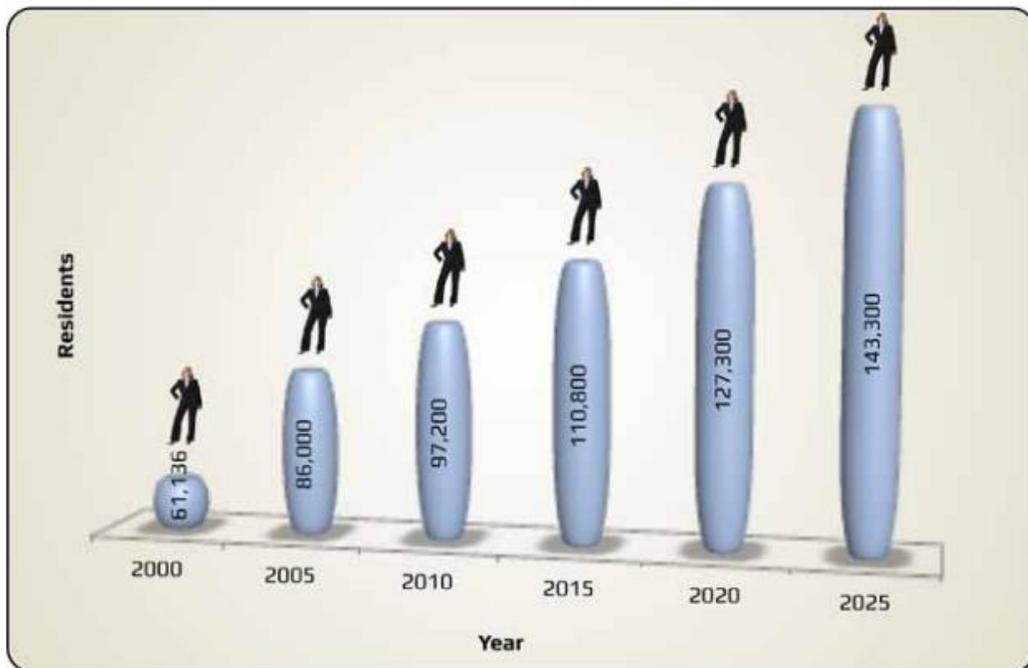


Figure 1 – Round Rock population graph 2000 - 2025 [6]

City of Round Rock and Greater Round Rock Population Projections  
2010-2030

Year	2010 City Projections	2010 City Growth Rate	2010 Greater Round Rock	2010 Greater Round Rock Growth Rate
2010 (Census)	99,887	-	141,807	-
2011	100,659	0.8%	143,960	1.5%
2012	101,702	1.0%	146,380	1.7%
2013	102,349	0.6%	151,133	3.2%
2014	103,107	0.7%	155,613	3.0%
2015	105,405	2.2%	160,385	3.1%
2016	106,591	1.1%	165,024	2.9%
2017	108,353	1.7%	169,213	2.5%
2018	112,201	3.6%	173,490	2.5%
2019	123,812	10.3%	177,859	2.5%
2020	127,279	2.8%	182,323	2.5%
2021	130,461	2.5%	186,062	2.1%
2022	133,723	2.5%	189,881	2.1%
2023	137,066	2.5%	193,508	1.9%
2024	140,492	2.5%	197,218	1.9%
2025	143,302	2.0%	200,312	1.6%
2026	146,168	2.0%	203,462	1.6%
2027	149,092	2.0%	206,670	1.6%
2028	152,073	2.0%	209,651	1.4%
2029	155,115	2.0%	212,693	1.5%
2030	158,217	2.0%	215,795	1.5%
<b>Notes:</b>				
2010 is the base year for these projections				
Greater Round Rock projections include City of Round Rock, and the ETJ, including Municipal Utility Districts				
<b>About Annual Adjustments</b>				
Projections for years beyond new City estimate not adjusted when new estimate is released, nor are Greater Round Rock Projections. While the City population has been growing slower than initially projected, recent new permits for single family and multi-family projects indicate that we should "catch back up" to the trend initially projected.				
Annual Estimates for the City of Round Rock are developed each year to reflect the April 1 population projection				
5/1/2018				

Figure 2 – City of Round Rock population and predicted population [1]

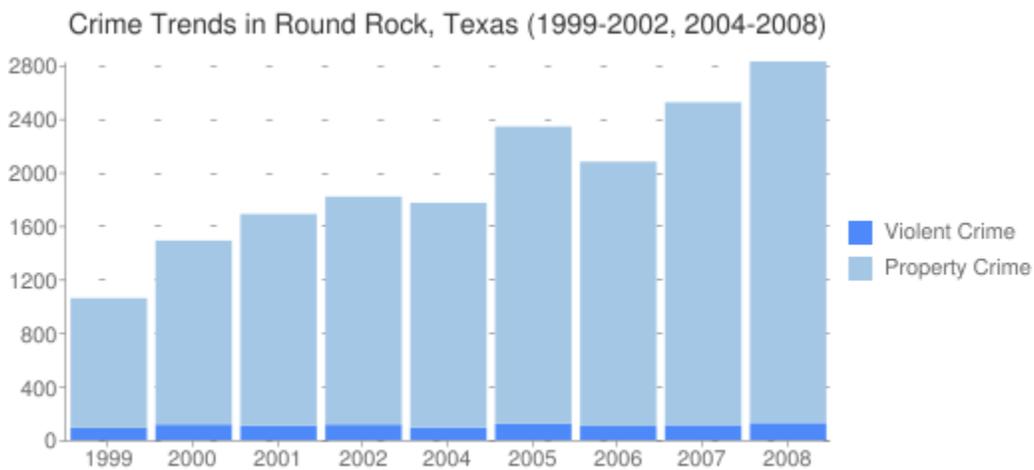


Figure 3 – Round Rock population graph and crime statistics 2003 - 2008 [5]

## Neighborhood Crime Statistics

A total of 656 police events were recorded for the Jester Farms neighborhood during the past 24 months. 365 events were recorded in the first 12 months and the number decreased to 291 during the next 12 months. Crime has dropped in the past 12 months, but there should still be a focus on maintaining the positive trend.

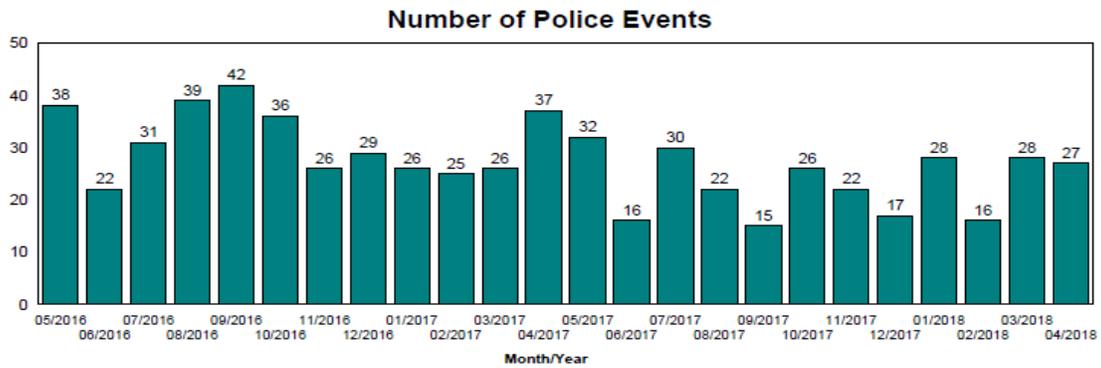


Figure 4 – Jester Farms Police events 5/2016 - 4/2018 [7]

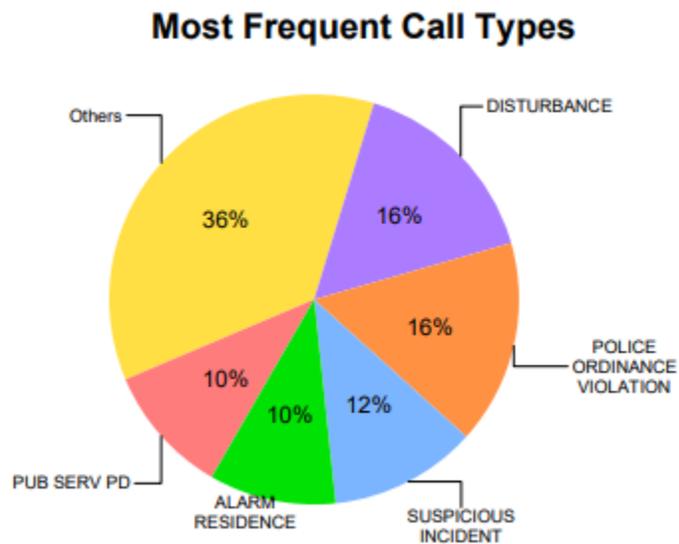


Figure 5 – Jester Farms most request call types [7]

### III. NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL MEDIA

Nextdoor (<https://nextdoor.com/>) is a social media site and application that is used to share information between neighbors privately or publicly. Nextdoor is cost free and can be accessed through a computer or mobile phone.

#### **Current Members**

Approximately 50% of Jester Farms homeowners are already members of Nextdoor.

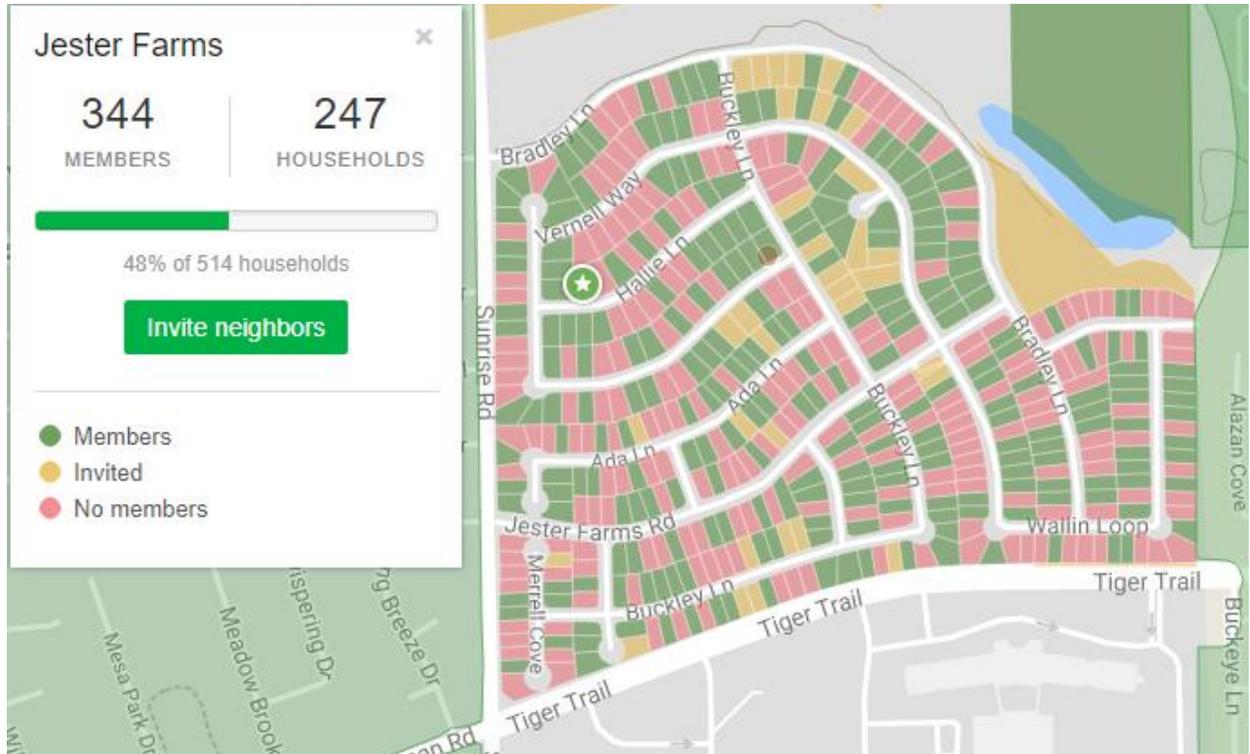


Figure 6 – Nextdoor map [3]

#### **Benefits**

These are some of the benefits that Nextdoor is already providing:

- Share details about a possible break-in or a break-in in progress
- Provide local “scam” alerts
- Provide alerts about traffic or nearby car accidents
- Provide hazardous weather alerts
- Raise awareness about trends in vandalism
- Receive updates from the city of Round Rock and local law enforcement
- Share information about upcoming community events

## ***Privacy***

The site uses verification to ensure people that sign up are actual residents or property owners in the neighborhood that they note as their place of residence. Nextdoor also provides option on their site to determine which contact information is shared and who they share the information with.

## ***Increasing Nextdoor Involvement***

Information is already communicated to HOA members through the Jester Farms HOA website (<https://www.jesterfarmshoa.org/>), the resident portal (<https://www.ciranet.com/ResidentPortal>), as well as monthly mail that includes the balance of HOA fees. The Jester Farms HOA website is public and is accessible to both HOA members and renters in the neighborhood. I recommend that a section be added to the website that provides information on Nextdoor. Nextdoor also includes an option for sending ten free postcards to the addresses of neighbors to join Nextdoor. Another option for raising awareness to Nextdoor would be to send out monthly newsletters again. \$5,500.00 is already figured into the budget for communications. A large amount of the money being used covers redundant communications and information. Most Jester Farms homeowners pay their HOA dues through automatic bank transactions or through the resident portal. Eliminating the redundant mailers could free up money that could be used for monthly newsletters instead. Many of the Jester Farms residents are not aware that a HOA website is active. A newsletter could also be used to share information about the Jester Farms HOA website and Nextdoor.

## **IV. SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS**

Neighborhood surveillance cameras can help to deter and track criminals if needed. Studies have shown that many crimes involve the use of a vehicle. The ability to record the license plate of a vehicle involved in a crime can help speed up a criminal investigation. Posting signs notifying people that surveillance cameras are in use has also been found to reduce crime in neighborhoods significantly.

### ***Community Considerations***

The Jester Farms subdivision is already surrounded by a fence to help provide additional security. There are only two entrances and exits to the neighborhood. This would simplify the addition surveillance cameras and help to keep related costs down. Security cameras are already in use at the community pool.

I considered the needs of the Jester Farms members, as well as my own when searching for surveillance cameras that might be a good fit for the community. These are factors that I took into consideration:

- Power source
- Data storage
- Image resolution
- Motion detection
- Night vision capability
- Data sharing
- Cost and maintenance fees
- Privacy concerns

### ***Recommended Surveillance System***

I researched and found that found that Flock Safety's Outdoor Wireless License Plate Reading Camera will be a good fit using the considerations that I noted. I found less and more expensive options, but Flock security cameras offered the best balance of price, privacy and functionality. They were also the only cost-effective option that included the ability to read license plates.

Flock security cameras are run through battery and solar power, so additional electrical wiring would not be required.

The recommended cameras can record the license plate of a car that is travelling up to 55 miles per hour and up to 75 feet away from the camera.

Flock Safety's Outdoor Wireless License Plate Reading Cameras cost \$1,500.00 each. The Flock company recommends adding two cameras at each neighborhood entrance. Two cameras could be installed at each of the Bradley Lane and Jester Farms Road

entrances at a total cost of \$6,000.00 per year. The cost would break down to an increase in HOA dues of \$12.00 a year for each member, but I believe that an increase of dues would not be needed if we work to streamline communications and their costs along with replacing closed circuit cameras with a less expensive and more flexible option such as Flock. Determining the number of cameras to implement or selecting a different camera provider will be dependent upon the initial interest that is shared by HOA members. Camera footage is temporarily stored locally to the camera and then the data is saved to the cloud using Amazon Web Services. Flock will not have access to the data. The HOA members would determine who had access to the camera footage. Access could be provided to an HOA board member, HOA member or all HOA members. Residents also have the option of opting out of being recorded. The camera can differentiate between residents and non-residents. The option to not be recorded is always an option, however opting out of being recorded can also prevent the footage from being beneficial in cases like auto-theft.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

This report was intended to help share ways of improving the security of our neighborhood.

The methods I described can be introduced at a low cost with a minimum amount of effort. Many of the changes could even help to reduce the HOA membership fees. An increase in the membership to Nextdoor could increase security, but it could also help to bring our community closer together. The suggestion of adding security cameras took cost into consideration, but it also factored in ways of ensuring that all HOA members would be able to maintain their privacy.

I believe that another major takeaway this report covered was to stay involved with our neighborhood and the need for HOA members to provide suggestions on the most efficient ways of using our HOA dues. An increase in community involvement will result in a safer neighborhood, in addition to assurance that HOA dues are distributed to cover expenses that will be most beneficial to our neighborhood.

## SOURCES

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