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JAMAICA PLAIN, ROXBURY

## More cameras to be installed around Jackson Square T station

Posted by Matt Rocheleau July 25, 2011 01:50 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

In response to an increase in reports of serious crimes at Jackson Square MBTA station, additional security cameras will be installed next month inside and outside the station.

Through the first half of this year, 11 serious, or "Part 1," crimes were reported at the station near the border of Jamaica Plain and Roxbury, according to Transit Police data. That figure is on pace to eclipse totals from each of the past two years. During all of last year, there were 16 serious crimes reported there and 19 reported during 2009.

The serious crime classification includes arson, assault, homicide, rape, and various forms of theft. It does not include lesser offenses recorded by the T such as vandalism or assault without intent of injury.

Those less-serious, or "Part 2," crimes reported so far during 2011 are on pace to be fewer than the number reported one year ago. Four less-serious crimes had been reported through the first half of this year. Thirteen were reported during 2010.

While they can aid in deterring crime, "the cameras alone are not going to stop crime. The only thing that stops crime is people in the community being vigilant," said State Rep. Jeffrey Sanchez. He announced the T's plans – a collaboration with the District E-13 police – to add cameras at the station in a Jamaica Plain Patch [column](#) this month.

"The T was looking to upgrade the cameras there," said Sanchez, who, according to the Boston Bulletin, several years ago worked with other area officials to upgrade safety-related aesthetics at the station, including improved lighting. "I'm happy to see they're stepping it up in that area."

As of Monday morning, the exact number of cameras the T plans to install at Jackson Square Station had not been finalized. But, officials said they hope to conclude project planning this week and install the new monitoring devices by the end of August.

The added cameras will provide more views, especially around the exterior, of Jackson Square Station, said Transit Police Lt. Michael Shea, who commands

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policing of a section of the T system that includes Jackson Square. "We want to make it safer for everybody," he said.

Cameras have been installed at every subway station across the T system for nearly the past five years, according to transit authority spokesman Joe Pestau. Some buses and trains also have cameras. Lt. Shea said cameras are used for multiple reasons including public safety and general operation of the subway.

Grants from the Department of Homeland Security paid for "many" of the cameras, which have no operational cost associated with them, Pestau added. Over the past decade, that federal agency created in response to 9/11 has provided grants to other subway systems across the country to install security cameras.

Some, including the ACLU of Massachusetts, have expressed concern over the added surveillance as a potential invasion of privacy.

Transit Police Chief Paul MacMillan said earlier this year that the T plans to expand its camera system to identify and catch criminal suspects. The transit system often asks for the public's help by posting video clips or snapshots from those cameras on the Web.

In February, Boston.com detailed how reports of serious crime across the MBTA system had risen 19 percent last year from the year prior. Still, the number of crimes reported during 2010 was the fourth-lowest in the past three decades. Only 2006, 2008 and 2009 -- the lowest total on record -- saw fewer crimes reported.

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