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News Crime City spending \$24M Homeland Security windfall on

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City spending \$24M Homeland Security windfall on wide-ranging security update

BY [ERIN EINHORN](#) AND [EDGAR SANDOVAL](#)
 DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITERS

Monday, October 5th 2009, 4:00 AM



Acker/Bloomberg

Empire State Building is within 'Ring of Steel' being secured by cameras and chemical-weapons detectors.

The "Ring of Steel" security plan is coming to midtown.

The [Empire State Building](#), [Grand Central Terminal](#) and the [United Nations](#) will be surrounded with cameras, license-plate readers and chemical-weapons detectors under the new plan to go in effect by 2011.

The eye-in-the-sky security gadgets that police now use to scan lower [Manhattan](#) will also be used in midtown, thanks to \$24 million in federal Homeland Security funds.

"We will spend as much as necessary in either federal or city funds to complete this project and protect [New York](#)," [Mayor Bloomberg](#) said as he announced the program yesterday. "This is our No. 1 priority, and it comes before all fiscal concerns."

The city launched its lower Manhattan program, modeled on [London's](#) "Ring of Steel," in 2006. It set up a command center in the Financial District last year, where police and other security officials review a constant flow of images and information from the streets.

The command center will also review the data supplied by the new midtown system, which will blanket the area from 30th to 60th Sts., from river to river.

"We started in lower Manhattan for obvious reasons," [Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly](#) said. "We're concerned as well about [midtown] ... where there are major infrastructure and, of course, large crowds of people."

TAKE OUR POLL

Someone is watching

Do you approve of the eye-in-the-sky security improvements that will go into effect in 2011?

- Yes. It will make me feel much more secure.
- No. It's a violation of my privacy.
- I don't know.

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He noted that there have been two foiled terrorist plots targeting midtown, at the [Herald Square](#) subway station and



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Privacy advocates question the initiative and don't necessarily prefer it. "There's no information with regard to who has access to the information, exactly what's being collected, how long it's being kept and whether it's been digitized into a massive database on the innocent and lawful comings and goings of millions of New Yorkers and visitors," said New York Civil Liberties Union Director Donna Lieberman.

Some of the people who depend on midtown's security and vitality for a living say they have mixed feelings about the initiative.

While some welcome the added sense of security, others don't like [Big Brother's](#) probing eyes.

"I would not like feeling like they can see what I do all day," said [Surje Lama](#), 38, a midtown street vendor. "But, in [America](#), with the dangers, I would rather be safe."

"I'm not going to be able to kiss my girlfriend now," quipped [Yavuz Alemdar](#), 25, a pedicab driver in midtown. "I don't like the idea of being watched all of the time."

The mayor is also lobbying Congress for \$40 million to complete a massive screening system for radiation-spewing "dirty bombs," but says the money is being held up by "politics as usual."

He contended that the money belongs where the biggest threats are, not where politicians hope to earn votes.

"They're trying to spread Homeland Security money around the country," he said. "They've turned it into pork barrel."

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FreedomofSpeech7476

7:56:39 AM
 Oct 5, 2009
 OK,there's one teeny tiny problem here.Does a suicide bomber really care if he's caught on camera if he's going to be dead in a few seconds anyway?Does a truck/car bomber really care if he's caught on tape and may go to jail if their life is worth nothing and they resort to this type of mass violence?All these cameras are capable of doing is telling you what happened, not prevent it.This is all a scam to line the pockets of politicians and the manufacturer of the security system.The only way to prevent terrorism is to take the gloves off and defeat it decisively.Let the CIA do what it needs to do instead of indicting them.Give the Marines everything they need. And every American killed,1000 of your people are going to die.War is ugly.If you are not prepared to get ugly,you're gonna lose.We're losing.

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between

8:46:42 AM
 Oct 5, 2009
 Well, gander! Taxpayers should insist that all politicians have surveillance and recording devices installed in their offices and residences, monitoring and public disclosure of all their financial accounts, and personal 24 hour gps or implanted chips to know just where these unindicted pols are. It is better to be safe and consider them guilty until proven innocent, as the odds favor that assumption. An annual "Corruption Fee", beginning with \$30,000 and doubling every year of incumbency, should be personally paid by every politician. Any criminal activity forfeits all pension and health benefits. Fifty percent of the accumulated Corruption Fee will be returned to the pol after his leaving public service for being clever enough not to have been caught. With the planned public surveillance AND if we monitor

the unindicted we can increase our safety AND cut down on a major amount of crime.

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Guility

1:00:05 PM
Oct 5, 2009 First... the intrusion into my private activities without any suspicion of ILLEGAL activity by a government body/agency IS A VIOLATION OF MY CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS. God given and shall not be infringed upon. Now for the record, I don't remember reading in there (Bill of Rights) anywhere a clause that these RIGHTS shall be suspended in times and circumstances as deemed fit. Second! The SURVEILLANCE DOES NOT PREVENT A TERRORIST... PERIOD! It provides FORENSIC evidence after the fact. The ability to get the plate number on the truck that blew up! SO... Wiretaps, ok, Banking Records, ok. All through the courts, with approval by a JUDGE. Unfettered and constant watch by big brother... can anyone say ORWELL!!!

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miniredsatan

2:15:53 PM
Oct 5, 2009 more big brother BS for their police state. none of this will prevent anything just like NORAD didn't stop 9-11 and we spent billions on that since the 50's. no, what has been created is more surveillance by the state on its citizens which is illegal and unconstitutional. remember that little piece of paper?! rule of law?! nahhh, the boogeyman is coming! the only thing this does is allow the state to spy and illegally surveil its citizens. and how can kelly actually declare there were foiled plots at heard square and citi center. those are outright distortions of the facts. and really if we're so worried about security, lets start watching the gov't instead of vice versa. the criminals aren't us citizens, its the scum in d.c. who sell us out for corporate money.

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Sea Chart

5:21:01 PM
Oct 5, 2009 So anyway on Broadway and 28th street all the younger criminal's from Africa that sell bootleg stuff do their bizzness right under the NYPD camera,this has been going on for years ,so what good will more Camera's do when nothing has been done about that area in years ,in spite of all the NYPD cameras. It's the worst area in Manhattan. Perhaps Scott Stringer or Mayor Bloomberg might visit this area from 27th street to 31st street?.....Nah!!!!

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Sosadworld

10:45:59 PM
Oct 5, 2009 The slums look like hell but we need this instead of fixing them . That's like our Postal Service raising the cost of postage so they can give away millions of dollars in free boxes a month ??? Surprised that many do not know you can order free boxes from the USPS . up to 500/ea. size difference/order and get them mailed to you free also . Get your tax dollars back , order today . Go try and get a box at UPS !

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khovalyg

12:18:25 AM
Oct 6, 2009 More waste of money to illegally, immorally, unethically snoop on American citizens & violate our privacy. Earlier posters are correct: spying on citizens doesn't STOP crime, although it may - but only MAY - give a plate number after the fact. Experience in other cities has shown that the cops watching the videos are more interested in watching anatomy than in watching for crime. Nonelected bush's Vaterland SS-ecurity is a costly bureaucracy that violates our rights. Period. - And those chemical 'detectors'? In view of the inside job of 9/11, they're more likely to SPREAD chemicals & disease rather than 'detect' them.

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steveiny

1:55:39 AM
Oct 6, 2009 Big brother will now have the millions of people who pass through Bloomberghattan every day on video for eternity.How creepy.Fuhrer Bloomberg's gestapo and shadow police getting more and more powerful as every single right we have is taken away.

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steveiny

2:05:31 AM
Oct 6, 2009 Gotta love the morons who are voting 'yes'.This city under the Fuhrer is the most sufocating,overbearing,over controlling,freedom-regulating nanny state government in the country.And some easily-scared simpletons actually like that.A city where not only are people on top of each other,but the police on top of them.

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TMI

10:08:02 AM
Oct 6, 2009 Now entering phase 2 of the Executive Branch plan orchestrated by the Bush family administration. Civil liberties, Patriot Act, 9/11, cameras, tracking and monitoring, OnStar vehicle disabling. Next will be the chip implants. Never, ever let the CIA run the country. Bend over, here it comes. The roller coaster ride to hell. Statistics say that 4 out of 10 people will go to jail and be processed for their finger print and photo

ID. Tracking and monitoring. All they need is a good excuse even if it has to be created. Watch your backs and never say never.

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EDITORS' PICKS



3 more arrested in stray shooting of Bronx girl

Five people are in custody, including a 16-year-old boy believed to be the gunman.



The Great Fall: Obama's approval drops below 50%

President's approval numbers slip to 48%.



Death penalty for 9/11 mastermind will be 'Mission Impossible'

Feds' past few tries at death penalty for terrorists have failed.



Beauty & the beach: PICS

Models, actors and other beautiful people mug for the paparazzi in their swimwear.



Rihanna's got herself a new man

Gatecrasher: The "Good Girl Gone Bad" has a new admirer, actor Tristan Wilds.



Bride says 'I sue' over racy photos posted online

Says her wedding photographer posted pics of her in underwear.

MORE FROM CRIME

- 3 more arrested in stray-bullet shooting of Bronx girl, Vada Vasquez
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