



POLICE DEPARTMENT

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DANIEL P. THOMPSON

Chief of Police

To whom it may concern,

In an effort to reduce crime and engage technology to better serve our community, we are exploring a partnership with Flock Safety.

According to the International Association of Chiefs of Police, upwards of 70% of crime involves the use of a vehicle. Law enforcement can use license plate data to identify the registered owner, get an address, access potential witnesses, and at a minimum, get the first lead in an investigation.

Flock Safety fills the evidence gap by building infrastructure-free devices, such as cameras, that can be installed anywhere we need it, and coupled with machine learning and cloud computing, capture the license plate and state details of every car that drives by, day or night. License plate information is a key piece of evidence needed to clear cases.

Beyond license plates, vehicles matter

Individuals planning to commit a crime also know that license plates are identifiable data points, so what happens if they steal a car or a license plate tag to commit a crime? Flock uses patented Vehicle Fingerprint™ technology, the camera captures the vehicle make, color, type, license plate, state of the license plate, missing plate, covered plate, paper plate, and over 20 unique vehicle details like roof racks and bumper stickers. If a traditional security camera or an eyewitness saw a yellow SUV with a roof rack, a detective would use Flock to turn thousands of hours of video into the one suspect vehicle that happens to be a yellow SUV with a roof rack. Narrowing the focus to the pertinent evidence saves a tremendous amount of time and leads to a faster case clearance.

How real-time alerts stop crime

Flock Safety technology integrates with the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), to provide alerts to dispatch and patrol officers on vehicle license plates associated with outstanding warrants, missing persons, and stolen vehicles. Since stolen vehicles are often used to perpetuate more crime, and the inhabitants of those vehicles are more likely to have been involved in violent crime, a stop of a stolen vehicle because a Flock alert disrupts the crime cycle by removing criminal transportation and arresting suspects.

Making a quick arrest prevents more crime

As stated above, most primary research suggests that the way to reduce crime is to solve it quickly when it does occur and apprehend a suspect. Then, publicize the success so the entire community knows that if you attempt to commit a crime in an area with Flock Safety cameras, you will be caught.

We can increase the presence of capable guardians with the adoption of Flock Safety





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technology which captures the objective evidence police need to solve crime. We can also reduce the motivation of would-be offenders with the publicization of arrests made. Now would-be offenders know they will be caught if they attempt to commit crime.

Cost-effective force multiplier

We need to supplement people with cost-effective, efficient technology that delivers a higher volume of investigative leads than would be available elsewhere. The cost of the cameras is \$2800 per camera to install, and then \$2600 per camera per year for maintenance.

Does Flock work?

Since 2017, Flock cameras have played a critical role in crime reduction and cases solved:

- The reduction of 34% of crime in Marietta 2 years ago
- 62% reduction in crime in Cobb County last year
- 70% reduction in crime in San Marino, CA
- 43% reduction in 2020 in a Dayton, OH neighborhood
- 20% reduction in Type A crimes in Shelby County, TN
- A Community Improvement District (CID) that welcomes over 1 million visitors each year recorded 46% fewer car break-ins and 25% fewer motor vehicle thefts
- Up to 90% reduction in mail theft in residential neighborhoods

Stolen vehicles recoveries have totaled:

- \$1.5 million+ in Fort Worth, TX
- \$1 million+ in Memorial Villages, TX
- \$1 million+ in Hemet, CA
- \$1.6 million+ in Wichita, Kansas

We must mitigate the risks

Now more than ever, we need transparent policing nationwide. There exists inherent risk when utilizing technology to enforce the law, including the potential loss of privacy and perpetuating bias. However, the license plate of a vehicle is considered public information. Moreover, case law has upheld that historical data from an automated license plate reader (ALPR) is not a violation of privacy, as there is no reasonable expectation of privacy in public spaces. When considering technology like license plate readers, the three most important questions to ask are:

- What type of data is collected?
- Who has access to the data?
- How long is the data stored?

With Flock Safety, the answers are straightforward and have been consistent since their founding in 2017.

- They collect the objective evidence police need to solve crime, which includes license plates and vehicle information. They do not utilize facial recognition technology, mitigating any implicit or explicit bias in the Flock Safety operating system.
- The data is fully owned by their customers. Only authorized users can access the system and every search requires a search reason, which is collected in a publicly available audit. No unauthorized users, including Flock Safety employees, have access to the footage. They never





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share or sell the data, and all the data is encrypted using AES-256 encryption with a secure cloud server.

- By default, all data is automatically deleted every 30 days on a rolling basis. Meaning, if you want to find footage from 31 days ago, you can't because it's been permanently deleted. The only exception to our data retention policy is if a democratically elected governing body or official has clearly defined a license plate reader data retention policy or law and made it publicly available. We always comply with local laws and regulations.

Flock Safety was founded with the mission to significantly reduce crime — and believe that is possible while protecting civil liberties and encouraging positive, productive relationships with local law enforcement and their communities.

In that effort, in 2021 Flock Safety launched the Transparency Portal, a landmark approach to police transparency and accountability, in partnership with Piedmont, CA Police Department, serving as a hub for all information around Piedmont PD's Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) cameras. This transparency portal is available to all law enforcement agencies that work with Flock Safety.

Flock has been proving for years that communities can take an active role in significantly reducing crime from their area. Whether you live in a neighborhood, run a business, or work in law enforcement, they want to talk with us and our community about how we can take the proactive steps necessary to quickly solve crime, prevent crime, and ultimately reduce crime in our community.

Pilot Program

We have been working with Flock Safety to start a **60-day trial** which we hope to begin on or around July 1, 2022. The pilot program will consist of **30 cameras** strategically located throughout the City to cover major ingress and egress locations for the City, coverage of the downtown, areas that contain multiple retail establishments, and locations where we have traffic flow and frequent traffic accidents.

Flock differs from Opticop as Flock cameras do not livestream. They take high-definition pictures of vehicles that capture a lot more detail. It is difficult for an Opticop camera to capture a license plate of a moving vehicle, and they do not capture the vehicle distinctions (like roof racks, damage, bumper stickers etc.). Flock Safety provides an ALPR system that is more advanced than the 3M units that we currently use. One of the big benefits of Flock is that you can search by make, model, color, plate, & vehicle distinctions. The Flock cameras also provide direction of travel, speed, better overall pictures of the vehicle and can be integrated with Evidence.com. Our plan is to work towards purchasing cameras by leveraging partnerships with area retailers. There has been success in other jurisdictions doing this and Flock is very much on board with helping us accomplish that.

There are several agencies around Wisconsin that have Flock Cameras. The agencies closest to us are Menomonee Falls, Hartford, and Mequon. Milwaukee PD is installing 139 cameras in 2022. Brookfield, West Allis, and several other agencies in SE





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Wisconsin are also putting up cameras in 2022.

While this project is still very much in the infancy stages, we were able to sign a MOU with them to access their nationwide records system. Several CID personnel attended a webinar on how to use the records system. The benefit to this is that even though we do not have any of their cameras, we can still search for vehicle information from the agencies that do have cameras. We can add any of our personnel to the account without any added cost (unlimited users). Those who access the system and search for reads must put in the search reason, a reason for the search and the IR# (if applicable). We were also told that the program best works on Google Chrome as Flock was built on Chrome but will work on the other internet platforms.

The pilot program does not cost the City any money. At the end of the pilot, we will have a better idea of which cameras have been the most beneficial to gather intelligence and solve crimes. We will also have our Retail partners involved in the process, with the goal of their purchasing of cameras, which we can then utilize to gather intelligence and help them solve cases. We will then present our findings and propose the number of cameras that we would like to purchase in the **2023 Budget**.

If you would like any more information on Flock Safety, you can go to flocksafety.com.

Respectfully Submitted,

Thomas A. Wagner
Assistant Chief of Police

