

History of LPR:

In September 2015, during a City Council planning session, the Council requested the inclusion of a License Plate Reader (LPR) system in the strategic plan. On February 9, 2016, the City Council approved a one-year pilot project for the Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR). As part of this project, 18 ALPR units were installed across four fixed locations, two patrol vehicles, and one mobile trailer.

Due to the pilot program's success, additional cameras were added in 2018. This brought the total to eight fixed locations, ten patrol vehicles, and three street sweepers, resulting in 56 physical cameras overall. Currently, 14 of these cameras are in "good" working condition, while 43 are "off-line," with many of them rated as being in "poor health."

When did the conversations with Flock Safety Group Inc. (Flock Safety) begin?

Initial sales discussions began in July 2024, but gained urgency in October 2024 due to the need to transition from our current Automatic License Plate Recognition (ALPR) vendor, Vigilant. Throughout the summer, obtaining customer service and support from Vigilant became increasingly difficult—at times, nearly impossible—especially after its acquisition by Motorola Solutions Inc. This lack of responsiveness raised significant concerns about the viability of continuing our partnership. Additionally, the City-owned ALPR hardware was aging and required repairs or replacement. We faced a critical decision: reinvest in Vigilant or explore alternative ALPR vendors.

Flock Safety emerged as the leading choice largely due to its existing partnership with Axon Enterprise Inc. This collaboration involves the integration of Axon's Fleet 3 vehicle cameras with Flock Safety proprietary software. As a result of this partnership, every vehicle in the fleet equipped with an Axon Fleet 3 camera is also capable of functioning as a License Plate Recognition (LPR) system. Flock Safety has been rapidly gaining traction among law enforcement agencies in the Bay Area, offering superior technological advancements compared to Vigilant. Consequently, more municipalities are choosing to switch from Vigilant to Flock Safety.

What is the guarantee that Flock Safety won't share the data? There are currently multiple court cases of where data was shared.

Flock Safety will not share data because the data belongs to the City (the customer). If data is requested through legal action, such as a subpoena, Flock Safety will consult with the cities that legally possess the data. Flock Safety is not aware of any court cases accusing them of sharing data. Vigilant operates similarly; however, the only difference is that Vigilant retains a year's worth of data for the customer, whereas Flock Safety's default retention period is 30 days. Any retention beyond 30 days would incur additional costs. Currently, our proposed agreement includes a retention period of 30 days, and we intend to maintain this timeframe.

Is there an option to hold the data in-house?

No, AWS Cloud employs robust security standards. Data is encrypted end-to-end, including while stored on AWS servers. These servers are trusted by numerous local, state, and federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies to handle their highly sensitive information. Flock Safety recommends consulting with the City's Information Systems experts, who can confirm the advantages of storing data offsite in the AWS Cloud.

Please discuss the equipment that was purchased in 12/2023

Axon Enterprise, Inc. received approval from the City Council in December 2023 for a five-year agreement regarding Axon equipment and software. The Axon equipment encompasses Body-Worn Cameras, docking stations for Body-Worn Cameras, Tasers, Taser Cartridges, Taser Batteries, Axon Signal for holsters and vehicles, Interview Room Cameras, and Fleet 3 vehicle cameras. The Axon software includes unlimited storage for all digital evidence collected from Axon equipment—currently containing 44,843 GB of data—through evidence.com. The Axon agreement also provides individual licenses for staff to access evidence.com, transcription services, Axon Respond (for live streaming), Axon's Redaction Tools, drone flight records and pilot licenses, as well as an Auto-Tagging feature for the Records Management System. It is important to note that Axon Enterprise Inc. operates separately from Flock Safety, with the exception of the Fleet 3 vehicle cameras, which feature a partnership between the two companies. Currently, the Brentwood Police Department is leasing thirty Fleet 3 vehicle cameras from Axon Enterprise Inc. These cameras can video and audio record incidents when officers activate their "Code-3" Emergency Lighting equipment or when an officer manually activates the camera.

Flock Safety has developed proprietary software integrated into Axon's Fleet 3 cameras called "Vehicle Fingerprint." This software is not activated or accessible to Axon customers unless they have a paid subscription to Flock Safety. When activated, the software continuously retains and captures vehicle descriptions and license plates, regardless of whether the camera is actively recording.

Please discuss the contingency for upgraded ALPR technology – what will happen to those funds?

The contract amount requires approval from the Council. This technology allows us to install License Plate Recognition (LPR) or video cameras anywhere in the City as needed to address crime or problem areas. If we do not allocate funds for additional LPR or video cameras, we will need to return to the Council to request an increase in the amount we are authorized to spend with Flock Safety.

The contingency amount will be included in the budget increase requested for Flock Safety. Any unspent amounts designated for contingencies will contribute to the budget savings rate, which is used to calculate the two-year Operating Budget General Fund surplus or the draw on the Budget Stabilization Fund.

Why are we increasing the cameras to 32?

The request is for 35 cameras. 32 ALPR's and 3 surveillance cameras. This is actually a decrease in the number of cameras we currently have through Vigilant.

Flock Safety's cameras have advanced technology that captures a wider field of view, which means fewer physical cameras are needed when compared to our current 56 Vigilant cameras. These cameras are also leased, allowing Flock Safety to maintain their functionality and ensure they remain "online." The 32 requested cameras will be installed at fixed locations to provide robust perimeter coverage along busy routes near the city limits and at major intersections. The three additional surveillance cameras are intended to monitor densely populated areas and locations that are not easily accessible by police staffing, such as City Park, downtown, and the pedestrian overcrossing of Highway 4.

Could we purchase a smaller amount this year?

Yes, but less cameras will result in less coverage and lower solvability rates in criminal cases and missing persons cases. Staff will need to assess and determine which locations would go without an ALPR camera. Organized criminal groups have identified other Cities' ALPR locations and shared those locations in various forums. For every camera less, it lowers the contractual annual cost by \$3,000.

Please provide the map of the current ALPR camera locations and the recommended.

See attached

Why was this budget ask made off-cycle? How can the team be strategic with budget management?

The Police Department collaborates closely with the Finance Department during the budget process and when discussing purchases. We had planned to include this item in the mid-year budget process; however, we were unable to do so for several reasons. First, although we currently have LPR cameras from a different vendor, the scope of services provided was changing with the addition of the video cameras. This prevented us from classifying Flock Safety as a recurring over-\$50,000 expense. Second, the contract between Flock Safety and the City needed to be reviewed. The contract went through several iterations and was not mutually agreed upon in time to be included in the mid-year budget.

Despite our best efforts to work closely with the Finance Department and include our major purchases within the budget cycles, there are occasional circumstances that require us to bring stand-alone items to the Council for approval, and this is one of those items.

These cameras play a vital role in serving as a force multiplier that operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The data they collect is used daily to assist our staff in solving crimes and locating missing persons.

Can the department find savings in the current budget to cover the expense?

The Police Department supplies and services budget does not have existing savings that can absorb this additional expense. The cost of this item was included in the General Fund Mid-Year projection presented in January and any budget amendment would not impact our prior year-end projections.

Contra Costa Cities/Unincorporated Areas currently using Flock Safety:

Alamo
Clayton
Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office
Concord
Danville
Discovery Bay
El Cerrito
Hercules
Kensington
Oakley
Orinda
Pleasant Hill
Richmond
San Ramon

Contra Costa Cities soon to have Flock Safety:

Antioch
Walnut Creek

Other notable Bay Area Agencies using Flock Safety:

Tracy
Stockton
Livermore
Berkley
San Francisco
Oakland
Fremont
San Jose
Hayward
CHP
Alameda County Sheriff's Office