



# Agenda Report

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**Agenda of:** April 22, 2025

**Department:** Police

**Subject:** Automatic License Plate Reader(ALPR)/ Flock Cameras

## **Recommended Motion: Accept and Approve Resolution for free 90 day trial**

**Background:** The police department has been reviewing and researching the proposed installation of Flock Safety cameras in our community. These cameras, which use automatic license plate reader (ALPR) technology, are being introduced with the stated purpose of enhancing public safety. They are typically mounted at neighborhood entrances, intersections, or high-traffic areas and can capture images of vehicles, including license plate numbers, make, model, and color. The data is then made available to law enforcement agencies to assist in investigations.

Our plan is to install 4 cameras that will allow us to capture vehicles entering and exiting our city on Highway 90. There are certainly potential benefits to this technology. Flock cameras have been used in other communities to aid in the recovery of stolen vehicles, to assist with Amber Alerts, and to provide valuable evidence in cases of burglary, vandalism, and package theft. Many law enforcement agencies have reported improved response times and increased case closure rates when supported by this kind of real-time data. From a public safety perspective, the cameras may function as a deterrent for criminal activity and can help create a sense of security for residents. ( Here are two examples: Last week a stolen truck from San Antonio stopped at our Tractor Supply entered the store and attempted to use a stolen credit card. In addition, last week we had a burglary of a motor vehicle in Alsation Oaks, and we have the car on camera; however, no license plate was able to be obtained.) These are merely two incidents and there could be hundreds of other instances where these cameras could have assisted in potentially solving these crimes.

It is essential that we also consider the potential downsides and questions these systems raise. Chief among these are privacy concerns. Without robust policies in place, there is a risk that this technology could be misused. In addition, we must follow state laws as we currently follow regarding the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS).

Furthermore, there are financial considerations. Flock camera systems typically cost three thousand dollars per unit annually. We have been approved for a free 90-day trial period. It is important to ask: how is this being funded? This will be discussed further when our budget is discussed. If a camera breaks there is no cost to the City of Castroville.

**Fiscal Impact:**

☐ Budgeted   ☐ Requires Budget Amendment

**Source of Funding: 90 day free-trial.**

**Attachments:**

**Urgency 2**

**Impact 5**

**Submitted by: Chief James Kohler**