



Agenda Report

Agenda of: May 27, 2025

Department: POLICE

Subject: Insert Agenda Item Title Here

Recommended Motion: Accept and Approve Grant Resolution

Background: On April 22, 2025, the below information was presented to city council, and they approved Resolution#R2025-014-ALPR for a 90-day free trial.

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.

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.

Update: MVCPA Grant for ALPR and Fixed Cameras

We were recently informed of a grant opportunity through the Motor Vehicle Crime Prevention Authority (MVCPA), which has successfully funded Flock ALPR camera systems for other agencies. Our grant proposal includes the installation of nine (9) Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs) and three (3) fixed cameras strategically placed throughout the city. The total proposed budget for this project is \$36,000.

This is a matching grant, with the city contributing 25% (\$7,200) and the grant covering the remaining 75% (\$28,800). Importantly, if we are awarded the grant for the one-year term, the city will have no obligation to continue funding the project beyond the grant period should future funding not be secured. The grant period will run from September 1, 2025, through August 31, 2026. Per the resolution, Randall Scott Dixon has been designated as the authorized official to apply for, accept, decline, modify, or cancel the grant on behalf of the city.

Fiscal Impact:

☐ Budgeted ☒ Requires Budget Amendment

Source of Funding: General Fund

Attachments:

Urgency (0-5 = Low Urgency to High Urgency): 3

Impact (0-5 = Low Impact to High Impact): 5

Submitted by: Chief James Kohler