



Date: November 28th, 2023

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Author and title: Danny Renfrow – Police Chief

Title: **ALPR Flock Safety Services Contract**

Jen Callaway, Town Manager

Recommended Action: Authorize the Town Manager to execute an agreement with Flock Safety for a five-year ALPR service agreement contract. Included in this service agreement would be the addition of six new ALPR cameras, for a total of twenty-three ALPR readers town wide at a total cost not to exceed \$305,000 over the next five years.

Discussion:

On January 17th, 2023, Town Council authorized the Police Department to enter into a one-year pilot project agreement with Flock Safety for the deployment of seventeen Automated License Plate Reading (ALPR) cameras within town limits. The need for these cameras were identified for emergency evacuation planning purposes as well as for providing law enforcement additional tools to assist with locating stolen vehicles, missing persons and vehicles associated to the commission of serious crimes.

As part of this authorization, the Police Department was directed to consider area aesthetics when choosing locations which would require poles to be installed for camera mounting. As a result, sites were chosen to best avoid placing poles within the immediate public view while also balancing the strategic needs to best meet project goals. Many of these locations were planned to be attached to existing Caltrans owned infrastructure, such as lights poles and traffic signals. When the proposed locations were provided to Flock Safety, our staff was made aware we would be the first entity in the state to attempt Caltrans approval for this unique purpose. As a result, the project proposal guidelines and length of time for the state's review process were all unknown given the unique circumstances. Of the seventeen cameras planned for deployment, nine of those cameras were required to undergo this approval process with Caltrans.

After waiting nearly seven months for state approval, staff was finally informed Caltrans had provided comment on the project requiring an additional layer of approval from the federal government. Caltrans was unfamiliar with the federal approval process and either could not or would not provide an explanation as to why this extra approval was needed for ALPR placement on state owned infrastructure aside from citing overall proximity to Interstate 80. Caltrans ultimately denied our permit request asking for a complete project re-submission once we received federal approval for camera placement on state owned infrastructure.

With the project now in October with only half the cameras installed, staff made the decision to forgo the Caltrans infrastructure plan and instead choose alternative locations where possible. This resulted in five additional cameras being installed in early November within Town controlled rights-of-way where pole locations would best blend with the area's surroundings. These quick turnaround installations brought the total number of functioning cameras to thirteen, with only four remaining to date in Caltrans (non-infrastructure) right-of-way still pending approval.

Despite not having obtained full camera deployment at the time of this staff report, the Police Department has still experienced numerous successes as a result of this technology. The car counting data obtained from our public roadways, specifically in the Tahoe Donner Subdivision, has met or exceeded all expectations of what staff originally believed to be possible when starting this project. The Police Department has also received regional and state-wide attention for successful criminal investigations associated to the use of these ALPR cameras.

https://www.2news.com/news/truckee-license-plate-readers-look-to-lower-crime/video_deff3d0c-2fb1-5d24-bd67-067676320e1f.html

The summary below highlights some of the more notable successes experienced during this project as well as some of the snapshot data obtained from June 2023 to date.

Snapshot Overview of Data Collected:

- Approximately 4 million total license plates were captured on local roadways (with limited camera deployment) just from June to November of this year. Of the 4 million total reads, 600,000 unique vehicles accounted for this overall number.
- There have been 761 total “Hot List” hits within this same time period, comprising of 732 Stolen License Plates, 27 Stolen Vehicles, 1 Felony Vehicle, and 1 Missing Person.

Beneficial ALPR Data for Emergency Management Planning

- Strategic camera placement in Tahoe Donner registered approximately 5,500 unique vehicles traveling to/from the subdivision on Wednesday, July 5th, the date which most holiday tourist traffic was shown to have left our area.
- With an estimated occupant average of 3 per vehicle, this provided the approximate transient population of Tahoe Donner at around 16,500 during the main exodus period of the 4th of July holiday period. This vehicle occupant estimate is roughly equal to the town’s projected total population from the last census designation.
- Despite not ever reaching full camera deployment, a clear trend of peak season traffic was preliminarily identified. The data showed a spike in unique vehicles reads topping over 190,000 in June/July which transitioned into the early Fall period known as “shoulder season”. The transition period eventually yielded a low of approximately 130,000 unique vehicles on our roadways, accounting for a reduction of 60,000 vehicles during “shoulder season”.

It should again be noted this data is only a snapshot of the “complete picture” would accompany a full camera deployment and a longer observation period that could be compared year by year.

ALPR Assisted Criminal Investigation Highlights

- In August, ALPR cameras in Tahoe Donner alerted on a murder suspect’s vehicle from the Sacramento area who was travelling through our town while attempting to flee detection by law enforcement. The “Hot List” alert allowed officers to coordinate the driver’s apprehension with surrounding agencies, resulting in all vehicle occupants being taken into custody without incident.
- An ALPR camera in the Coldstream area located a vehicle belonging to a missing person out of Illinois who was categorized as in-danger/at-risk. The information provided by our cameras allowed for coordination with Illinois law enforcement, which ultimately resulted in the missing person being located shortly thereafter.

- ALPR Cameras in the Glenshire area assisted the California Highway Patrol in apprehending the driver of a vehicle who had eluded their officers during a police pursuit where speeds had exceeded over 100 miles per hour on residential roadways. The pursuit was terminated after being deemed too high of a risk to the surrounding public. Without the cameras having captured the vehicle's license plate, the driver would never have been apprehended by law enforcement.
- An ALPR camera on Brockway Road captured the vehicle of a prolific shoplifting suspect who had just fled a well-known local business after stealing several hundred dollars in merchandise. He was ultimately identified based upon the captured vehicle data, with subsequent arrest warrants issued.
- Flock cameras in the Glenshire area proved critical in identifying a suspect out of Reno who was stealing E-Bikes from people's driveways and out of open garages within the subdivision. Arrest warrants were issued as a result.

Discussion Continued:

In September 2023, staff was informed Flock Safety would be increasing their annual usage rates per ALPR reader from \$2,500 to \$3,000 – an estimated increase of \$8,500 annually for 17 cameras – unless we agree to a 5-year contract prior to January 2024. If Town Council authorizes this contract, each camera would remain \$2,500 annually for the contract term.

Although the obvious benefits of ALPR cameras to law enforcement investigations were quickly made evident to staff during the pilot project, it was also made clear that the full potential and benefits of data gathering for emergency management planning would be largely dependent on a full-scale camera deployment strategy and a continued observation period over the course of several years. An increase in cameras, coupled with a longer data gathering period would allow for the ability to determine statistical trends for more accurate population estimates which this technology proved more than capable of obtaining.

With this in mind, the Police Department is seeking authorization to commit to a five-year contract with Flock Safety for the 17 initial cameras authorized during the pilot project, with an additional request for six new cameras being added, for a total to 23. The addition of six new cameras would complete the coverage of all major thoroughfares and all entry/exit points into town limits from surrounding areas and will be installed once this contract is executed (projected January 2024).

Priority:

<input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Climate and Greenhouse Gas Reduction	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing
<input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure Investment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emergency and Wildfire Preparedness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Core Service

Fiscal Impact:

The total five-year contract with Flock Safety for 23 ALPR cameras is proposed to cost the Town \$305,000. The first year would cost the Town \$65,900 due to one-time implementation fees to install the additional six cameras. Each subsequent year would cost just under \$60,000 for camera maintenance and the ALPR system functionality.

If not authorized to proceed with this contract at this time, as of January 1, 2024, Flock Safety will be increasing their price per camera nationwide, resulting in a price increase of \$57,500 total, or \$11,500 annually, for the same number of requested cameras and existing services proposed under the terms of this same contract.

Staff propose utilizing the COPS fund for the first-year costs which would be paid in January of 2024. Future years' installments would be budgeted as part of the annual operating budget. The COPs fund

currently has a balance of around \$400,000, which is sufficient to cover this additional expense for calendar FY23/24.

Public Communication: This Staff Report and Normal Public Postings