

	Council Agenda Item
Meeting Date:	09/01/2026
Agenda Item:	Flock Guardrail Options
Staff Contact (name, email, phone):	Dan Meyer dmeyer@whitewater-wi.gov 262-473-1371

BACKGROUND

(Enter the who, what when, where, why)

UPDATE:

In preparation for the September 1, 2026, Council meeting, all Flock Safety information has been included in the packet. Regarding the topic of Flock search categories, it was found that PD staff have control over which categories are available for our staff to select. Thirteen categories were subsequently removed due to being overly broad or because they would not be utilized by our staff.

Additionally, it's important to note that Flock's automated audit assistance tool is activated for WPD. What that means is a user's search activity is flagged for administrators as needing review if any of the following search patterns occur:

- Searching the same plate for more than a 30-day period
- Searching for the same plate with multiple case numbers
- A user who is the only person in the agency searching for a plate and does so 10 or more times
- Repeatedly searching within narrow time windows (less than 96 hours)
- Searching entirely outside of owned cameras or only on shared cameras

Finally, each guardrail below has an option(s) bolded and in red, which represents the option(s) that the police department recommends incorporating.

The following updates were provided at the August 18, 2026, Council meeting based on the discussion at the August 4, 2026, Common Council meeting:

- The link for the Transparency Portal has been moved to the main PD webpage.
- Two additional guardrail options were added and are now included below.
- Data Retention: The default setting for data retention is 30 days; however, it can be reduced to a shorter period (any number of days less than 30). Flock recently announced it plans to reduce the standard retention period to 7 days, stating that 90% of cases were resolved using records obtained within that shorter timeframe.

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- The cases investigated that were categorized as “traffic infractions” were attached in the packet and found to be:
 - A reckless driving incident where the reporting party was nearly struck by the vehicle
 - Two different vehicles that fled from our officers’ traffic stopsThese cases should ideally have been more specifically categorized as “reckless driving” and “flee/elude.”
 - The PD is not required to consent to camera updates such as software or firmware updates as those are standard system maintenance.
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During the July 21, 2026, Common Council meeting, the Council requested a staff report describing various options for guardrails that would restrict the use of the Flock system for WPD or attempt to reduce liability associated with use of the Flock system. The following guardrails and options are available for consideration:

1) Editing WPD ALPR Policy Regarding Flock Information Sharing

Currently there is no policy language directing staff when they can directly share Flock camera information with outside agencies (i.e. verbally). The following options exist:

- A. No change.
- B. Add language permitting sharing of Flock camera information to any law enforcement officer if the officer has a legitimate law enforcement need for the information.
- C. Add language permitting sharing of Flock camera information to law enforcement officers, with the exception of federal law enforcement officers conducting immigration enforcement, if the officer has a legitimate law enforcement need for the information.**
- D. Add language permitting sharing of Flock camera information to law enforcement officers, with the exception of federal law enforcement officers, if the officer has a legitimate law enforcement need for the information.
- E. Add language restricting sharing Flock camera information to any law enforcement officer employed by an outside law enforcement agency.
- F. Add policy language restricting staff from utilizing Flock for immigration enforcement or tracking an individual’s legal free-speech activity.**

2) Adjusting Sharing Settings

We have requested confirmation from Flock representatives on how to best analyze our search history to determine the frequency with which searches provide results in a given geographic radius.

Currently our agency has a reciprocal sharing agreement with law enforcement agencies nationwide with the exception of federal law enforcement agencies. The following options exist:

- A. No change.
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B. Reduce the sharing radius from nationwide to 500 miles from the City of Whitewater. This would include all or nearly all of the following states: Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, and Iowa.

- C. Reduce the sharing radius from nationwide to 250 miles from the City of Whitewater. This would include the majority of Wisconsin and Illinois, approximately half of Iowa, Indiana, and Michigan, and only a small portion of Ohio, Missouri and Minnesota.
- D. Reduce the sharing radius from nationwide to 100 miles from the City of Whitewater. This would include southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois.
- E. Reduce the sharing radius to Wisconsin and Midwest states (Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan).
- F. Reduce the sharing radius to Wisconsin and adjacent states (Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, and Michigan).
- G. Reduce the sharing radius to the state of Wisconsin.
- H. Restrict all sharing.

3) Increasing Audit Frequency

To date, our audits have resulted in no instances of misuse by WPD staff. However, increasing the frequency of audits is not a significant administrative burden, and if misuse did occur a higher frequency of auditing would identify the issue more quickly.

Currently the policy states that the command staff may conduct periodic audits, however, our practice is to conduct quarterly audits. The following options exist to update the policy and practice:

- A. No change.
- B. No change to quarterly audit frequency but incorporate the frequency in the written policy.
- C. Adjust policy and practice to complete monthly audits.**
- D. Adjust policy and practice to complete bi-weekly (one every two weeks) audits.

4) Reducing the Number of Users

The use of the Flock system by employee type was tabulated for the past 30 days with the following results:

- Dispatch: 50
- Patrol: 14
- Detective: 13
- Supervisor: 16
- Admin: 5

Currently every sworn officer and dispatcher is trained in the use of the Flock system and has access to complete a Flock search to ensure efficiency and continuity of operations. This includes employees representing dispatch, patrol, detectives, supervisors, and administration. The following options exist to reduce the number of users:

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- A. No change.
 - B. Reduce users to administrators, supervisors, detectives and dispatchers only.**
 - C. Reduce users to administrators, supervisors and detectives only.
 - D. Reduce users to administrators and supervisors only.
 - E. Reduce users to administrators and dispatchers only.

5) Restricting Flock use by Case Type

The reasons for Flock searches were tabulated and ranked by month and included in the packet as an attachment. Most of the top search reasons involved criminal offenses, but not necessarily felony-level offenses.

Currently, the policy restricts the use of the Flock system to use “for official and legitimate law enforcement business” and personnel are required to have “an articulable law enforcement reason to access and/or perform any query.” The following options exist to further restrict the reasons for conducting Flock searches:

- A. No change
- B. Require a minimum threshold of misdemeanor-level criminal investigation or a community caretaker function to conduct a Flock search.**
- C. Require a minimum threshold of felony-level criminal investigation or a community caretaker function to conduct a Flock search.

The question was also posed whether settings could be adjusted in order to reduce the capabilities of the Flock cameras. Upon consulting with Flock Safety, the representative’s reply was, “In general there are not standard user settings in the Flock system that are intended to “reduce the capabilities” of the cameras. They system is designed to operate in a way that supports the camera’s normal image capture and detection performance.”

PREVIOUS ACTIONS – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS (Dates, committees, action taken)
N/A

FINANCIAL IMPACT (If none, state N/A)
\$39,000 annually

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
N/A

ATTACHMENT(S) INCLUDED (If none, state N/A)
1. WPD Policy – ALPR 2. Flock Contract 2026-27 3. LPR Myths and Facts

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4. LPR FAQ
 5. Flock Safety Security Claims and Facts
 6. WPD Flock Case Examples
 7. WPD Communications Audio Transcription
 8. Monthly Reason for Search Rankings January – July
 9. Traffic Infraction case listing
 10. Flock Offense Search Categories
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