



Agenda Item: 11.C
Date of Meeting: June 22, 2026
Department: Police

STAFF REPORT

To: City Council
From: Nate Derr
Subject: **Discussion and Action Regarding the City's Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) Program and Flock Safety System**
Prepared On: June 16, 2026

Background/History:

The Bishop Police Department implemented the Flock Safety Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) system to assist with criminal investigations, recovery of stolen vehicles, identification of wanted suspects, and the investigation of crimes occurring within the City of Bishop and surrounding region.

The system consists of strategically placed ALPR cameras located along major transportation corridors and public roadways. Cameras are not located in residential neighborhoods and are not directed at private residences. The system captures license plate information and vehicle descriptors, including make, model, color, and distinguishing characteristics.

The City also operates traditional closed-circuit security cameras at the Tesla Lot and Talmage Park. These cameras are not ALPR cameras and are not connected to the Flock information-sharing network.

Since implementation, the Flock system has assisted in approximately 85 criminal investigations involving:

- Stolen vehicles
- Stolen license plates
- Theft investigations
- Vandalism investigations
- Drug trafficking investigations
- Wanted felony suspects
- Kidnapping

The Bishop Police Department currently serves as the primary law enforcement agency for the City of Bishop and relies upon modern technology to assist with criminal investigations and public safety efforts.

Analysis/Discussion:

Since concerns regarding the ALPR system were raised, City staff and Police Department personnel have undertaken significant public outreach efforts.

These efforts have included:

- Multiple public City Council meetings where the ALPR program was discussed.
- Publicly available ALPR policies and annual reports.
- A public meeting with concerned citizens held on June 10, 2026.
- Multiple individual meetings with concerned citizens.
- Demonstrations of the Flock system and explanation of how information is collected, stored, searched, and accessed.
- Discussions regarding privacy concerns, data retention, information sharing, and legal compliance.

Staff has worked extensively to answer questions and provide factual information regarding the operation of the system.

As part of the review process, staff requested and received additional information from Flock Safety regarding:

- Data storage practices
- Data transfer and encryption methods
- Cybersecurity protections
- Audit capabilities
- Artificial intelligence technologies utilized by the platform

Information provided by Flock Safety indicates that the system utilizes computer vision and machine-learning technologies to identify vehicle characteristics such as:

- License plate numbers
- Vehicle make
- Vehicle model
- Vehicle color
- Vehicle characteristics

The system does not utilize facial recognition technology.

Data is encrypted during transmission and storage and access is restricted to authorized personnel. User activity is logged and auditable.

The Bishop Police Department participates in the Flock Safety information-sharing network which allows authorized law enforcement agencies to share ALPR information for legitimate law enforcement purposes.

This information sharing assists agencies with:

- Locating stolen vehicles
- Identifying suspect vehicles
- Locating wanted persons
- Investigating crimes occurring across jurisdictional boundaries

The Bishop Police Department does not share live video feeds through the Flock network.

The Department's participation in information sharing has been conducted in compliance with California law, including Senate Bill 54 (SB 54).

During discussions with concerned citizens, staff offered and discussed several possible compromises, including:

- Disabling information sharing with outside agencies.
- Restricting information-sharing permissions.
- Reviewing camera locations.
- Reviewing retention periods.
- Reviewing and modifying policy language.

Staff advised concerned citizens that the City remains open to reviewing alternative technologies or vendors.

As of the date of this report, staff has not received a list of alternative vendors or alternative technological solutions for evaluation.

A primary concern raised during public discussions has been whether the City should continue utilizing a networked ALPR platform or move to traditional closed-circuit camera systems.

Traditional security cameras can be effective investigative tools. However, they typically require officers or investigators to manually review footage and identify relevant information. This process can be labor intensive and may delay investigations.

Modern ALPR technology uses automated analysis to rapidly identify vehicles associated with criminal activity and provides investigators with information in near real time.

The principal value of the Flock system is not solely the capture of license plate information but the ability to rapidly compare information across jurisdictions and provide investigative leads at modern technology speeds.

Criminal activity frequently crosses jurisdictional boundaries. Stolen vehicles, wanted persons, narcotics trafficking, organized theft rings, and other criminal activity routinely move between cities and counties.

The Flock network allows agencies to identify those connections quickly and efficiently.

California law enforcement history provides several examples demonstrating the importance of information sharing between agencies.

One of the most notable examples is the investigation of the Golden State Killer. Crimes were committed across multiple jurisdictions over many years and were investigated by numerous agencies. Investigators later determined that connecting information from multiple jurisdictions was critical to ultimately identifying the suspect.

Similarly, statewide systems for missing persons, child abductions, auto theft investigations, and organized retail theft investigations have been expanded because criminal activity frequently crosses jurisdictional boundaries.

Modern law enforcement information-sharing systems were developed in response to lessons learned from cases where critical information was not readily available to neighboring agencies.

The ability to share information quickly is now considered a standard law enforcement practice throughout California.

Automated License Plate Reader technology is currently utilized by neighboring cities, counties, and law enforcement agencies throughout the Eastern Sierra region and California.

If the City of Bishop were to discontinue ALPR technology entirely, the Bishop Police Department would become the only local law enforcement agency in the immediate region not utilizing this investigative tool.

Impacts to Council Goals and Strategic Planning Priorities:

Having this ALPR system aligns with the City of Bishop Strategic plan Objectives:

4.2- Support a connected and engaged community where all residents feel represented and informed.

4.6- Investing in modernizing business functions and streamlining processes.

5.3 Continue to address crime trends through strategic operations and address crime rates through proactive law enforcement and innovative police practices.

Budget Impacts:

The City has invested roughly \$200,000 in the Flock Safety system and associated public safety camera infrastructure.

Should the City elect to discontinue the system, the City would not realize the full value of this investment and may incur additional costs associated with removal, replacement, or procurement of alternative technology.

Legal Review:

City Attorney Pucci has reviewed this item and finds it complies with the law.

Recommended Action:

Conduct a discussion regarding the City's Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) Program

and provide direction to staff to:

1. Continue utilizing the current Flock Safety ALPR system;
2. Direct staff to solicit proposals from alternative vendors for consideration;
3. Discontinue the use of ALPR technology within the City of Bishop.

Approved By: Ethan Aukee 6/16/2026

Approved By: Robin Picken 6/16/2026

Approved By: Dean Pucci 6/18/2026

Approved By: Pam Foster 6/18/2026