

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****April 4, 2023**

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SUBJECT: FLOCK SAFETY CAMERAS

This purpose of this informal report is to provide information about Flock Safety cameras, how they are funded, and how the Fort Worth Police Department uses them. Flock Safety is a company that builds both hardware and software designed to prevent and control crime. The general concept is to use cameras and other technology as an eyewitness and thereby to provide leads for law enforcement investigations.

Flock cameras are fixed cameras that are focused upon lanes of traffic. The camera captures the characters of the license plate passing through its field of view. The characters are then processed through an algorithm to determine the license plate number and licensing state. That information is then checked against a list or database of vehicles that are wanted for a law enforcement purpose. If a vehicle is identified as wanted on the list, an alert is sent to members on the account for potential law enforcement actions. Flock cameras are monitored by the Real Time Crime Center (RTCC) for vehicles that are stolen, wanted for warrants, or suspected in an on-going investigation. Additionally, the information is used to identify vehicles passing through the cameras that are suspects in reported crimes from active, nearby incidents.

Flock cameras and supporting software/maintenance have been funded through several sources. The associated funding source has depended upon how these resources will be deployed. Funds include the General Fund, the Crime Control and Prevention District (CCPD), the Municipal Airports Fund, and Public Improvement Districts.

The Fort Worth Police Department has approximately 170 Flock cameras. The Department also has access to private company/entity Flock cameras that are located in and around the City of Fort Worth. Some of these cameras are purchased by private businesses, homeowner associations, and neighboring cities that share access with the Police Department. Access is granted to the Department from the owners of these cameras.

In a recent 12-week period, RTCC logged 2,698 investigations and 370 of those investigations were generated through the use of the Flock camera system. A significant amount of our violent crime arrests and investigative leads can be attributed to personnel in the RTCC providing information to the field by leveraging technology like pan/tilt/zoom cameras, traffic cameras, and Flock Safety cameras. Investigators using Flock Safety cameras see increased efficiency and better case management by following up with leads that are objectively generated by the camera system. In the field, first responders often locate and identify specific offenders using Flock Safety, which leads to faster arrests and unbiased evidence for stronger prosecution.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Deputy Chief David Carabajal at david.carabajal@fortworthtexas.gov or 817-392-4311.

David Cooke
City Manager