



Meeting Date: January 27, 2026

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA SUMMARY

City of Mill Creek, Washington

AGENDA ITEM: FLOCK PROGRAM UPDATE

KEY FACTS AND INFORMATION SUMMARY:

Council will receive an informational presentation consisting of frequently asked questions (FAQs) regarding Flock Safety's automated license plate recognition (ALPR) technology. The presentation is intended to address common community questions related to the system, what network procedures are in place, legal considerations, and the Police Department's commitment to utilizing best practices related to ALPR technology.

Additional topics will include data retention periods, access controls, system security, and auditing practices designed to safeguard information.

The Department will also provide examples of Flock Safety's impact on public safety in Mill Creek, as well as some basic statistics.

ATTACHMENTS:

[Flock PowerPointe-2026v3](#)

Respectfully Submitted:

Martin Yamamoto

City Manager



Flock Safety

Jan. 27, 2026

Timeline



- In 2023 interest in Flock Safety grows in public safety community and Chief is asked to obtain information to present to Council.
- In April of 2024, Flock Safety was presented to City Council during regular meeting and approved for implementation.
- In Nov. 2024, MCPD enters a two-year service agreement with Flock Safety. Shortly after, the planning and permitting process for automated license plate readers (ALPR) camera deployment began.
- Flock Safety installed the first camera in Mill Creek on Sept. 29, 2025. Based on the service agreement, the two-year term of the service agreement starts on this date.

What is Flock Safety



- Camera network: Flock Safety installs and maintains a network of ALPR cameras throughout the City of Mill Creek.
- Data collection: Cameras capture real time license plate information, which is sent to an encrypted cloud storage with an established retention period.
- Integration with law enforcement: License plate data is then shared with existing law enforcement databases, such as the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), to detect current Law Enforcement Status (stolen vehicles, stolen plates, warrants, or missing persons).
- Crime solving: By providing a database of license plate information, the ALPR system helps police solve crimes faster by identifying vehicles with associated Law Enforcement Status.

Mill Creek Flock Safety data is not shared with any local or state law enforcement agency outside Snohomish County, or any federal law enforcement agency.

Per the Mill Creek Police Department Policy (Policy #461) and the departments “Data Sharing Agreement”, the system is not to be utilized for immigration enforcement.

On Oct. 1, 2025, two days after camera install, Mill Creek disabled the "National Lookup" option to prevent unvetted access. This option was reported to have been utilized by federal agencies previously, but DHS accounts were closed on or before Aug. 25, 2025.

Organizations requesting access to the Mill Creek Flock network must complete a “Data Sharing Agreement” verifying compliance with the following criteria.

- 1. ALPR tech is not utilized for immigration enforcement.*
- 2. Investigations must have a clearly articulated nexus to criminal activity.*
- 3. Shall not be used for sole purpose of monitoring movement or harassment.*
- 4. Provide Indemnity, which hold harmless the City of Mill Creek, its officers, employees, and agents, and process and defend at its own expense any and all claims, demands, suits at law or equity, actions, penalties, losses, damages, or costs of whatsoever kind (“claims”) brought against The City of Mill Creek arising out of or in connection with the Agreement.*

Mill Creek PD currently shares Flock Safety data with three agencies in Snohomish County, all of which have completed and signed Data Sharing Agreements, per operating procedures.

- Everett Police Department
- Lake Stevens Police Department
- Mukilteo Police Department



Fourth Amendment:

- **The Virginia Court of Appeals and Circuit Courts (Ninth & Eleventh)** Previous rulings from these courts have widely agreed that fixed-location ALPRs do not violate the Fourth Amendment because license plates are in plain view in public.



Public Records:

- **Pierce County (Jose Rodriguez v. City of Lakewood).** Courts decision holds that LPR data is exempt from disclosure under Washington's Public Records Act (PRA). Sites similarity to traffic enforcement cameras and their exemption from PRA.
- **Skagit County (Jose Rodriguez v. City on Sedro-Wolley and City of Stanwood).** Courts decision is under appeal. Superior Court ruled that ALPR data is not exempt from disclosure.

2026 Legislative Session (SB 6002 & HB 2332) – Companion Bills from Senate and House:

- Agencies must register with the Attorney General Office
- Meets legislative requirements and training
- Restricts data sharing to aid in investigation of immigration or protected health care
- 21-day retention on ALPR data
- Annual reporting requirements
- Not subject to PRA disclosure
 - ALPR data is exempt from public records disclosure except for bona fide research* and does not contain individually identifiable information, research is defined as;

*Research - A planned and systematic sociological, psychological, epidemiological, biomedical, or other scientific investigation carried out by a state agency, by a scientific research professional associated with a bona fide scientific research organization or by a graduate student currently enrolled in an advanced academic degree curriculum, with an objective to contribute to scientific knowledge.....

Common Questions



Are residents being tracked?

The system is vehicle-based, not person-based. It does not track individuals or monitor daily activities. The system does not provide sufficient data to establish the current location of a vehicle.

How is data protected?

Flock Safety data is:

- Encrypted in transit and at rest

- Stored securely in compliance with industry standards

- Accessible only to authorized users

Common Questions



Can law enforcement access data without city approval?

Flock Safety data sharing with law enforcement follows formal agreements and policies, and access is logged and auditable.

How long is data retained?

ALPR data retention is set by the city, **currently 24 hours**, unless needed for an active investigation.

Is data sold or shared with third parties?

Flock Safety does not sell data or use it for advertising.

Common Questions



Are Flock cameras legal?

License plate recognition technology is legal and widely used across the United States. The city complies with all applicable state and local laws.

Does this violate privacy or constitutional rights?

The cameras capture license plate data which are visible in public spaces. Courts have consistently ruled there is no reasonable expectation of privacy for license plates displayed in public.



Common Questions

Are there safeguards against misuse?

Safeguards include:

- Written acceptable-use policies
- User access controls
- Multifactor authentication access
- Audit logs of every search
- Disciplinary consequences for misuse



Common Questions



What types of crimes do these cameras help solve?

ALPR data assist in investigations involving:

- Stolen vehicles and license plates
- Warrants
- Theft/Fraud
- Burglaries
- Robberies
- Assaults/Domestic Violence
- Homicide
- Amber and Silver Alerts
- Missing persons cases



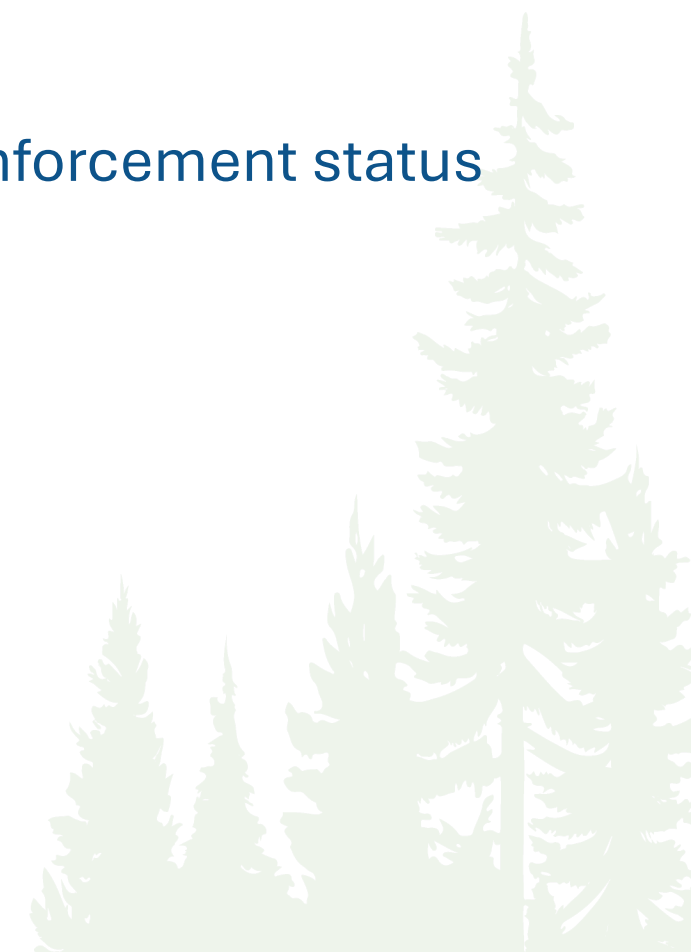
Common Questions



Do these cameras reduce crime?

While cameras alone do not prevent all crime, they:

- Provide real time notification when vehicles with law enforcement status are identified.
- Improve investigation efficiency
- Increase case clearance rates
- Help recover stolen vehicles and plates more quickly
- Act as a deterrent in some cases



Common Questions



Will Flock camera data be used for immigration enforcement?

Consistent with Washington's Keep Washington Working Act (RCW 49.74):

The City does not use Flock Safety cameras for civil immigration enforcement. Data is not shared with ICE or CBP for immigration enforcement purposes. Immigration status is not monitored, inferred, or investigated.

Are residents' movements being monitored for immigration purposes?

The system is vehicle-based, not person-based, and is not used to track individuals or communities.

Can federal immigration agencies request access to the data?

The City will:

- Deny voluntary requests related to civil immigration enforcement.
- Review all requests for legal compliance and purpose.
- Require a judicial warrant or court order for any data request, as required by law.

Could Flock camera data be used to track people seeking reproductive healthcare?

The City will not use, allow, or share Flock Safety data to:

- Identify individuals seeking reproductive or gender-affirming healthcare
- Support investigations related to lawful reproductive healthcare services
- Assist out-of-state requests that conflict with Washington law

Common Questions



How does this align with Washington law?

Washington State has strong protections for reproductive healthcare privacy, including laws that:

- Protect patients and providers from out-of-state enforcement actions.
- Limit cooperation with investigations related to lawful reproductive care.
- The City's policies prohibit use of LPR data in any manner that would undermine these protections.

Mill Creek Commitment



- Maintaining public trust through transparency and accountability is vital to the successful use of Flock Safety.
- The mission of the MCPD is to provide professional police services to the community we serve. This mission commits our agency to upholding Washington State law and our community values. Our agency will make every effort to ensure responsible use of the technology leveraged to aid us in our mission.
- MCPD is working with Flock to develop a public-facing web portal. Once completed, this portal will provide residents with accessible information about the system's use in Mill Creek.

Transparency



The Mill Creek Police Department's Transparency Portal is a public facing online platform designed to provide community members with a clear understanding of how the department utilizes ALPR technology from Flock Safety to further its mission, *“To provide professional police services to the community we serve.”*

The portal serves as a central hub for accountability and trust building, allowing residents to review the following information regarding the department's use of Flock.

<https://transparency.flocksafety.com/mill-creek-wa-pd>

Transparency

Policies

What Is Flock Safety?

Camera network: Flock Safety installs and maintains a network of ALPR cameras throughout the City of Mill Creek.

Data collection: Cameras capture license plate information, which is sent to an encrypted cloud storage with an established retention period.



Integration with law enforcement: License plate data is then shared with existing law enforcement databases, such as the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), to detect current Law Enforcement Status (stolen vehicles, stolen plates, warrants, or missing persons).

Crime solving: By providing a database of license plate information, the ALPR system helps police solve crimes faster by identifying vehicles with associated Law Enforcement Status. .

Usage



Data retention (in days)

1 day



Number of LPR and other cameras

18



Organizations granted access to Mill Creek WA PD data

Everett (WA) Police Department, Lake Stevens WA PD, Mukilteo WA PD



Hotlists Alerted On

NCIC, NCMEC Amber Alert



Unique vehicles detected in the last 30 days

17,770

Transparency



Acceptable Use Policy

Data is used for law enforcement purposes only. Data is owned by Mill Creek WA PD and is never sold to 3rd parties.

Prohibited Uses

ALPR technology and data shall not be used for the sole purpose of immigration enforcement.

Without another clearly articulated nexus to activity that is or would be criminal in Washington State, ALPR technology and data shall not be used to specifically target or track the movement of vehicles traveling to or from healthcare facilities, including but not limited to hospitals, clinics, mental health providers, and reproductive health care centers. This restriction applies irrespective of the vehicle's origin, destination, or the medical services sought by the individuals.



ALPR technology and data shall not be used for the sole purpose of monitoring individual or expressive activities protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

ALPR technology and data shall not be used for personal use, harassment, and any other usages that are inconsistent with the Mill Creek Police Department's policy.



Hotlist hits in the last 30 days

200



Searches in the last 30 days

46



Access Policy

All system access requires a valid reason and is stored indefinitely.



Hotlist Policy

Hotlist hits are required to be officer verified prior to action.



Transparency

What Flock Safety is Not

A traffic enforcement tool: The cameras are not traffic cameras, do not detect speeding, and cannot issue tickets for traffic infractions.

A facial recognition system: The technology does not have facial recognition capabilities and does not capture biometric information.



An immigration enforcement tool: Per the Mill Creek Police Department Policy and Data Sharing Agreement, the system is not to be utilized for immigration enforcement (see Prohibited use).

An unlimited law enforcement data source: The system has network authorizations which allow agencies the ability to allow or prevent sharing with Federal, State, or local agencies (see Organizations granted access to MCPD data).



Hotlist hits in the last 30 days

200



Searches in the last 30 days

46

Successes



Burglary:

Flock camera search identified a vehicle license plate associated with a theft of over 100K worth of tools and parts from a public entity. The Flock search assisted in the investigation which led to the suspect's arrest.

Stolen Vehicle:

Flock alert for a stolen vehicle. Officers located the stolen vehicle and were able to apprehend the driver and passenger.

Stolen Vehicle/Stolen Firearm:

Flock hit on stolen vehicle. Two subject arrested from the vehicle. Firearm found inside vehicle was reported stolen. Driver was a convicted felon.

Organized Retail Theft :

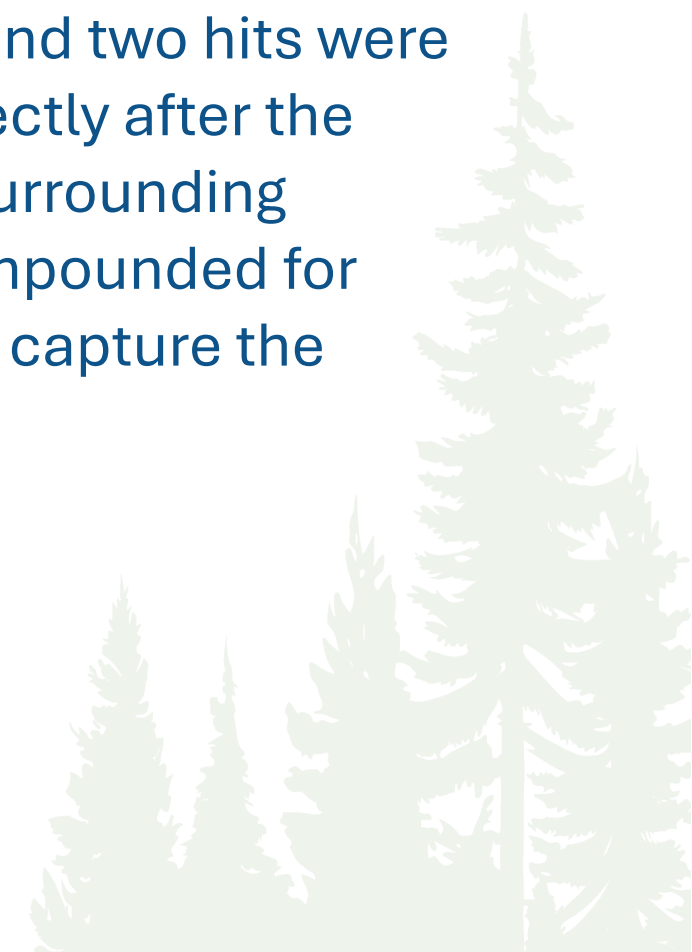
The Investigations Unit was contacted about a Bothell PD investigation where two subjects were stealing hot water tanks. A check of the suspects license plate through Flock associated the suspect vehicle to additional Mill Creek incidents, which resulted in the subjects being arrested.

Assault 1/Burglary:

Lynnwood PD case - Assault 1 and Burglary 1, three subjects, three separate vehicles, one captured on Flock at 132/10th. Found two vehicles at apartment complex, third around the corner. Without Flock we would not have known all three were in the area.

Assault 1:

Flock was searched within time and proximity of the crime and two hits were located for one vehicle coming into the area and leaving directly after the incident. A license plate was obtained, a BOLO put out to surrounding agencies. The vehicle was located abandoned in SNOCO, impounded for DNA testing and fingerprints. Other video in the area did not capture the license plate.



FLOCK SAFETY STATS TO DATE

Flock Related Incidents: 66

Arrests: 56

Stolen Vehicle/Plate Recovery: 2

Investigative Leads: 7

Pending Investigation : 1



QUESTIONS

