

REINSTATING \$80,000 IN THE 2026 OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE DANE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR AN AUTOMATED LICENSE PLATE READER SYSTEM WITH ENHANCED PRIVACY, SECURITY, TRANSPARENCY, AND DATA CONTROL SAFEGUARDS

The use of Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) technology raises important concerns regarding privacy, data retention, public accountability, and potential misuse of information. It is the Dane County Board's intent that any consideration of ALPR technology for future implementation must ensure that the technology upholds the highest standards of data security, transparency, and accountability to maintain public trust while simultaneously supporting the public safety needs of the Dane County Sheriff's Office (DCSO), including assisting in investigations, locating stolen vehicles, and enhancing response capabilities.

From 2023 through March 2026, DCSO used ALPR technology to assist in 18 arrests, 12 recovered stolen vehicles, and one drug investigation. Overall, there have been at least 14 missing person-related cases in which ALPR technology was utilized for investigative purposes. These included four Silver Alerts, 12 missing or endangered person cases (one involving a juvenile), and two other missing person cases. Only two of these cases remain unresolved; the other 12 individuals were located. ALPR technology has helped DCSO with two homicide investigations in 2025 and another homicide investigation from a neighboring jurisdiction in 2024. In those cases, it supported both the investigative process and DCSO's ability to help provide the victims' families with some measure of closure. Over the past three years, the ALPR network also helped DCSO and partner agencies safely locate missing or endangered persons and identify and apprehend individuals with felony warrants. It has also been useful in routine cases, such as identifying a work truck after tools worth several thousand dollars fell onto a county highway; the vehicle was located, and the tools were recovered and returned.

In March 2026, DCSO assisted the Wisconsin State Patrol in identifying a vehicle involved in a road rage incident that resulted in a fatal crash. A search of the ALPR system using vehicle descriptors and license plate information, limited to a 10-minute timeframe on the date of the incident and a specific state highway, helped investigators identify and locate the suspect driver and led to an arrest. The technology is important both in major investigations and in day-to-day efforts to develop leads quickly and use deputy time more efficiently and support public safety measures.

The Board supports the use of an ALPR system that incorporates maximum privacy and security controls, including strict limitations on data access, retention, and sharing. It is further the intent of the Board that all data collected through such a system remain under the full ownership and control of the Dane County Sheriff's Office, without unauthorized third-party access and complete, transparent documentation when access is granted.

44 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Dane County Board of Supervisors
45 reinstates \$80,000 in the 2026 Operating Budget for the Dane County Sheriff's Office,
46 creating 2026 Dane County Operating Budget line SHRFSUP NEW "Automatic License
47 Plate Reader" and allocating the \$80,000 to this line for the purchase and
48 implementation of an Automatic License Plate Reader system, subject to the contract
49 conditions set forth herein.

50
51 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Dane County Sheriff's Office is requested to
52 conduct a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process for the selection of an
53 ALPR system vendor.

54
55 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that prior to issuance of an RFP, a draft of the RFP is
56 requested to be presented to the Public Protection & Judiciary Committee for public
57 notice and input.

58
59 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the contract for any ALPR system shall include all of
60 the following requirements:

- 61 1) Independent, third-party auditing of the system's privacy and security protections
62 and disclosure of audit findings;
- 63 2) Exclusive ownership, control, and management of all collected data by the Dane
64 County Sheriff's Office, with detailed public reporting on the access to data, to
65 ensure that no third party has independent rights to access, use, retain, sell, or
66 share the data outside of DCSO authorization and applicable law;
- 67 3) Strict data retention limits and clearly defined deletion policies;
- 68 4) Restricted user access controls and comprehensive audit logging;
- 69 5) Prohibition on unauthorized data sharing, sale, or external access;
- 70 6) Strict documented limitations on the collection and retention of non-license-plate
71 imagery.
- 72 7) Compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws;
- 73 8) Public transparency measures, including public disclosure of a clear DCSO
74 policy on data use and annual reporting to the Public Protection & Judiciary
75 Committee.

76 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Dane County Sheriff's Office is requested to
77 provide an annual report to the Public Protection & Judiciary Committee on the
78 program's implementation, including adopted policies and safeguards to ensure
79 transparency, and on the effectiveness of the ALPR system in supporting DCSO's
80 public safety efforts.