

**AMENDING THE 2026 OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE DANE COUNTY SHERIFF'S
OFFICE TO REMOVE FUNDING FOR THE USE OF THE FLOCK AUTOMATIC LICENSE
PLATE READER SYSTEM**

Use of Flock cameras, which are equipped with AI-powered automatic license plate reader (ALPR) technology, is on the rise nationwide. The cameras take pictures of passing vehicles, storing them for up to 30 days in a database that organizes the images based on identifiable license plates and vehicle descriptions. Through a feature called “National Lookup,” law enforcement agencies that subscribe to Flock can search for license plates across the network, including cameras installed by other law enforcement agencies, homeowners’ associations, and private businesses.

Serious and increasing concerns are being raised by Dane County residents, Wisconsin state legislators, and privacy experts about reported and verified abuses across the nation of the data gathered from these ALPR systems, as well as about their potential for new forms of misuse and their vulnerability to hacking. The Electronic Frontier Foundation reports that public records searches by technology journalists have revealed thousands of national and statewide lookups by law enforcement agencies done either at the behest of the federal government or as an 'informal' favor to federal law enforcement. A study by the University of Washington Center for Human Rights found that audits of the Flock systems have revealed apparent “back door” access by U.S. Border Patrol to the networks of at least ten law enforcement departments in the State of Washington alone. Informal data-sharing using these ALPR systems creates an end-run around oversight and accountability measures and allows federal agencies to access local surveillance networks without the transparency and legal constraints that would apply to direct federal contracts.

While supporters of ALPR technology argue that it plays a critical role in modern policing, experts monitoring this technology indicate that the opportunity for abuse of these systems by parties outside of Dane County law enforcement—and without the knowledge or permission of Dane County law enforcement—has the potential to undermine the human and civil rights that Dane County has committed itself to upholding.

The 2026 budget includes a total of \$80,000 for the Dane County Sheriff's Office to fund an annual subscription to the Flock automatic license plate reader system. The current subscription runs through May 31, 2026.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the 2026 Dane County Operating Budget line SHRFSUP 31132 “Hardware and Software Maintenance” be reduced by \$80,000 to remove funding for the Flock camera system.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Dane County Board of Supervisors does hereby prohibit any further expenditures for the Flock automatic license plate reader system by the Dane County Sheriff's Office.