



November 16, 2022

Public Comment Re: Agenda Item 22, Flock Cameras

Dear Mayor and City Councilmembers:

The City of South Pasadena should not move forward with leasing the Flock Camera Systems.

The City has not identified which performance metric will be enhanced by this ongoing expense. Our resources should be spent on targeting specific problems – not on ‘solutions’ to problems that lack empirical evidence.

Chief Solinsky has advertised the value of this system based on the fact that “San Marino has seen a 50% reduction in commercial burglaries after installing these systems.” As most of you already know, correlation is not causation. And did you know that prior to the installation of the flock camera systems San Marino experienced 6 commercial burglaries? Yes folks, and ongoing cost of \$30,000/year to allegedly prevent three crimes that are covered by insurance. **Doesn’t make a lot of sense financially.**

What the Public Safety Commission and City Council have not discussed is the danger these systems present to our neighborhood. The comings and goings of our residents is private. It is not meant to be broadly disseminated through a private company’s database over which South Pasadena’s citizens have no oversight. That is one of the reasons why other cities have rejected these systems.

That is why organization such as the American Civil Liberties Union and the Electronic Freedom Foundation firmly oppose and reject these systems.

These systems also have the problem of false positives – this has led to Police stopping a Black family at gun point, having them lay on the ground – including their six- and eight-year-old children. Why would we erroneously divert police resources and cause harm to innocent people? **That does not make sense.**

The Commissioners and electeds have not considered the fact that abortion rights activists are alarmed and object to Flock Camera Systems. Yes folks, the systems used in a state where abortion is legal share the data with police in a state where abortion is illegal. Again the data belongs to Flock, and Flock can use it as its executives see fit.

The Council should exercise its due diligence, and reject this system. Look beyond the marketing. If a thorough review of this system were conducted it would not be implemented.

There are few things worse than a false sense of security. Rolling out a Flock System is going to waste money and time that could be spent finding real solutions to issues our city faces.

Resources:

- <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/06/how-expanding-web-of-license-plate-readers-could-be-weaponized-against-abortion>
- <https://www.aclu.org/en/news/aclu-statement-rejection-flock-safety-surveillance-cameras-portsmouth-town-council>
- <https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2020/09/flock-license-plate-reader-homeowners-association-safe-problems>

Sincerely,

Care First South Pasadena