Resolution #4-R-26
A Resolution Directing the Revocation and Cessation of the Use of Automated License Plate Reader Cameras Within the City of Appleton

Date: May 6, 2026
Submitted By: Alderperson Wolff – District 12
Referred To: Mayor's Office

Resolution Summary: This resolution would remove access to ALPR cameras in the city of Appleton.

WHEREAS, the City of Appleton currently employs Flock Safety automated license plate readers (ALPRs) on public rights-of-way; and

WHEREAS, the Dane County Board of Supervisors voted on April 16, 2026, to remove funding for the Flock system, with County Board Chair Patrick Miles citing "well-documented concerns about how this company operates and uses its technology to violate people's 4th Amendment rights," and Supervisor Chad Kemp noting the Sheriff's Office cannot confirm that agencies with data access are not misusing information; and

WHEREAS, the Dane County resolution highlighted that data-sharing agreements allowed access to information gathered on county roads by over 140 law enforcement agencies across multiple states, enabling potential misuse that bypasses local oversight; and

WHEREAS, the Sturgeon Bay Common Council voted to discontinue its Flock camera contract, with residents successfully challenging the system due to trust issues surrounding surveillance and concerns about how data "could be in the wrong hands and who knows how it can be abused"; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oshkosh rescinded its Flock contract on April 22, 2026, after the Oshkosh Police Department chief reported that information received from Flock representatives was "inconsistent with certain statements made... during the Common Council meeting" regarding vehicle movement tracking and federal data sharing; and

WHEREAS, a Menasha police officer residing in Appleton was charged in January 2026 with felony misconduct in public office for allegedly using the Flock system to track his ex-girlfriend's vehicle while off-duty, making unauthorized searches without a valid case number from his personal phone and later claiming "desperation and bad judgment" ; and

WHEREAS, a Milwaukee Police Department officer was charged in February 2026 with misconduct in public office after an audit revealed he had searched for the license plates of a woman he was dating and her ex-boyfriend more than 170 times over a two-month period, logging the searches under the vague rationale of "investigation" despite no active investigation existing ; and

WHEREAS, the ACLU of Wisconsin has documented that Flock technology “scans and stores license plate data to track countless drivers every day without their knowledge or a warrant,” and in response to the Milwaukee case stated that these incidents are not isolated but exemplify “just how easily Flock cameras can be turned against the very people the technology purports to protect” ; and

WHEREAS, the ACLU further noted that law enforcement using taxpayer-funded tools to conduct “private surveillance… to spy on women they have a romantic interest in” represents a growing national pattern of abuse ; and

WHEREAS, such mass surveillance infrastructure has been documented as accessible to federal immigration enforcement and other agencies in ways that erode civil liberties protections for all residents; and

WHEREAS, this Council finds that even with departmental audits, the inherent authority and access granted to system users enables serious, repeat invasions of privacy; the documented criminal misuse of taxpayer-funded surveillance tools in neighboring municipalities makes it impossible to guarantee with absolute certainty that such abuse will not occur in Appleton.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Common Council of the City of Appleton as follows:

The City of Appleton Police Department is hereby directed to immediately revoke and cease the use of all automated license plate reader cameras, regardless of the vendor or manufacturer, and terminate any contractual relationship with any ALPR provider at the earliest legally permissible date. No future municipal funds shall be allocated or expended for the subscription, maintenance, or renewal of any ALPR system.