



I am here tonight to express my concern and disapproval of the somewhat secret installation of the Flock Safety Systems automatic license plate readers at three locations in town. These cameras are more than just license plate readers and were apparently installed without any public input. They are an invasion of privacy.

The cameras are not owned by the town or the police department. They are owned by Flock Safety Systems with data being provided by subscription to the Rangely Police Department. But that is not all. The data is also shared with third parties who merge the data from the cameras with data from other databases. It is not only license plate data either. Each time a vehicle passes one of the cameras the AI driven system captures the license plate number, the vehicle's make model and color, other descriptors such as words on bumper stickers, body damage, and of course the time, date and location of the vehicle. This can lead to profiling. For example, a bumper sticker might indicate an individual's political leanings, an individual's religion, or the school to which an individual's children attend.

Data is collected and added to the cloud based searchable database from every vehicle that passes the camera. If the license plate is found on any of a number of so called "Hot Lists" the police are notified of the "wanted" vehicle. The company claims that the data is only retained for 30 days. But since the data is in the cloud, anyone with access – including hackers – can save the data in their own database indefinitely so long as it is gathered from the cloud within the 30 day period. Here again is the problem: Neither the police or anyone else have any business collecting and storing information about any individual not suspected of criminal activity, without any probable cause or without a warrant.

In the packet of material I will provide to each of you please take the time to read why this insidious invasion of privacy should be of concern to everyone. There are already a number of lawsuits working their way through the courts, not only against Flock, but against the cities that have deployed the cameras without public approval. After your own investigation, I would ask for a resolution to order the termination of the contract with Flock Safety Systems and have the cameras immediately disabled. At the very least hold a public meeting where the issue can be discussed.

The public is largely unaware that such a surveillance system has been installed in Rangely and therefore no public outcry. Each person that I have informed is first surprised and then outraged. The automatic license plate readers are not serving the public, and if I may remind you, serving the public is the business of the Town Council. While capturing criminals in Rangely is important and done very well by our Police Department, capturing criminals passing through the town, not so much if it is at the expense of our personal privacy and at the expense of town resources. The town of Auroa paid 1.9 million dollars to a family terrorized by police when the system incorrectly identified the car they were driving as stolen.

Finally, the state of Colorado has enacted privacy laws. In part the law states that a person must opt-in to have their personal data collected and shared. It remains to be seen if providing this to the cloud where it is merged with personally identifiable data would constitute a violation of Colorado law.

In the future this technology will become the tool of tyrants. Before this big brother technology is used, there must be consent by the informed public – Again, I would suggest holding a public meeting to discuss the pros and cons of this issue.