



CITY OF FORT WAYNE

SHARON TUCKER, MAYOR

Police Department • Paul Smith, Police Chief

Since being appointed Chief of the Fort Wayne Police Department earlier this year, I have been committed to transparency regarding our use of Flock License Plate Reader technology. I want to continue that transparency today by explaining both the decision we have made and how we arrived at it.

Following City Council's vote not to approve the proposed Flock contract, I briefly considered whether a smaller contract could allow the department to retain a limited number of cameras. One of the factors we needed to consider was our obligation under the federal grant that initially funded this program.

That issue has now been resolved. The federal government has authorized the Fort Wayne Police Department to close the grant early without penalty or jeopardizing our eligibility for future grant funding.

I continue to believe Flock has value as an investigative tool. Our officers and detectives have used this technology to develop investigative leads, locate vehicles associated with criminal activity, recover stolen vehicles, locate missing people, and assist in serious criminal investigations.

However, effective policing requires more than technology. It requires the trust and confidence of the community we serve.

After careful consideration and discussions with Mayor Tucker, it became clear to me that continuing the Flock program following City Council's decision carried the risk of damaging that trust. While we may not always agree on the value of a particular law-enforcement tool, the relationship between this department, our elected leaders, and the people of Fort Wayne is far more important than any single piece of technology.

For that reason, the decision was made to discontinue the Fort Wayne Police Department's use of Flock.

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As of today, FWPD's subscription with Flock Safety has been canceled and the system is offline. Our data-sharing relationships through the Flock platform have been terminated, and FWPD-controlled data stored within the Flock system has been deleted. Flock Safety will now begin the process of removing FWPD's cameras from locations throughout Fort Wayne.

I want to thank the members of City Council, Mayor Tucker, and the residents who participated in this discussion. I also want to make clear that our willingness to listen and adjust should not be interpreted as a retreat from our responsibility to protect this community.

The Fort Wayne Police Department remains fully committed to preventing crime, identifying those responsible when crimes occur, and providing our officers and detectives with lawful and effective tools to accomplish that mission.

Technology will change. Investigative tools will change. Our commitment to the safety of Fort Wayne and the trust of the people we serve will not.

Chief Paul Smith

Fort Wayne Police Department.

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