

MAYOR MAINTAINS THREE CONTRACTS WITH FLOCK SURVEILLANCE DESPITE PUBLIC COMMITMENTS TO CANCEL

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Solid State DSA

Solid State DSA calls on Bloomington's mayoral office to **comply** with City Council's existing decision to cancel all contracts with Flock Safety. In addition, we call on City Council to request a full audit of Flock-related contracts, communications, camera locations, searches, exports and uses over the last five years.

We also call on council to require that any future surveillance technology contract, including any non-ALPR or replacement camera contract, be disclosed publicly and approved by city council before it is signed.

Solid State DSA has presented city council members with a proposal that provides working draft language for legally binding ordinances addressing these contracts and associated issues.

Why this cannot wait

Mayor Kerry Thomson has **publicly committed** to removing Flock cameras and canceling the city's contracts with Flock Safety. The city has only partially delivered on this promise, and has failed to document this commitment. While some Flock ALPR cameras have apparently been removed, Bloomington residents have no way to verify that all cameras have been removed, that all contracts have been terminated, that no new cameras have been installed, and that no new surveillance contracts have been signed.

This lack of transparency is not a paperwork issue. It is a serious case of **obfuscation** to both City Council and Bloomington residents. Surveillance systems track where people drive, whether they can seek life-affirming medical care, organize politically, or live without fear of immigration enforcement. Bloomington residents have a right to transparency about systems that directly affect them.

In March 2026, after substantial public input and work by groups including Solid State DSA, Bloomington City Council unanimously passed a resolution calling for the cancellation of Flock Safety contracts and greater oversight of the city's ability to contract surveillance technology firms. In response, the administration said it was transitioning away from Flock. The records and statements now available tell a different story.

What public records show

Thanks to public records requests and public comments, we know the following:

- **The contracts.** There are **four** known Flock contracts. City officials have repeatedly spoken as if there were a single Flock contract, but there is not. The known materials include contracts for Flock ALPR services, a mobile trailer camera system, and related Flock services (e.g., audio surveillance, software). We can account for some cameras associated with one contract being taken down. We cannot account for the status of every contract, every camera, every trailer, every device, or every possible replacement system. The city has contracts that do not expire until 2027, and no Flock contract produced through public records requests appears to have expired on March 5th, 2026, contrary to public statements by Mayor Thompson.
- **The March 5th claim.** In an April 15th press release response to the Council resolution, Mayor Thomson announced "that the City's contract for Flock LPR services expired on March 5, 2026" and that it was not renewed ("City of Bloomington Transitions

Away from Flock Use After Months-Long Evaluation”). That statement does not match the contracts obtained through public records requests. At most, one of four known contracts was non-renewed.

- **The transition period.** In an April 15th memo to City Council, “Flock Contract Non-Renewal and Interim Safeguards”, Mayor Thomson wrote that “The [Flock] system is expected to remain temporarily active during the transition period.” The memo also said, “Access to Flock data will be limited to Bloomington Police Department personnel only. There will be no outside data sharing”. No additional information was provided about when the transition period began, when it would end, whether it has ended, or whether replacement cameras or contracts are considered.
- **The June 1 removal deadline.** The administration has committed to removing Flock cameras by June 1st. We still do not have written documentation showing that every Flock camera was removed by that date, that no Flock device remains active, or that replacement ALPR systems have not been installed.
- **The remaining contracts.** In his April 22nd in-person address to City Council, Bloomington Police Chief Mike Diekhoff said the city was still trying to get out of the other contracts:

“the license plate reader contract expired and so that one has not been renewed. And we are still working through the process of ending the other contracts. But the LPR system just ended so that, that will go away this weekend. The other contracts we still have to terminate. And that is a legal process that I am not going to comment on, I will let the attorneys talk about that.”

Presumably, the department and the Mayor's Office have been trying to resolve this since March 5th, when the mayor says the city's Flock contract expired and she decided not to renew it. But the contracts (requested through the public record) show multiple Flock agreements, none of which appear to expire on March 5th, and some of which **do not expire until 2027**.

Why to these statements and public records not match?

Why this matters

Flock's centralized surveillance model

Flock Safety Inc. provides AI-enabled cameras that record license plates and vehicle details. Their cameras are commonly referred to as ALPRs, or automated license plate readers, but also include a suite of other equipment and services. Video and photo footage goes to cloud-based storage controlled by Flock and accessible to whoever has contracted Flock Safety. Flock's primary customers are law enforcement agencies, but Flock cameras are available to anyone who can afford them. Deflock.org estimates 100,286 ALPRs nationwide.

The issue is not simply that cameras exist on Bloomington streets. Flock's business model centralizes vehicle-location information, stores it in cloud-based systems, and uses customer data and “anonymized” vehicle attributes to develop their services and sell them to other customers. By signing the contract, Bloomington has bought into that centralized data model, and lost ownership over our data.

There is also a grave concern that city officials do not understand the contract they signed with Flock. Mayor Thomson has stated that Flock “Search results show a still image and timestamp tied to a vehicle observation, not a personal identity profile”. In his April 22nd City Council memo, Chief Diekhoff wrote “LPR cameras only capture a photo of a vehicle's license plate as the vehicle passes. They do not create any type of association between resident activities or their daily lives”.

This is simply not true. The city's November 25th, 2024 contract with Flock describes the technology:

“Vehicle Fingerprint Technology(R) Patented proprietary machine vision to analyze vehicle license plate, state recognition, and vehicle attributes such as color, type, make and objects (roof rack, bumper stickers, etc.) based on image analytics (not car registration data).”

The “vehicle attributes such as color, type, make and objects (roof rack, bumper stickers, etc.) based on image analytics” are treated as “Anonymized (Anonymous) Data”. That data creates a vehicle fingerprint separate from any license plate or vehicle registration data. To call this data anonymous is misleading. There might be a thousand 2019 Toyota Corollas in Bloomington, but only one that is copper colored, has a roof rack that did not come from the factory, has one or more specific bumper stickers, and has a slight dent above the right rear tire. **Information about YOUR specific vehicle is what Flock gathers and sells to law enforcement and other customers.**

Flock emphasizes this capability in its contracts, including those with Bloomington:

“[Flock is the] Only LPR provider with “Visual Search,” which can transform digital images from any source into an investigative lead by finding matching vehicles based on the vehicle attributes in the uploaded photo.”

By signing the contract, Bloomington granted Flock a broad license to use and distribute our (not so anonymous) data:

“Anonymized Data. Flock shall have the right to collect, analyze, and anonymize Customer Data and Customer Generated Data.”

*“Customer hereby grants Flock a **non-exclusive, worldwide, perpetual, royalty-free right to use and distribute** such Anonymized Data to improve and enhance the Services and for other development, diagnostic and corrective purposes, and other Flock offerings. Parties understand that the aforementioned license is required for continuity of Services.”*

That language is why we demand an analysis of how the city's surrender of data may allow Flock to continue using Bloomington-derived vehicle data after the city's contracts with Flock ends.

Immigration, abortion, and officer-abuse risks

Has this information been used to nefarious ends? Flock cameras are controversial because surveillance data can be shared with ICE and other federal agencies. Public records requests by the ACLU in Massachusetts revealed that an administrator can share data with ICE and other police departments, including agencies in states seeking abortion-related data. In many cases, sharing is a default setting that police departments must opt out of (and often do not). Flock does not necessarily inform police departments of this when training them on the software.

In her April 15th press release, Mayor Thomson stated that, during the transition period, “Access to Flock data will be limited to Bloomington Police Department personnel only. There will be no outside data sharing”. She also stated that before this policy change, “data collected by Bloomington cameras was shared only with other Indiana law enforcement agencies”.

But the public cannot rely on this promise alone. The ACLU's Massachusetts public records request and audit found that police shared Flock surveillance data with 7,000 law enforcement agencies and organizations despite Massachusetts having passed “Shield Law” legislation that prohibited police from sharing data with ICE and federal immigration agencies. The Shield Law also prohibited providing information or assistance to out-of-state police in relation to abortion or gender-affirming care. The information became public because the police were subject to a full and comprehensive audit. That is why we demand a similar audit of the Mayor's Office and BPD for all Flock-related matters¹.

Indiana state law makes this even more problematic. Indiana SB-76 specifically prohibits local governments, state agencies, and public colleges from limiting or restricting the enforcement of federal immigration laws. Mayor Thomson is well aware of SB-76. That means Bloomington residents should not be asked to rely on informal promises that Flock data will not be used for immigration enforcement.²

The risk is not limited to federal data-sharing. An investigation by the Institute for Justice reported “police officers [are] using ALPR camera networks to keep tabs on their romantic interests, including current partners, exes, and even strangers who unwittingly caught their eye in public”. There is no evidence that members of BPD have engaged in this behavior. But the potential for abuse is clear, and only transparency measures such as an audit can rule it out.³

Law Enforcement Effectiveness

Both Mayor Thomson and Chief Diekhoff have claimed that ALPRs are crucial tools for law enforcement. But evidence from other cities raises questions about the value of this surveillance relative to its risks. As reported by the Electronic Frontier Foundation, the Austin, Texas, Police Department conducted 113 million ALPR scans that resulted in 165 arrests, a 0.145% success rate. Austin cancelled its Flock contract in 2025⁴.

Neither Mayor Thomson nor Chief Diekhoff has addressed the full concern about Flock cameras: not only where cameras are placed, but who can access the data, how it can be searched, what default data sharing is installed, and what Flock retains after Bloomington exits the contract. In his memo to City Council, Diekhoff stated: “They are not placed in any sensitive area that might involve reproductive health care services or locations used for religious observance, such as churches, mosques or temples”. That statement does not answer whether Flock cameras have been used, or could still be used, for federal immigration enforcement or out-of-state abortion investigations.

¹ <https://www.aclu.org/news/privacy-technology/flock-massachusetts-and-updates>

² <https://action.aclu.org/send-message/in-stop-sb-76>

³ <https://ij.org/police-have-reportedly-used-license-plate-readers-to-stalk-romantic-interests-at-least-14-times-in-recent-years>

⁴ <https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2025/06/victory-austin-organizers-cancel-citys-flock-alpr-contract>

The city also resisted releasing its Flock contracts. As highlighted in a February 1st article in the B Square Bulletin, “Flock trailer contract finally unredacted by Bloomington; ‘umbrella’ accord still missing” the city released an unredacted version of a contract for a mobile trailer camera system on January 27th, 2026, after six months of repeated requests. Previous public records requests produced heavily redacted versions of the same contract.⁵

What can we do about it?

City Council has the ability to pass legislation requiring the mayor to provide an audit of past and current actions regarding Flock contracts, communications, camera locations, and data use.

At a minimum, the audit should require:

- **Contracts:** all Flock contracts, amendments, scopes of work, invoices, purchase orders, renewal notices, non-renewal notices, cancellation notices, legal correspondence, and termination timelines.
- **Camera inventory:** every Flock device, mobile trailer, LPR/ALPR camera, and related camera system used by the city in the last five years; each location, installation date, active dates, deactivation date, physical removal date, and replacement status.
- **System access and searches:** all BPD, Mayor's Office, city, contractor, or vendor users with access; audit logs of searches, hits, exports, screenshots, police case uses, or data downloads.
- **Data sharing:** all agencies, organizations, vendors, and individuals with whom Bloomington Flock data has been shared; all sharing settings; all opt-in or opt-out changes; and all dates on which sharing rules changed.
- **Anonymized data analysis:** what data Flock retained or can continue using; whether “Vehicle Fingerprint Technology” data remains available to Flock; whether Bloomington can require deletion; and whether Flock has used or distributed Bloomington-derived anonymized data for “other Flock offerings”.
- **New vendors:** all communications between the Mayor's Office, BPD, and city legal staff with any potential replacement vendor about Flock, ALPRs, camera installation, camera removal, transition periods, replacement systems, and data retention.

We strongly encourage City Council to set a **legally binding 30 day deadline** for the Mayor’s office to fully remove all existing cameras associated with terminated contracts, provide documented proof of removal, and deliver the audit report as described. We also encourage the City Council to follow the audit report with a public hearing where residents can share questions directly with city officials.

Council can also pass legislation requiring that **any new surveillance technology contract**, including any ALPR or replacement camera contract, come before City Council before it is signed and is made public before it is approved.

Finally, we suggest that City Council develop **oversight ordinance(s) for privately owned Flock cameras** or other surveillance systems within city limits, requiring at least (but not limited to) licensing and audit protocols.

Solid State DSA has maintained, and is committed to continuing, an open line of communication with City Council. It is our hope that Council treat this issue as a highest-priority matter. Beyond the surveillance concerns, the Flock issue exemplifies a frustrating lack of transparency from the Mayor's Office. Bloomington residents should not have to rely on press releases, partial statements, or verbal assurances when the issue is a surveillance system that directly and negatively affects our daily lives.

Attached to this press release is a copy of DSA Solid State’s recommendations for City Council, officially sent to all City Councilors on May 7th, 2026.

⁵ <https://bsquarebulletin.com/flock-trailer-contract-finally-unredacted-by-bloomington-umbrella-accord-still-missing>

We strongly encourage that the Bloomington City Council pass as soon as possible legally binding ordinance(s) demanding the following:

1. That the mayor immediately provide written, documented proof that all Flock Safety contracts have been cancelled and are not currently active, and that the mayor's "transition period" has ended. This "transition period" was referenced in her April 15 memorandum to the Bloomington City Council: "The system is expected to remain temporarily active during the transition period". These contracts shall include, but not be limited to, BPD, HAND, and any other City of Bloomington entity;
2. That the mayor specify the locations, including GPS coordinates, of any and all Flock camera locations, current and past, whether they be associated with BPD, HAND, or any other City of Bloomington entity;
3. That the mayor provide proof that no other ALPR cameras or similar technology (cameras, drones, noise detection devices etc) has/ have been contracted or purchased by BPD, HAND, or any other city of Bloomington entity in the past five years;
4. That council set a **legally binding 30 day deadline** for the mayor that all Flock Safety cameras be physically removed, with documented proof.
5. That the mayor immediately release the "months-long evaluation" review referenced in her April 15, 2026 press release: "City of Bloomington Transitions Away from Flock Use After Months-Long Evaluation". Specifically to be immediately released: any and all correspondence, meeting notes, recordings, agreements, etc. as specified in her language in her April 15, 2026 press release: "The review included consultation with Bloomington Police Department (BPD) leadership and investigative teams, the City's legal team, Flock representatives, and community partners, and included an assessment of operational use, legal considerations, and documented case applications".
6. That the mayor immediately release the audits specified in her April 15, 2026 press release (City of Bloomington Transitions Away from Flock Use After Months-Long Evaluation): "Within BPD, access is limited to sworn officers and data analysts. Users are required to complete training, use individually assigned log-ins, connect searches to an active event number, and identify a valid reason for each search. Search activity is logged and those logs are subject to **audit** every 60 days. The Police Department also maintains a 30-day retention period for Flock data unless material was entered as evidence in a criminal case."
7. That the mayor immediately provide documented evidence that "The Police Department also maintains a 30-day retention period for Flock data unless material was entered as evidence in a criminal case."
8. That the mayor provide detailed examples of the material that "was entered as evidence in a criminal case".
9. That Council demand a full and comprehensive audit of BPD and HAND of any and all Flock related content. Please note: this is a separate and distinct demand from the audit issue detailed in point 5 above. This new demand for a full and comprehensive audit of BPD and HAND of any and all Flock related content must include but not be limited to the following:
 - a. Any and all sharing of BPD/ HAND Flock data with federal, state, and private entities;
 - b. Any and all requests by federal, state, and or private entities to BPD/ HAND etc for reproductive health, immigration status, or gender identity or sexual orientation, whether directly or through proxy indicators;
 - c. Detailed reports of any and all arrests resulting in successful prosecution of crimes solved using Flock camera data by BPD;
 - d. The identity of any and all persons, past and current, accessing the BPD/ HAND Flock system and the date, time, and purpose of the access;
10. That council compare these audit results (points 5 and 8 above) to recent claims made by mayor Thomson and BPD Chief Diekhoff (April 15th and April 22nd), and that council take appropriate legal action for any and all proven examples of outright lying, intentional obfuscation, misleading statements etc, including but not limited to removal from office and or criminal prosecution.
11. That any and all future surveillance technology (cameras, drones, noise detection devices etc) be subject to Council approval, regardless of cost;
12. That any and all correspondence, outreach, draft proposals etc by any city entity, for any and all future said surveillance technology, be shared with Council and made publicly available. These city entities include, but are not limited to, BPD, HAND, and the office of the mayor;
13. That Council develop oversight ordinance(s) for privately owned flock cameras within city limits, including but not limited to licensing and audit protocols;