




Luis C. Tigera
Chief of Police

Niles Police Department

7000 West Touhy Avenue Niles, IL 60714

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chief of Police Luis C. Tigera via Chain of Command

FROM: Detective Sergeant Michael Boba #51 

DATE: January 20, 2022

SUBJECT: **Drug asset forfeiture funds and DUI asset forfeiture for Flock LPR system**

I am requesting the use of drug asset forfeiture funds and DUI asset forfeiture funds for the purchase of 12 Flock LPR cameras to be placed in areas of the Village of Niles that typically experience high volumes of vehicular traffic.

Illinois law details how assets seized as a result of a drug offense should be used in 725 ILCS 150/2 of the drug asset forfeiture procedure act. That section of the statute states:

725ILCS150/2

Sec. 2. Legislative Declaration. The General Assembly finds that the civil forfeiture of property which is used or intended to be used in, is attributable to or facilitates the manufacture, sale, transportation, distribution, possession or use of substances in certain violations of the Illinois Controlled Substances Act, the Cannabis Control Act, or the Methamphetamine Control and Community Protection Act will have a significant beneficial effect in deterring the rising incidence of the abuse and trafficking of such substances within this State. While forfeiture may secure for State and local units of government some resources for deterring drug abuse and drug trafficking, forfeiture is not intended to be an alternative means of funding the administration of criminal justice. The General Assembly further finds that the federal narcotics civil forfeiture statute upon which this Act is based has been very successful in deterring the use and distribution of controlled substances within this State and throughout the country. It is therefore the intent of the General Assembly that the forfeiture provisions of this Act be construed in light of the federal forfeiture provisions contained in 21 U.S.C. 881 as interpreted by the federal courts, except to the extent that the provisions of this Act expressly differ therefrom. (Source: P.A. 94-556, eff. 9-11-05.)

This statute allows for the use of the funds to purchase license plate reading cameras as detailed later in this memo.

Additionally, Public Act 097-1050 was added to amend 625 ILCS 5/11-501.01 to state the following:

Any moneys received by a law enforcement agency under this subsections (f) shall be used for the enforcement and prevention of driving under the influence of alcohol, other drug or drugs, intoxicating compound or compounds or combination thereof, as defined by Section 11-501 of this Code, including but not limited to the purchase of law enforcement equipment and commodities that will assist in the prevention of alcohol related criminal violence throughout the State; police officer training and education in areas related to alcohol related crime, including but not limited to DUI training; and police officer salaries, including but not limited to salaries for hire back funding for safety checkpoints, saturation patrols, and liquor store sting operations.

On November 30th 2021, I spoke with Flock LPR sales representative Dan Murdock to discuss the purchase of license plate reading cameras and access to the Flock nationwide license plate reader Service. Flock quoted a price of \$38,896 for the first year for 12 cameras plus updating of our two current Rekor cameras, all needed hardware, software to access the system and installation. The fee for the system then becomes \$34,396 annually. Although this is a significant amount of money, the benefits of having this system from a public safety standpoint is priceless. Furthermore, LPR's in squad cars will allow for the constant collection of license plate data alerting the officer to license plates associated with criminal activity. The LPR's in the squad cars will also benefit our vehicle sticker enforcement efforts.

License plate reading cameras (LPR) are becoming an essential tool in fighting crime and protecting both our residents and businesses. The Flock LPR system will provide the Niles Police Department with analytics and access to billions of license plate scans from our Flock cameras as well as cameras that are deployed in cities throughout the country. Flock LPR cameras are currently being used by over 600 police departments' nationwide covering 1000 plus cities. Flock LPR's are currently being used by 65 police departments in Illinois.

Flock LPR cameras in Cobb County Georgia resulted in a 60% reduction in crime by placing Flock cameras in high crime areas. In April of 2019, the Marietta Georgia Police department experienced a 34% reduction in calls for service by placing Flock cameras in crime hot spots.

Flock also partners with business and homeowners associations to deploy Flock cameras. If a business or homeowners association purchases and deploys a Flock camera, the police department has access to that camera and the data collected by the camera. This provides another layer of safety and security for our businesses and residents.

The Flock LPR system would allow Detectives, Investigators and Officers to scour billions of easily filterable historical vehicle scans using just a license plate number, vehicle color or make a time, date or location. This information would be invaluable for all types of crimes that occur within the Village of Niles. For example, an armed robbery occurs and the offender flees in a vehicle. A witness or victim can provide a vehicle description and a partial license plate. That information can be entered and investigators would have instant access to images of vehicles matching the description and possessing the partial license plate.

Flock LPR cameras installed in Niles Police Squad cars via the Axon dash cameras would allow the officer operating the LPR equipped squad car to be immediately notified when a license plate is read that is on a reported stolen vehicle. It would also inform the officer if the registered owner of the vehicle is a wanted subject, or if the vehicle in question was involved in a recent crime.

The Flock LPR system would be of enormous value in solving the following crimes that are frequently investigated by our department because of the following capabilities.

- Placing the cameras on two of the most highly traveled roadways in the Village of Niles will allow officers the ability to observe impaired driving indicators that may have occurred prior to the officers contact. This will be achieved by placing cameras at Milwaukee Ave and Touhy, Milwaukee Ave. and Golf Rd, Dempster and Greenwood and Dempster and Harlem.
- The LPR cameras will also be placed in close proximity to establishments within the Village of Niles that have 4 A.M. liquor licenses.
- Assist in combating drug trafficking. Using the convoy analysis tool we could easily identify vehicles that travel together as part of a trafficking convoy helping to generate new leads and establish connections that will build a stronger case.

The Flock LPR system will also assist the Niles Police Department in the investigation of other criminal offenses such as;

- Car jacking's which have been on the increase, and Niles has not escaped the trend. Frequently carjacking crews travel in multiple vehicles. The Flock LPR system would assist us in locating the vehicle that was car jacked as well as vehicle that are traveling near that vehicle frequently. The use of the associated vehicles tool helps to locate associated vehicles based on previous sightings.
- Armed robbery investigations when a vehicle flees or is seen on the businesses surveillance cameras.
- Auto theft/catalytic convert theft and retail theft rings. By using the associate analysis, Detectives would be able to identify vehicles who have been seen together giving us the opportunity to verify a potential accomplice and getaway car used during the thefts.

- Locating fleeing suspects. We would have the ability to do a comprehensive plate location analysis. We could then use predictive analytics and historical vehicle location data to determine potential locations where a suspect that fled may be hiding out.
- Burglary investigations. Common license plate analysis can help generate a suspect lead by identifying a vehicle which has been previously observed at the various locations of a series of burglaries.
- Complete and partial plate searches to generate a preliminary list of suspect vehicles even with only a partial plate.
- Location based stakeout search for potential leads by identifying vehicles previously sighted near the location of a crime scene involving drugs or alcohol.

Prior to the installation of the cameras, Flock engineers will visit Niles to determine the most effective positioning of the cameras and the intersections that will be able to capture the largest amount of data. Flock will also provide members of NPD with training on all of the software included in the package.

In addition to budgeting for the LPR purchase, I have asked Commander Brandt to research grants that are available. Additionally, the use of money for the DUI fund, the drug fund or the equitable sharing account would be appropriate for this purchase. The police department also plans to partner with the Village of Niles IT department on this project.

Additionally, I recommend that the recurring cost be covered by partnering with the IT Department and sharing the cost of the LPR's. A second recommendation is to continue to seek out grants to cover the cost of the system. A third recommendation to cover recurring costs is to create a line item in our budget which will cover the annual fee for the system.

I have attached the quote for the purchase to this email. I have also attached a data sheet for the camera as well as some additional information on Flock cameras capabilities and success stories.