

LET'S TAKE TIME TO TALK ABOUT FLOCK CAMERAS

We're asking the Sheriff & City Council for a public working session **before any contract** — so we can get this right, together.

Privacy isn't partisan. Left or right, this is about the rights of us all.



We're unified in one goal: a safer Trinidad with less crime. We truly appreciate that the Council and Sheriff are working to protect our town. However, we don't believe Flock's mass surveillance is the right way to do it — let's discuss some better ways forward.

1

LEARN TOGETHER — COMMUNITY GATHERING

MON, JULY 6 • 5:00 PM

Mutiny Coffee on Main • Trinidad

2

SPEAK UP AT CITY COUNCIL MEETING

TUE, JULY 7 • 6:00 PM

City Hall, 135 N. Animas St. • 3rd-Floor Council Chambers



ADD YOUR NAME

petitions.hoppingmadgames.com/reject-flock-cameras-trinidad-co

Scan to
sign →



WHAT IS A FLOCK CAMERA?

Flock Safety sells **automated license-plate readers (ALPRs)** — solar-powered cameras that photograph **every passing vehicle**: plate, make, color, dents, bumper stickers, even "fingerprint" details. Each scan is time-stamped, GPS-tagged and uploaded to a **nationwide cloud database**.

It does **not** just watch wanted cars — it logs **everyone**, building a searchable record of where ordinary residents drive, when, and how often. Over **3,000+ agencies** can tap into that shared network.

Locally: public records show the **Las Animas County Sheriff already has a Flock account** on the statewide network. No public Trinidad PD contract was found — an open-records request can confirm the current picture.

IT'S A SUBSCRIPTION — EVERY YEAR

\$2,500–\$3,000

PER CAMERA • PER YEAR

+ install fees. Auto-renews. Prices rose ~\$500/camera in 2024. You lease — you never own it.

A modest **10-camera** deployment ≈ **\$25,000–\$30,000 EVERY year** — **\$125,000+ over 5 years**, with nothing owned. **And hard to undo:** Flock's terms make canceling costly & difficult — easy to sign, tough to exit.

OTHER SAFETY OPTIONS WORTH COMPARING



Better Street Lighting

–36%

nighttime crime in a randomized study when neighborhoods got brighter lights. Lasted 3 years.

Cost: mostly one-time — the town owns it

Chaffin et al. / NYC RCT



Greening Vacant Lots

–29%

gun violence around cleaned-up lots in a Philadelphia randomized trial.

Cost: ~\$1,500/lot + ~\$300/yr

Branas et al., PNAS



Mental-Health Crisis Response

\$8.5M

saved per year in Eugene, OR by sending trained crisis responders — not just police — to nonviolent calls.

Cost: ~\$2.1M/yr → ~\$8.5M saved

White Bird Clinic / CAHOOTS



Youth & summer-jobs programs. Multiple studies show paid summer jobs cut violent-crime involvement among participants — for a few thousand dollars per teen, not a forever camera lease.



Fund detectives to solve real cases. Most crimes are never cleared. Paying investigators to close cases deters far more than recording every law-abiding driver in town.

Several of these cost less and raise fewer concerns — all the more reason to weigh them together before anyone commits.

BOTH SIDES: WHAT'S WORTH WEIGHING TOGETHER

WHAT FLOCK OFFERS

- + Can help **recover stolen vehicles** and locate suspect cars after a crime.
- + Useful for **AMBER Alerts** and tracing vehicles tied to active investigations.
- + Quick to install; no wiring; one vendor handles upkeep.
- + Flock advertises "**up to 70% crime reduction**" in its marketing.

BUT DOES IT ACTUALLY CUT CRIME? THE EVIDENCE IS THIN.

- > A **randomized study** (George Mason Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy / NIJ) found "**little clear evidence**" that license-plate readers prevent crime.
- > A **16-year analysis** of Piedmont, CA found **no statistical evidence** ALPRs deterred auto theft — researchers said cities "might as well flip a coin." (*Independent Institute, 2025*)
- > The **EFF and ACLU** conclude there is **no real evidence** ALPRs reduce crime; crime has fallen for decades for unrelated reasons.
- > At best they help **recover already-stolen cars after the fact** — they don't stop the crime from happening.

QUESTIONS & CONCERNS TO DISCUSS

- × **Mass surveillance of everyone.** Every car logged, not just suspects.
- × **ICE & federal access.** Your movements can reach immigration agents.
- × **Used against lawful gun owners.** Even gun-show attendees have been logged.
- × **Reaches across state lines.** Out-of-state police can pull your travel history.
- × **No public vote.** A chief or sheriff can sign it behind closed doors.
- × **A bill that never ends.** A yearly lease that auto-renews — you own nothing.
- × **Wrongful, gunpoint stops.** Plate misreads put guns on innocent people.
- × **Hackable.** A live camera was cracked in under 30 seconds.
- × **Leaky.** Police feeds and driver data have been exposed and breached.
- × **Mission creep.** Bought for stolen cars — used to stalk ex-partners.
- × **Hard to cancel.** New contract terms make leaving costlier.
- × **Chilling effect.** People start self-censoring where they drive.

🔊 YOUR QUESTIONS, ANSWERED

💰 Will our taxes pay for this?

YES

Flock is a **yearly lease, not a purchase**. Whichever agency signs — the Sheriff or city police — pays roughly **\$2,500–\$3,000 per camera every year, forever**, out of county or city taxes. You never own the equipment. Cancel, and Flock removes it.

📍 Where would cameras go?

ROADS IN & OUT

Most likely the **entrances/exits on I-25, US-160 and US-350**, plus major intersections and arterials. Cameras on the state highway shoulder need a **CDOT permit**; cameras on city streets are the **City's** call. They run on solar + cellular, so they can go almost anywhere.

🏠 Is it up to the Sheriff?

MOSTLY

Largely **yes — which is exactly why a public conversation matters**. Colorado does **not** require Flock; it's optional and local. Because a sheriff or chief can sign administratively, a public conversation is how residents get to weigh in *before* a decision, not after.

★ How do WE get a say?

ASK TO TALK

The **County Commissioners fund the Sheriff** and the **City Council funds the police**. The friendliest path is simple: **ask them to pause and talk it through** with residents before any contract, and offer to help gather facts and options. (See *how, below*.)

❗ WHAT OTHER TOWNS LEARNED — WHY THE TALK MATTERS

These aren't reasons to point fingers at anyone here. They're why other communities wish they'd taken time to discuss before signing — and why exiting a Flock contract later is so hard.

- ❌ **A veteran tracked 526 times — including trips to the gun range.** Norfolk, VA blanketed the city with **176 Flock cameras**. Court filings show they logged Navy veteran Lee Schmidt **526 times in just over four months** — about 4 times a day — capturing his trips to the **shooting range** and his daughters' schools, all with **no warrant**. One resident was caught **14 times in a single 6½-hour span**. Schmidt is suing under the **Fourth Amendment** with the libertarian Institute for Justice; a judge let the case proceed by pointing to the Supreme Court's *Carpenter* location-tracking ruling. (NBC News; Institute for Justice, 2024–2026)
- ❌ **ICE & federal agents used a "side door."** An investigation found local police ran **4,000+ immigration-related lookups** through Flock's national network on behalf of federal agents — even though Flock had **no formal ICE contract**. The **Secret Service and U.S. Navy** also tapped in. The revelations prompted a **Congressional investigation** into how a local crime tool quietly became a backdoor for federal surveillance. (404 Media, 2025)
- ❌ **Denver, CO — tracked for immigration, then ripped out.** Records showed Denver's Flock data was searched **1,400+ times** in connection with immigration enforcement (about 690 after Jan. 2025). After a packed public meeting, the City Council **unanimously rejected** a \$666,000 renewal and the city **removed all 111 cameras** — a template for what a town can do. (ACLU of Colorado; Institute for Justice; Colorado Newswire, 2025)
- ❌ **Innocent people at gunpoint — and officers abusing access.** Plate **misreads** have led police to pull over and **draw guns on innocent drivers, including families with children**. Officers elsewhere have been caught using ALPR systems to **stalk ex-partners and romantic interests**. And security researchers **hacked a live Flock camera in under 30 seconds**. (EFF; Institute for Justice; national reporting)
- ❌ **Towns are ripping them out.** The ACLU counted **55+ communities ending Flock contracts in a single year** — Eureka, CA rejected 21 cameras, Gig Harbor, WA rejected 10, and Denver, Austin, and Santa Cruz all walked away — over privacy, federal access, and cost. In other towns, Flock was caught installing cameras **without the required permits**. (ACLU "Get the Flock Out"; Institute for Justice, 2025–2026)

👥 HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER

- 1 Come to the July 7 council meeting and respectfully push for a public working session** on Flock before any decision. A calm, full room speaks volumes.
- 2 Ask questions early.** An open-records (CORA) request for any contract, camera locations, data retention & sharing helps **everyone** discuss with the full facts.
- 3 Ask for time, not a fight.** Because Flock contracts are hard to exit, request a **pause** so residents, the Sheriff & Council can talk it through together first.
- 4 Bring ideas to the table.** If cameras do move forward, offer safeguards to discuss — no federal/out-of-state sharing, short data retention, and public audits.

Who to talk with: Las Animas County Commissioners • Trinidad City Council & Mayor • Las Animas County Sheriff's Office (719-846-2211). **Learn more:** deflock.me & eyesonflock.com.

Sources: CDOT, "Installing ALPR Systems on CDOT Right of Way" (Oct. 2023); Colorado SB 25-276 & SB 26-70; Flock Safety / OMNIA Partners price lists & municipal contracts (2024–2026); 404 Media (May–Sept. 2025); Wall Street Journal on gun-show plate surveillance; ACLU "Get the Flock Out," "How to Fight Deployment of Flock," & "Beware of Changes in Flock's Terms" (2025–2026); ACLU of Colorado & Colorado Newswire on Denver ICE searches (2025); Boulder Reporting Lab (Aug. 2025); EFF Atlas of Surveillance; Institute for Justice; George Mason Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy / NIJ & Independent Institute on ALPR effectiveness; Chalfin et al. NYC street-lighting RCT; Branas et al. Philadelphia vacant-lot RCT (PNAS); U.S. DOJ CrimeSolutions.gov. Local deployment details should be confirmed via open-records requests; some figures are point-in-time and may change.