Information Item

Date:	March 21, 2022
To:	Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council
From:	Patrice Toney, Assistant City Manager Catrina A. Thompson, Chief of Police

Subject:
Winston-Salem Police Department Pilot Program Deployment of Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs)

Strategic Focus Area: Safe and Secure Community
Strategic Objective: Reduce Crime and Fear of Crime
Strategic Plan Action Item: No
Key Work Item: No

The Winston-Salem Police Department (WSPD) has a proposal for a public safety investigative lead solution through a partnership with Axon (the WSPD's body worn camera system provider) and Flock Safety, a provider of Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs).

Flock Safety has a public safety operating system that helps communities and law enforcement in over 1,400 cities work together to eliminate crime, protect privacy, and mitigate bias. The ALPR technology will allow the WSPD to capture vehicle details needed to generate investigative leads to solve and prevent crimes, as well as generate investigative leads on AMBER, Silver, and missing person alerts. Flock Safety's technology allows a law enforcement search by license plate, vehicle make, color, type, state of the license plate, missing plate, covered plate, paper plate, and unique vehicle details like bumper stickers, etc.

WSPD believes this technology will be a complement to our ShotSpotter Gunshot Detection system, allowing officers to obtain descriptions of vehicles engaged in firing weapons on city streets. This technology will be based in the WSPD Real Time Crime Center (RTCC). The RTCC is funded by a 2020 Strategies for Policing Innovation grant in the amount of $700,000.

AXON and Flock Safety have proposed a "pilot program" to WSPD to install and operate a network of 25 sensors, which will be equitably deployed in all eight (8) wards in the City, for a period of 1 year without charge ($71,000+ value). The City of Raleigh and the Raleigh Police Department have already committed to participate in this "pilot program". Although the sensor hardware will remain the property of Flock Safety, WSPD will own the data collected by the sensors. Flock Safety is committed to never share any data with third parties. Additionally, every search conducted in the system requires a "specific reason" to maintain a traceable audit for law enforcement leadership, constituents, or City Government Auditors.

There is no cost to operate the ALPRs program during the pilot phase. At the end of the pilot, the WSPD will evaluate the success of the ALPRs program and develop a proposal to bring to City Council if ongoing funding is recommended.