

1 Other vendors also sell mass surveillance

The City Council is looking for a “better” surveillance technology vendor, but Flock’s competitors - Axon and Motorola - also aggregate data into national databases that form an AI surveillance dragnet. Additionally, they contract with the Department of Homeland Security.

2 ALPRs use AI and track more than our license plates

AI systems build profiles of each vehicle based on make, color, dents, etc. It learns everyone’s travel patterns from recordings collected 24/7 across all automated license plate readers (ALPRs) in and outside Berkeley. The AI systems also let officers search for people with descriptions, putting vulnerable populations at risk.

3 If collected, feds have legal ways to get our data

The City acknowledges there are scenarios where vendors are legally barred from notifying the City about federal agencies accessing our data. Under Trump, collecting data on people in Berkeley risks arming federal agents with targets for his war on immigrants.

6 Things the Berkeley City Council is not telling us about their ask for surveillance technology

4 Delegating investigative work to AI is problematic

If officers use AI to compile data from multiple sources and produce drafts of investigation reports, officers are no longer forming independent judgement about cases. Officers would have a harder time catching errors because they wouldn’t have reviewed the data in detail.

5 We need humans for crisis response, not machines

Many 911 calls are for mental health crises or welfare checks. Replacing in-person assessments with a camera feed on drones, means high-stakes decisions will be made with incomplete information. The contract requires training for officers but sets no standards, which can create expensive legal liability when errors occur.

6 Public safety requires addressing root causes

The strongest evidence-based approaches for improving public safety address the root causes, such as poverty, family instability, or cycles of violence exposure. Surveillance documents crime for law enforcement in the moment, but cannot address the conditions that lead to crime.

Tell City Council we don’t want this! More info at bams.network