



Sunnyvale

Fixed Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) City Council Review

Chief Daniel Pistor
Department of Public Safety
April 21, 2026



Discussion

- ALPR Technology Overview
- How Sunnyvale Uses the System
- Privacy Protections and Oversight
- IT Dept. System Review
- Program Results
- State Law and Policy Context
- Questions and Discussion

About ALPR Technology

Fixed Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR):

- Fixed cameras that capture images of vehicles traveling on public roadways for use in crime investigations

What is recorded:

- License plate
- Date and time
- Location
- Vehicle image and basic characteristics (color, make, body type)

Purpose:

- Identify vehicles associated with criminal investigations
- Locate stolen vehicles
- Assist with crime investigations
- Assist with pro-active policing
- Locate missing persons

What ALPR Does NOT Do

- The Sunnyvale system:
 - ◆ Does not collect personal identifying information
 - ◆ Does not use facial recognition technology
 - ◆ Does not monitor or track people
 - ◆ Does not enforce traffic violations
 - ◆ Does not collect driver or occupant information
 - ◆ Does not provide DMV vehicle registration information
 - ◆ Cannot be used for civil immigration enforcement

Where Fixed ALPR Cameras Are Located

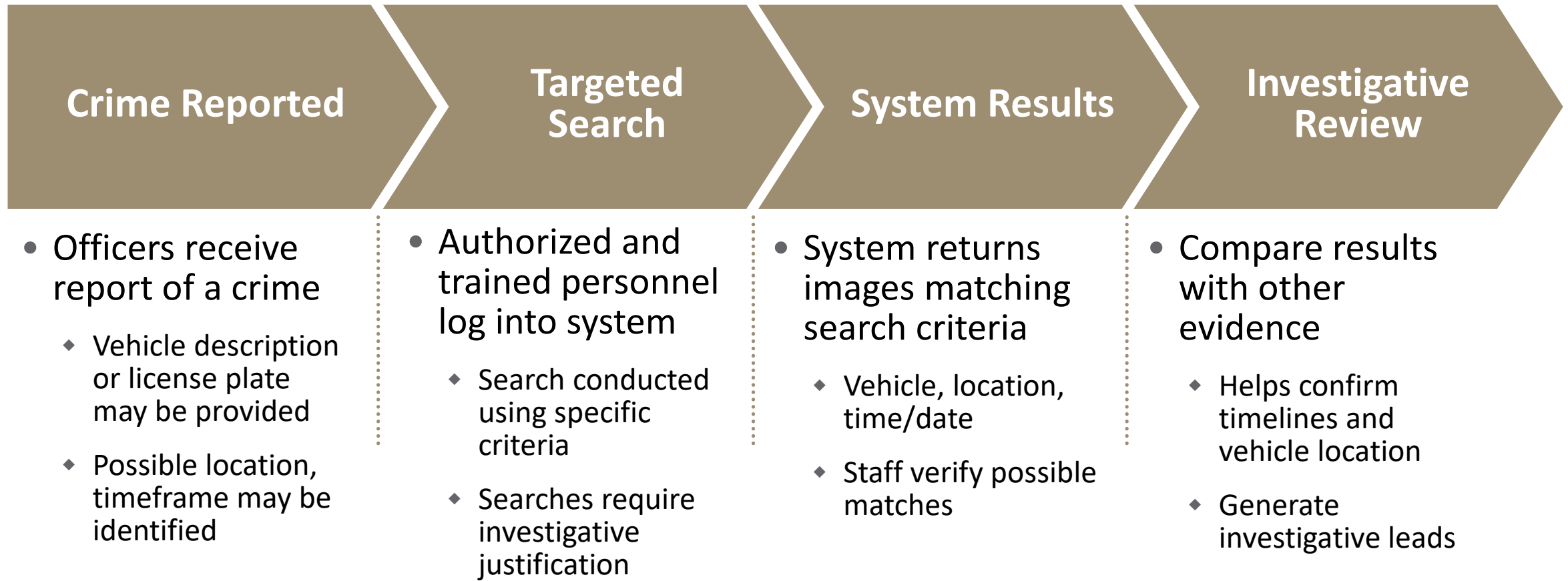
- Sunnyvale's 20 Fixed ALPR cameras are:
 - ◆ Located along major roadways
 - ◆ Not located in residential neighborhoods
 - ◆ Fixed in place (not mobile)
- *Cameras capture vehicles when they pass a fixed location*



How ALPR is Used in Sunnyvale

- ALPR supports investigations by helping DPS:
 - ◆ Identify vehicles associated with reported crimes
 - ◆ Prevent crime by identifying wanted vehicles and alerting Public Safety
 - ◆ Confirm investigative timelines
 - ◆ Narrow the pool of possible suspects
 - ◆ Locate stolen vehicles
 - ◆ Locate vehicles linked to potential witnesses
 - ◆ Locate vehicles linked to missing person alerts
- *ALPR is used as an investigative tool to supplement traditional police work*

How ALPR Assists Sunnyvale Investigations




What Information Is Provided In An Alert

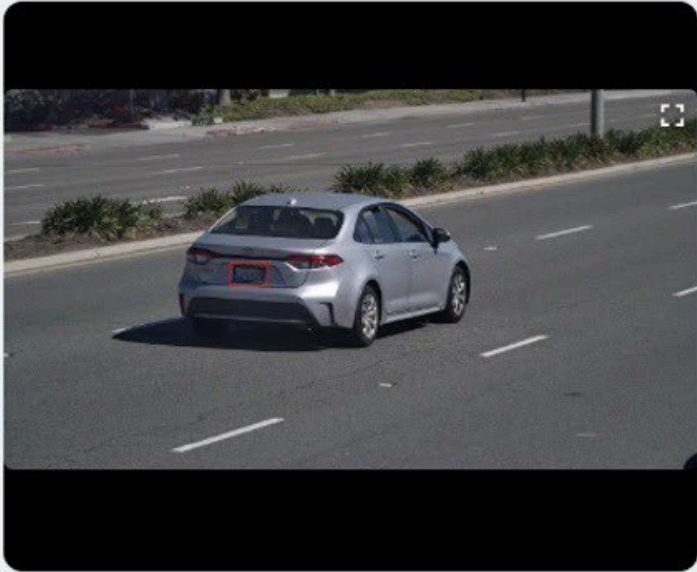
California SVS 3/12/2026 at 2:07:56 PM
6 days ago

Felony Vehicles

Plate
CA [REDACTED]

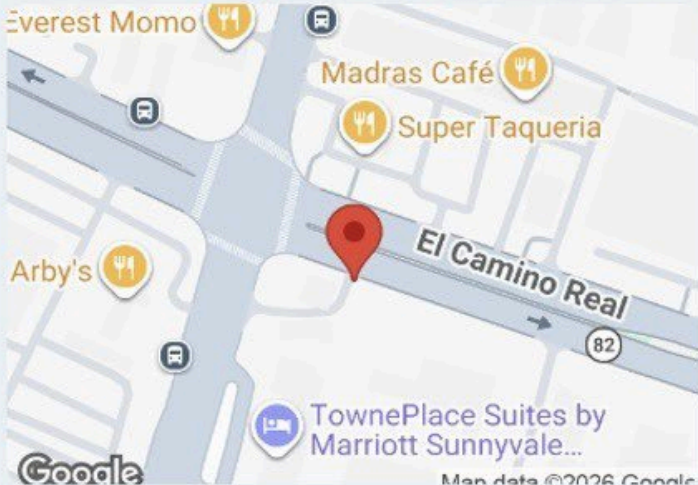


Source Entry Details
Not Provided



Device
EB ECR @ S Bernardo Ave- LR#006

Estimated Location
1198 E El Camino Real, Sunnyvale, California 94087, US



Search Nearby Video Mark Outcome Open Map Comments

What Information Is Provided In An Alert


California SVS

California SVS - Felony Vehicles ←

6 days ago

Click title to scroll back to this hit in your feed

Overview Media (2) Comments



Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, Microsoft, Facebook, Inc. and its Powered by Esri

About

Source	California SVS
Reason	felony vehicles
State, Plate	CA [REDACTED]
Body, Make, Color	Sedan, Toyota, Unknown

Alert Info

Confidence Levels	>
Device	EB ECR @ S Bernardo Ave- LR#006
Location	1198 E El Camino Real, Sunnyvale, California 94087, US
Network	Sunnyvale CA PD

Several Layers of Data Protection

- ALPR alerts notify DPS
 - ◆ Stolen vehicles, vehicles used in felony crimes, missing persons
- Officers cross-check and verify ALPR alerts with DMV records, stolen vehicle database through the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS)
 - ◆ CLETS database is gold standard of IT security
 - ◆ Officers must be trained and credentialed to access
 - ◆ Need to Know; Right to Know
- Provides another check and balance on the system
- Human validation is a key component

Fixed ALPR Program Results in Sunnyvale

- Since the October 2024 launch
 - ◆ Produced 28,000+ alerts, including:
 - Stolen vehicles
 - Stolen plates
 - Vehicles linked to felony crimes
 - Location of a missing person
 - ◆ Contributed to:
 - 81 leads
 - 61 arrests
- Crimes investigated include robbery, homicide, stolen vehicle cases and organized theft

Case Examples: Homicide Investigation

- In one homicide case, ALPR data helped investigators:
 - ◆ Identify and confirm suspect vehicle
 - ◆ Establish a timeline of vehicle movement
 - ◆ Connect locations to the suspect
 - ◆ Confirm information from other sources
- More recently, ALPR information contributed to the arrests of suspects in the murder of Kemberly Chirinos-Flores, a 24-year-old Mountain View resident and mother of a 5-year-old son

Case Example: Indian Jewelry Store Robberies

- Between May 2025 and August 2025, Sunnyvale experienced 8 violent takeover style robberies targeting Indian Jewelry stores in Sunnyvale.
- Stolen vehicles were being used.
- Flock provided an alert of numerous stolen vehicles entering Sunnyvale.
- Patrol developed a response plan and arrived at a jewelry store on El Camino Real as several stolen vehicles arrived.
- Prevented robbery and made 5 arrests.
- The Flock System provided the early warning which, combined with proactive patrol response, prevented additional victims and injuries.

Case Example: Elderly Resident Lost and Located

- On March 6, 2026, around midnight, Public Safety received a Flock alert for a vehicle that was being driven by an elderly female who was reported missing by the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office.
- She was last seen at approximately 1 p.m.
- At approximately 12:13 a.m., Flock located the vehicle, which was being driven by the missing person in Sunnyvale.
- Happy to report that the elderly female was reunited with her family unharmed.

Sunnyvale's Privacy Safeguards

- Sunnyvale's ALPR program includes multiple safeguards, including:
 - ◆ 30-day data retention before automatic deletion
 - ◆ Access restricted only to authorized personnel
 - ◆ Investigative justification required for system searches
 - ◆ Detailed system audit logs
 - ◆ Data sharing is limited to approved law enforcement requests following command-level review

Sunnyvale's ALPR program upholds the California Values Act and Sunnyvale Statement on Values and Public Service

Data Access Controls

- ALPR data access requires:
 - ◆ Individual user login credentials
 - ◆ Case number or investigative justification
 - ◆ Activity logging and auditing
- Data sharing:
 - ◆ Limited to approved law enforcement agencies
 - ◆ Requires documented request and command staff approval
 - ◆ Must comply with state law

Internal IT Review

- The City's Information Technology Department recently conducted an internal system review
- Scope included:
 - ◆ Confirm how the system is configured
 - ◆ Recheck data-sharing settings
 - ◆ Review user permissions
 - ◆ Review system access logs
 - ◆ Confirm that federal agencies cannot access data

IT Review Findings

- Sunnyvale's IT Department confirmed:
 - ◆ The system is not configured to share data with federal agencies
 - ◆ No federal agencies appear as authorized data-sharing partners
 - ◆ User roles and permissions properly configured
 - ◆ Access controls in place
 - ◆ All searches logged
 - ◆ No generic user accounts

Data Retention and Security Controls

- IT review confirmed:
 - ◆ 30-day data retention policy active
 - ◆ Automatic deletion after retention period
 - ◆ Manual exports logged
 - ◆ Evidence preservation procedures documented
- Audit logs track searches, exports, deletions and administrator activity

ALPR Data Settings

- Staff has reviewed how the Sunnyvale platform’s data-sharing settings are configured:

Permitted Access	Sunnyvale System
National Lookup	Never Enabled
State Lookup	Enabled at launch; disabled January 2026
Federal and State agencies not listed as sharing partners	Must submit online request; Command Staff must review and approve
Local and State agencies listed as sharing partners	Direct access is currently permitted to 27 agencies under data-sharing agreements

ALPR Data Settings: Additional Finding

- The Loma Linda Healthcare System Veterans Affairs Police Department (a Veterans Affairs agency based in Loma Linda, CA) accessed the system twice in May 2025
 - ◆ One search was hit-and-run investigation; another was an attempt to locate a suicidal veteran
 - ◆ Search was compliant with State law.
- Search was conducted through the statewide lookup function, which provides the largest "net" to locate vehicles
 - ◆ Search function limited to license plate information only
- No national sharing occurred

California Law Governing ALPR

California Civil Code SB 34

Written ALPR usage policies

Documented data-sharing procedures

Audit requirements

Limits on who can access ALPR data

Sunnyvale's program operates in compliance with these requirements

City ALPR Programs Under Review

- Cities across California have taken different approaches to Fixed ALPR programs in recent months
- Some have:
 - ◆ Reviewed policies and procedures related to privacy and data sharing
 - ◆ Strengthened oversight policies
 - ◆ Continued use with existing or additional safeguards
 - ◆ Cancelled or temporarily paused programs
 - ◆ Reinstated use of ALPR after updating security protocols

Options Before the City Council

Staff Recommendation

- Maintain the City's current fixed ALPR system with stronger oversight measures to include an annual audit conducted by Public Safety and ITD, provide the City Council with an annual audit report of the ALPR system, monitor state legislation, and reevaluate program and vendor options prior to 2027 contract renewal.

Alternatives

1. Maintain the City's current fixed ALPR system with stronger oversight measures to include an annual audit conducted by Public Safety and ITD, provide the City Council with an annual audit report of the ALPR system, monitor state legislation, and reevaluate program and vendor options prior to 2027 contract renewal.
2. Continue program with existing safeguards
3. Provide alternative direction to staff