Washtenaw County Sheriff’s Office

Community Education Series
License Plate Readers (LPR)

Sheriff Jerry L. Clayton

Agenda

6:00pm  Introduction to WCSO  Sheriff Clayton

6:20pm  LPR Technology overview  Sheriff Clayton & Commander Flores
        Role of LPR within the WCSO
        Internal Policy Presentation
        Q&A

7:00pm  Closing  Sheriff Clayton
Mission Driven

Create Public Safety, Provide Quality Service, Build Strong and Sustainable Communities

**Core Strategies**
- Providing Community Leadership
- Building Partnerships & Collaborations
- Focusing on Service Excellence
- Providing Internal Direction & Accountability

Core Values

- Ethical Integrity
- Accountability
- Openness & Engagement
- Financial Integrity
- Professional Competence

"Provide efficient, cost effective, quality service"

“Treat all residents equally with respect and fairness”

“A people first approach.”
Three Evaluative Dimensions

1. **Legal** – does not violate constitutional or other legal principles.

2. **Ethical** – safeguards to minimize social harms

3. **Democratically Accountable** – Open and engaged by proactively consulting our communities.

Assessing Potential Benefits

1. What is the specific problem(s) the product is intended to solve?
2. How important/what is the magnitude of the problem you expect to solve?
3. How certain is it that the technology will address the problem?
4. Could using the technology have unintended or secondary benefits?
Assessing Potential Costs

1. Once deployed, can the technology be used (or misused) in ways other than contemplated in this use case?
2. Will the use of this technology lead to greater criminalization or to policing in counterproductive ways?
3. How will this use of technology impact personal information privacy?
4. Does the use of the technology raise concerns regarding racial or other identity?
5. Does the use of the technology raise transparency-related concerns in terms of how we engage with members of the communities we serve?
6. Does the use of the technology raise risks of directly or indirectly violating constitutional or other legal rights?
7. Are there other potential social costs that have not yet been considered?

Frequently Asked Questions

Sheriff Jerry L. Clayton
1. **What is a License Plate Reader?**
LPRs are stationary devices that capture computer readable images of license plates, and other identifying vehicle information for a traceable vehicle fingerprint.

2. **How do the cameras gather information?**
LPR’s utilize the FBI’s NCIC federal and state hotlists. This will send real time alerts to law enforcement agencies when a wanted or stolen vehicle is detected.

3. **Will LPR cameras be used to conduct surveillance?**
No. Not in the way we are using them. LPRs are stationary devices that capture computer readable still photographs of license plates and other identifying vehicle information for a traceable vehicle fingerprint.

4. **Will LPR’s be mounted in patrol vehicles?**
No. These will be stationary at intersections coming into and exiting from Ypsilanti Township. They will be positioned throughout the entire township and are not neighborhood specific.

5. **Will LPR’s capture names, phone numbers or addresses?**
No. LPR’s do not capture information on who is driving or riding in a vehicle as it is considered personally identifiable information. They only capture the back of vehicles for objective evidence. It is not possible for them to detect race, gender, etc...

6. **Is LPR and facial recognition the same?**
No. LPR’s only pick up computer readable images of license plate and vehicle information. Facial recognition focuses on the face of a person.
7. How will the WCSO use this technology?
When there is a serious crime involving vehicle information, LPR’s will alert the WCSO when the suspect vehicle is captured by the LPR.

The WCSO is dedicated to respecting citizens privacy and committed to treating all people equitably regardless of race, religion, age, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, politics, etc. **LPR technology is purpose built to remove human bias from solving crimes.** LPR technology is engineered to capture vehicle characteristics and license plates, which are cross checked against state and federal records to ensure data accuracy and minimize errors.

8. Will LPR’s monitor 24/7?
No. Cameras will remain dormant but can start taking photographs in less than a tenth of a second and can capture multiple still photographs of a vehicle traveling up to 100mph. The cameras do not take live video.

9. How do I know the information gathered by the LPR system will not be used outside Ypsilanti Twp or for other reasons besides policing?
All storage is fully encrypted and cloud-based. Data will only be shared with police agencies for investigative purposes and will never be sold to third party businesses.
10. Will LPR photos be the sole source for making an arrest or traffic stop?
No. An LPR “hit” or alert will not constitute reasonable suspicion or probable cause to conduct a traffic stop or take enforcement actions. A deputy may not detain an individual based on an alert from the LPR system unless the deputy has reasonable suspicion or probable cause that such person is involved in criminal activity.

11. What are the accuracy rates of the cameras?
Different companies share different rates. Since Flock has been referenced here locally, we are sharing data from Flock Safety. Flock cameras capture 97% of vehicle traffic.
- 93% license plate characters accuracy
- 95% vehicle color (daytime) accuracy
- 92% vehicle make accuracy
- 98% vehicle type accuracy
It is the policy of the Washtenaw County Sheriffs’ Office that all police-initiated actions, including all investigative detentions, traffic stops, arrest, searches and seizures of persons and/or property by employees will be based on a **standard of reasonable suspicion or probable cause consistent with the Fourth Amendment** of the United States Constitution.

**Employees must be able to articulate specific facts, circumstances and conclusions that support probable cause or reasonable suspicion for the investigative detention, traffic stops, arrest, and searches.**

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**Approved Uses, Accountability and Data Retention**

- Sheriff’s Office staff will be **required to enter a reason for each search** made utilizing the LPR system.

- A **search history will be retained for up to 30 days to ensure the system was being properly utilized.** All unused data captured by LPR technology will automatically be deleted after 30 days.

- **Audit trails will be checked on a monthly basis** by the Operational Captain or designee to ensure “vehicles of interest” should remain on the list but are not there indefinitely. A monthly report will be completed.
Approved Uses, Accountability and Data Retention cont.

- An LPR “hit” or alert will not constitute reasonable suspicion or probable cause to conduct a traffic stop or take enforcement actions. **A deputy may not detain an individual based on an alert from the LPR system unless the deputy has reasonable suspicion or probable cause that such person is involved in criminal activity.**

LPR’s Prohibited Capabilities

- LPRs do not collect information on who is driving or riding in the vehicle as it is not considered personally identifiable information (PII).
- LPRs do not include facial recognition, footage of passerby's or pedestrians.
- LPRs do not record names, phone numbers or addresses. The cameras only capture the back of vehicles for objective evidence so it's not possible for the camera to detect race, gender, number of occupants in the vehicle, etc.
- LPRs do not engage in predictive policing or make predictions or judgments on specific locations, neighborhoods, or areas.
- Data will never be shared outside of other law enforcement agencies or sold to third parties without written approval.
- LPRs **will not be used to monitor to track an individual(s) who are subject of an active criminal investigation unless authorized by a warrant, issued upon probable cause or exigent circumstances** that would justify the use without obtaining a warrant.
Next Steps

• Additional community presentations and conversations
• Neighborhood Watch discussions
• FAQ distribution
• Citizen survey
• Based on our contracting partner's decision to purchase the proposed technology and based on all information gathered through this process, Sheriff Clayton will decide if the WCSO will utilize LPR technology.

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