OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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Notice Meeting CM's Peluso RE Surveillance Equipment
August 28, 2026
Don Davis Room 3:30 PM

Attendees: Council Member Jimmy Peluso (D7), Council Member Elect Moné Holder (AL1), Council President Nick Howland (AL3), Office of the Mayor Brittany Norris, Office of General Counsel Shannon MacGillis, Chief of Research Colleen Hampsey

Call to Order: 3:31 p.m.

Summary

Opening & Purpose

Council Member Jimmy Peluso called the Notice Meeting to order at 10:31 a.m.. Council Member Peluso welcomed attendees and introduced the meeting's purpose: to discuss the use of automated surveillance equipment, including automated license plate reader (ALPR) cameras, in Jacksonville. The discussion focused on public safety, privacy rights, data collection and retention, law enforcement access, installation procedures, public oversight, and the City's authority to regulate this equipment.

Council Member Peluso stated that no draft legislation had been prepared and that the meeting was intended to gather information and public input before determining what legislative action, if any, should be pursued. He noted that the discussion was not limited to one vendor, such as Flock Safety, but concerned automated surveillance equipment more broadly.

Automated Surveillance Equipment: Policy and Regulatory Considerations

Council Member Peluso raised questions about who authorizes and installs surveillance cameras in public rights-of-way, whether permits or other approvals are required, and whether public funds are used for installation or ongoing subscription services. Brittany Norris of the Mayor's Administration stated that she did not have immediate answers to all the questions but had compiled a list of issues for further research.

Council Member Peluso outlined several potential policy measures under consideration:

- A temporary moratorium of approximately 120 days on installing additional automated surveillance cameras in Jacksonville.
- An inventory of surveillance cameras currently operating in the City.

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- A process for public participation and community review before new cameras are installed, potentially involving the City's Planning and Advisory Committees for Citizens (CPACs).
- A process through which residents could request that a camera be removed or relocated, potentially using a petition process similar to that used for neighborhood traffic-calming requests.

Council Member Peluso stated that the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (JSO) had expressed support for the cameras, citing their reported value in solving crimes, locating missing persons, and identifying individuals wanted by law enforcement. He acknowledged those potential benefits while emphasizing the need to address constitutional concerns, ensure residents are informed about camera locations, and establish a process for communities to express concerns about equipment installed near their neighborhoods.

The discussion also addressed whether the City has authority to regulate cameras located in public rights-of-way. A representative of the Office of General Counsel explained that the answer may depend on the specific circumstances, including whether the road is maintained by the State or City, who owns the camera, and the nature of the proposed regulation. The representative cautioned that actions taken by other jurisdictions would need to be examined individually to determine their legal effect and applicability to Jacksonville.

Council Member and State Representative Discussion

Council President Howland discussed the importance of balancing public safety with privacy protections and stated that the issue warranted careful consideration and broad community discussion. He noted that the Sheriff had recognized the cameras' public-safety value while also expressing concern about potential misuse of data and the protection of Fourth Amendment rights. He encouraged the City to consider community concerns and develop an appropriate balance between security and privacy.

Council Member-elect Mone Holder expressed appreciation for the opportunity to attend and hear community perspectives. He acknowledged both the potential public-safety benefits of the cameras and the concerns surrounding surveillance and privacy.

State Representative Dean Black addressed the tension between security and personal liberty. He stated that government should ensure law enforcement has the tools needed to protect the public while avoiding the creation of surveillance systems that could threaten individual freedoms. He indicated that these concerns were also being discussed among state lawmakers. Council Member Peluso also raised the possibility of legislation addressing the misuse of ALPR data, including potential penalties for unauthorized use. He suggested that local action to

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protect privacy might be considered while the State evaluates its approach to surveillance technology. No specific legislation was introduced or adopted during the meeting.

Public Comments

Members of the public expressed a range of views regarding automated surveillance cameras. Many speakers supported a temporary moratorium or stronger restrictions, while others emphasized the cameras' potential role in solving crimes and assisting victims. Major themes included privacy, data security, transparency, accountability, the effectiveness of the technology, and the need for meaningful public participation.

Aaron Perkins raised concerns about the City's financial and maintenance responsibilities, including the costs of maintaining equipment, storm-related damage, installation issues, and the possibility that the technology could become outdated. He supported pausing expansion until the City had established clear rules and public information procedures.

Brooke questioned whether private camera companies had access to driver's license information and asked what licensing, approval, and access restrictions apply to companies installing cameras in public locations.

Red opposed broad collection of residents' movements through ALPR systems. The speaker raised concerns about government overreach, the potential use of location data against political dissidents, private companies' commercial incentives, and the lack of legal protections comparable to those that apply to certain other forms of personal data
.

Tim Riggins who identified himself as a senior staff engineer at a civic technology company, expressed concerns about the security design of surveillance products and whether technical restrictions could adequately prevent unauthorized searches or misuse. He suggested that a moratorium should consider temporarily disabling existing cameras, not only preventing new installations.

Michael Nelson who identified himself as an archaeologist studying human populations, raised concerns about the commercial value of location data and the potential consequences if a surveillance company were sold, went bankrupt, or transferred its assets to another entity.

Ben Elkhorn described the issue as complex and argued that a moratorium would provide time to evaluate the technology rather than constitute a permanent ban. The speaker acknowledged that cameras can help deter or solve certain crimes but emphasized the need for transparency regarding costs, data use, access by other agencies, and the technology's actual public-safety benefits.

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Laura Harris described having her vehicle stolen in 2022 and experiencing significant financial and personal hardship while trying to recover it. She acknowledged that ALPR cameras might have helped locate her vehicle sooner and supported considering their potential benefits alongside privacy concerns.

Allison Patrick raised questions about who retains surveillance data, how long it is stored, what happens if a vendor is acquired, and how public-records requests could be handled. She also expressed concern about the interaction between ALPR systems and other surveillance technologies, including drones, and supported canceling contracts or imposing a temporary moratorium.

Jennifer Dean Patterson stated that she supports technology that helps law enforcement protect communities but emphasized that security and surveillance are not the same. She called for clear limits, oversight, transparency, accountability, and meaningful public input before surveillance technology is installed, expanded, or renewed. She also encouraged consideration of less intrusive alternatives where appropriate.

Rachel Beabout spoke about civic responsibility and the importance of preserving individual freedoms while addressing public safety. She expressed concern that broad surveillance could place everyone under continuing investigation.

Marshall Anderson a recently retired Navy veteran, discussed the risks associated with aggregating large amounts of location data. He expressed concern that routine movement information could reveal sensitive patterns and potentially create security risks, particularly given Jacksonville's significant military presence.

Latasha Hobbs spoke in support of continued use of ALPR cameras, citing her experience as the mother of a murdered child and the importance of evidence in helping families obtain answers. She attributed figures to JSO indicating that the cameras had assisted with cases involving murders, kidnappings, sexual offenses, shootings, and missing persons since 2024. She advocated retaining the technology while ensuring appropriate safeguards and accountability.

Chad Charles opposed what he described as widespread surveillance of residents' movements and expressed concern that the technology could be used to target individuals based on their political views or other activities. He called for removal of the cameras.

Albert Stern expressed concern about potential misuse of ALPR systems, cybersecurity vulnerabilities, private vendors' business incentives, and the possibility of increased costs or reduced flexibility once a government agency becomes dependent on a vendor's technology.

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Casey Jones expressed strong opposition to the cameras, stating that they undermine public trust and raise concerns about residents being tracked without adequate justification.

Robert Jeffers acknowledged that the cameras may provide public-safety benefits but expressed concern that inadequate protections had been established before the technology was widely installed. He encouraged the City to take a proactive approach to privacy safeguards and oversight.

Andrew Scott, who identified himself as a software development manager with experience in computer vision and machine learning, raised concerns about data retention, cloud storage, cybersecurity, and the possibility of combining location data with other information to track residents. He questioned whether the City would retain meaningful control over data stored or managed by private vendors.

Dale Cummings questioned how effective ALPR cameras are at solving crimes and whether they are necessary to achieve those outcomes. He discussed a case publicly attributed to the technology and argued that witness statements may have played a significant role in identifying suspects. He called for clearer evidence of the cameras' effectiveness rather than relying solely on case examples.

Sean Costello questioned the placement of a camera near a community swimming pool and noted that some camera locations may not appear to correspond directly with license-plate reading. He encouraged Council Members to examine not only how the equipment is currently used but also its capabilities and potential future applications.

Key Issues and Potential Next Steps

The discussion identified several issues for further consideration:

- Determining the City's legal authority over surveillance equipment installed in public rights-of-way.
- Establishing an accurate inventory of cameras operating in Jacksonville, including ownership, installation approvals, costs, and contractual arrangements.
- Reviewing what information the systems collect, how long data is retained, who can access it, and whether it may be shared with outside agencies or private entities.
- Evaluating cybersecurity safeguards, vendor access, data ownership, and what happens to stored data if a vendor is acquired or ceases operations.
- Assessing the cameras' effectiveness in solving crimes and locating missing persons, including the role the technology played in specific cases.
- Considering a temporary moratorium on new installations while the City develops policy and obtains public input.

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- Creating a transparent process for community notification, review, and requests to remove or relocate cameras.
- Considering safeguards and penalties for misuse of surveillance data.

Council Member Peluso stated that he intended to continue working on the issue and recognized the importance of JSO's role in maintaining public safety. He reiterated the need to balance law enforcement's ability to solve crimes with residents' privacy rights and indicated that additional discussion and potential legislative action would follow.

Closing Remarks

Council Member Peluso thanked his colleagues, the State Representative, City staff, and members of the public for participating. Because of the noticed meeting's scheduled time limit, not all individuals who submitted public-comment cards were able to speak. Council Member Peluso invited those who had not spoken to provide their comments by email and stated that he and others would remain available to hear additional concerns after the formal meeting concluded.