



November 17, 2025

Oakland City Council

Charlene Wang, District 2, Chairperson, Public Safety Committee
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 Janani Ramachandran, District 4
 Noel Gallo, District 5
 Ken Jenkins, District 6
 Barbara Lee, Mayor

Oakland, CA

Subject: Shut Down Flock Safety's Mass Surveillance Network

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

We write to demand you reject the OPD Community Safety Camera System use policy and FLOCK Safety Contract (File #26-0189) in its entirety. This resolution asks you to approve three deeply problematic actions: (1) adopting surveillance use policy DGO I-32.1 that consolidates public and private camera feeds into Flock Safety's FlockOS platform; (2) awarding a \$2.25 million contract to Flock Safety for Automated License Plate Readers, Pan-Tilt-Zoom cameras, and operating system technology; and (3) waiving both competitive bidding requirements and Local/Small Business Enterprise program protections.

Each component of this resolution violates Oakland's values. Together, they represent a catastrophic failure of governance that would compromise sanctuary city protections, undermine fiscal responsibility, abandon local economic development, and build mass surveillance infrastructure that will be weaponized against our most vulnerable community members.

This is Oakland's defining moment on sanctuary city protection. While the federal government explicitly targets sanctuary jurisdictions and Attorney General Pam Bondi vows to use "all available means" to compel immigration enforcement data sharing, you are deciding whether to spend \$2.25 million building the very surveillance infrastructure that will be weaponized against our immigrant neighbors.

By fast-tracking this costly integration, OPD is handing Flock Safety real-time surveillance access to track the movements of millions of Oaklanders and Bay Area residents—gutting our privacy protections and trampling constitutional rights.

The Surveillance Threat: FlockOS, Private Cameras, and Real-Time Tracking

Under OPD's proposed use policy (DGO I-32.1), FlockOS would tap into every private security camera—your doorbell camera, your business security system, your apartment building's cameras—and feed those live streams into OPD's ALPR network—creating a searchable database of millions of law-abiding residents' movements without any warrant requirement. This transforms voluntary private security into mandatory government surveillance. Your Ring doorbell becomes an ICE informant. Your business camera becomes a deportation tool.

But this resolution goes beyond license plate readers. The contract authorizes Pan-Tilt-Zoom (PTZ) cameras that enable real-time tracking of pedestrians and protesters. Unlike ALPRs that capture only vehicles, PTZ cameras allow operators to manually zoom in on and follow individuals on foot. Flock's dual-lens PTZ technology simultaneously records wide-angle views and close-up details, creating comprehensive video surveillance of Oakland's streets. This infrastructure could be weaponized against immigrants, protesters exercising First Amendment rights, and anyone deemed "suspicious" by law enforcement.

Combined with FlockOS integration of private cameras, PTZ deployment creates infrastructure for pervasive human surveillance—not just vehicle monitoring—across Oakland.

Flock Safety has Proven Itself an Untrustworthy Actor

Flock Safety has demonstrated it cannot be trusted with sensitive surveillance data, sharing ALPR data with ICE and federal agencies despite promises to the contrary. Under DGO I-32.1, OPD would fold private doorbell cams, city cameras, and CHP plate-reader feeds into FlockOS, creating a real-time dragnet of our community's movements.

Knowing this, Oakland cannot hand such critical information over to the Trump administration. Doing so would put countless Oaklanders at immediate risk of detention, deportation, and/or violence at the hands of federal agents.

The threat is not hypothetical—it is happening right now. Just three months ago, in July 2025, audit logs revealed California law enforcement shared Oakland ALPR data with ICE in direct violation of SB 34 and Oakland's sanctuary ordinance. Despite state law protections, federal agencies accessed our data through shared databases. Oakland's own investigation confirmed this occurred. And it will happen again with FlockOS—but on a vastly larger scale, capturing not just license plates but live video feeds from thousands of private cameras across Oakland.

Flock Safety By The Numbers:

1. 50M stolen data points in Flock database (CEO admission)
2. 6,000+ communities, 5,000+ agencies in Flock's coast-to-coast surveillance network
3. 20B+ monthly license plate scans captured nationwide
4. Millions of Ring doorbells now feeding police through FlockOS (Oct 2025 partnership)
5. ICE, Secret Service, Navy confirmed access to Flock network (Oct 2025)
6. 30,000+ live camera streams running through FlockOS platform
7. 7 federal agencies accessed Oakland data despite SB 34 (July 2025)
8. 99% of alerts = zero police action (Oak Park study)
9. \$2.25M cost = 15-20 violence prevention positions

Procurement Waivers Violate Oakland's Transparency And Equity Commitments

Beyond the surveillance and sanctuary city concerns, this resolution circumvents two critical safeguards designed to protect taxpayers and Oakland's local economy.

1. Competitive Bidding Waiver: Fiscal Irresponsibility

Oakland Municipal Code Section 2.04.042 requires a multi-step competitive solicitation process for IT systems to ensure transparency, cost savings, and vendor accountability. This resolution asks you to waive that requirement.

Flock Safety claims sole-source status, yet competitors like Axon, Motorola, and Genetec offer similar surveillance systems. By waiving competitive procurement, the City denies taxpayers the cost savings and accountability that competitive bidding provides. This rushed process suggests OPD is prioritizing speed over responsible governance.

Questions Council Must Answer:

1. What emergency justifies bypassing transparency safeguards?
2. Why weren't alternative vendors given the opportunity to bid?
3. How can the City verify \$2.25M represents fair market value with no competition?
4. What precedent does this set for future IT procurement?

Oakland has been criticized by auditors for improper competitive bidding waivers in the past. We cannot afford to repeat those mistakes—especially for a \$2.25 million surveillance contract.

2. Local/Small Business Enterprise Waiver: Abandoning Oakland's Economy

The resolution waives Oakland's Local and Small Local Business Enterprise (L/SLBE) program requirements, sending \$2.25 million in taxpayer dollars to a Georgia-based corporation rather than investing in Oakland's local economy.

Oakland created the L/SLBE program specifically to support Oakland businesses, circulate wealth within our community, and advance racial equity through economic opportunity. Waiving this requirement contradicts the City's stated commitments and is particularly egregious given Oakland's severe budget crisis.

This waiver means:

- **\$2.25M leaves Oakland instead of supporting local jobs and businesses**
- **Oakland security and technology vendors never had the chance to compete**
- **The City abandons its equity commitments at the moment they matter most**
- **We prioritize an out-of-state corporation over Oakland's economic recovery**

Given Oakland's budget shortfalls and the difficult decisions Council has made to cut services, it is unconscionable to send millions to Georgia while local businesses and violence prevention programs go unfunded.

The Privacy Advisory Commission Recommended Rejection

On October 2nd, the Oakland Privacy Advisory Commission (PAC) voted to recommend rejecting OPD's proposed use policy and contract with Flock. Noting the lack of meaningful guardrails in this contract will create a significant risk for misuse of surveillance data, several commissioners highlighted Flock's track record of using as many as 50 million stolen data points for FlockOS and CEO Garrett Langley's willingness to deceive to the public, as it did in Loveland, CO. Additionally, **one commissioner pointed out that even the City's current agreement to allow Flock ALPR cameras under a contract with California Highway Patrol appears to violate Oakland's Sanctuary ordinance, which disqualifies it to be a city vendor.**

The Commission's expert analysis should carry decisive weight. The PAC was established specifically to provide civilian oversight and technical expertise on surveillance technology. When the expert body created for this exact purpose votes to reject a surveillance proposal, the Mayor and City Council have a democratic obligation to respect that recommendation.

Overriding the PAC's expert judgment would render civilian oversight meaningless and betray the community trust Oakland built when it created the nation's leading surveillance accountability ordinance.

Oakland Cannot Build The Deportation Database

We're not debating surveillance in the abstract—we're deciding whether to build a \$2.25 million deportation database while the federal government actively targets sanctuary cities.

Oakland is a sanctuary city. This is more than just a label - it reflects our moral obligation to do everything in our power to protect our undocumented neighbors. This is a clear opportunity for us to prevent ICE from gaining access to even more mass surveillance data in the City of Oakland that will be used to detain and deport our friends and neighbors.

Oakland is currently a plaintiff in federal litigation defending sanctuary jurisdictions from administration threats to withhold funding. We cannot simultaneously fight in court to protect sanctuary cities while voluntarily building surveillance infrastructure that undermines those very protections. The contradiction would be fatal—both legally and morally.

We have seen how this administration acts. We know that if we create a system of surveillance, they will come here and seize access to that system. The only opportunity we have to prevent empowering ICE is to refuse to gather this information in the first place.

Oakland's values, fiscal responsibility, local economy, and most vulnerable residents are all at stake. We urge you to vote no.

Sincerely,

18 Million Rising

Alliance for Boys and Men of Color (ABMoC)

All of Us or None

American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California (ACLU NorCal)

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)

Anti Police-Terror Project

Arab Resource and Organizing Center

Black Arts Movement Business District, Community Development Corporation of Oakland

BAY-Peace
Bike East Bay
Black Solutions Lab
California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice (CCIJ)
Californians United for a Responsible Budget (CURB)
California Walks
Care 4 Community Action
Center for Empowering Refugees and Immigrants (CERI)
Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice (CURYJ)
East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBASE)
East Bay Democratic Socialists of America
East Bay Sanctuary Covenant
Fight for the Future
GABRIELA Oakland
Justice Teams Network
Kapor Center Advocacy
Kindred Care Collective
Lavender Phoenix
MediaJustice
New Light Wellness
Oakland Rising
Positive Women's Network-USA
Secure Justice
SEIU United Service Workers West (SEIU USWW)
Showing Up for Racial Justice - San Francisco
Street Level Health Project
Trabajadores Unidos Workers United
Urban Peace Movement
Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club
Young Women's Freedom Center