Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR)
Information Guide and Frequently Asked Questions

The Monterey Park Police Department (MPPD) recognizes that the use of Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) technology has generated public discussion and concern nationwide. We take these concerns seriously and believe transparency is essential. MPPD utilizes ALPR technology, specifically 34 Falcon ALPR cameras, to support public safety operations.

This document is intended to provide the public with a clear explanation of the configuration, governance, auditing, and use restrictions of ALPR technology in the City of Monterey Park and to identify the safeguards in place to ensure compliance with California law, City policy, and community expectations concerning privacy and civil liberties.

Overview of Monterey Park's ALPR Deployment

The Monterey Park Police Department (MPPD) currently utilizes ALPR cameras installed within public rights of way which are used solely as a law enforcement investigative and situational awareness tool to support the City's public safety mission.

These ALPR cameras capture images and vehicle information only when a vehicle passes a camera location. These cameras are not designed or used to continuously monitor people, neighborhoods, or public spaces. The Department's fixed ALPR cameras provide investigators with vehicle-related information that may assist in solving crimes, locating stolen vehicles, identifying wanted vehicles, and supporting authorized criminal investigations.

The use of ALPR technology is strictly limited to authorized law enforcement purposes and is governed by California law, Department policy, and privacy and security standards. All system access is restricted to authorized personnel, is subject to audit, and is monitored to ensure accountability and compliance with applicable laws and Department policy.

MPPD has implemented specific safeguards to prevent misuse and ensure lawful use:

- Mandatory training on lawful ALPR use and California legal restrictions
- Regular audits of ALPR searches to ensure compliance
- System-level restrictions that block federal immigration enforcement–related searches in California
- Requirements that all searches be conducted for official police purposes and documented with an associated case/reference number and criminal offense code
- Prohibitions on personal or non-investigative use of ALPR data,

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Does MPPD share ALPR data with ICE or out-of-state agencies?

A. No. Consistent with the California Values Act and the Trust Act, MPPD does not share ALPR data with immigration enforcement authorities, except as required by a valid court order or subpoena. No subpoenas or court orders have been issued for Monterey Park's ALPR data since its inception. Access to MPPD ALPR data is limited to authorized personnel and California law enforcement agencies.

Q: How long is ALPR data retained?

A. ALPR data is retained for 30 days. Data is automatically deleted at the expiration of the applicable retention period.

Q: Does MPPD opt into ALPR's Nationwide Lookup tools?

A. No. MPPD has opted out of the Nationwide lookup tools. This configuration ensures compliance with California law and ensures that data captured by MPPD system is accessed and used only by California State agencies.

Q: Is facial recognition or biometric identification used with ALPR systems?

A. No. MPPD does not use facial recognition technology, biometric identification, biometric surveillance, behavioral analytics, or predictive profiling tools in connection with ALPR systems.

Q: Has MPPD experienced a data breach involving ALPR systems?

A. No data breaches involving the MPPD ALPR systems have been identified to date.

Q: Why do you list "Offense Code" and not "Reasons" in your audits?

A. Monterey Park Police Department (MPPD) requires personnel to enter an Offense Code when conducting a search in the ALPR Safety system. This required fields document the specific criminal offense being investigated.

The "Reason" field within the ALPR system is an optional field provided by the vendor and is not required to perform a search. Because optional fields may be completed inconsistently, MPPD relies on the required Offense Code to ensure every search is associated with a documented law enforcement purpose.

Q: Who at the Monterey Park Police Department has access to ALPR and is authorized to conduct searches?

A. Only MPPD Detectives and Public Safety Dispatchers (9-1-1 Dispatchers) are authorized to perform searches within the ALPR system. Every search must be conducted for an authorized law enforcement purpose and must be associated with a criminal offense and an official police report or case number.

For more information, including additional FAQs and a link to our Transparency portal, and to view our ALPR Policy, please visit our webpage https://www.montereypark.ca.gov/ALPR