# Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR)

## 422.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Automated License Plate Reader

(ALPR) technology, also known as License Plate Recognition, provides automated detection of license plates. The ALPR is used by the Edgewater Police Department to convert data associated with vehicle license plates for official law enforcement purposes, including but not limited to identifying stolen or wanted vehicles, stolen license plates, missing persons, Amber Alerts regarding abducted children, Medina Alerts regarding hit and run vehicles and Blue Alerts regarding officer safety issues. The ALPR may also be used to gather information related to active warrants, suspect interdiction and stolen property recovery.

An ancillary benefit of the ALPR is a reduction or elimination of racial profiling complaints or allegations because the ALPR provides automated detection of all license plates captured by the camera(s), mitigating the potential for subjective review of license plates by officers.

## 422.2 ADMINISTRATION OF ALPR DATA

All installation and maintenance of ALPR equipment, as well as ALPR data retention and access shall be managed by the Chief of Police or designee. The Chief of Police will assign personnel under his/her command to administer the day-to-day operation of the ALPR equipment and data.

## 422.3 ALPR OPERATION

Use of an ALPR is restricted to the purposes outlined below. Department personnel shall not use, or allow others to use, the equipment or database records for any unauthorized purpose.

(a) An ALPR shall only be used for official and legitimate law enforcement business.

(b) An ALPR may be used in conjunction with any patrol operation or official department investigation. Reasonable suspicion or probable cause is not necessary before using an ALPR.

(c) While an ALPR may be used to canvass license plates around any crime scene, particular consideration should be given to using ALPR-equipped cars to canvass areas around homicides, shootings and other major incidents. Partial license plates reported during major crimes should be entered into the ALPR system in an attempt to identify suspect vehicles.

(d) No member of this department shall operate ALPR equipment or access ALPR data without first completing department-approved training.

(e) The officer shall verify the license plate on the vehicle, including the state associated with an ALPR response through the Colorado Bureau of Investigation before taking enforcement action that is based solely upon an ALPR alert.

(f) No ALPR operator may access the Colorado Bureau of Investigation data unless authorized to do so.

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(g) Officers will not conduct a traffic stop based solely on an alert from the ALPR system. Any alert identified by the system should be considered one element, which would contribute to determining reasonable suspicion for a traffic stop.

## 422.4 ALPR DATA COLLECTION AND RETENTION

All data and images gathered by the ALPR are for the official use of the Edgewater Police Department and because such data may contain confidential information, it is not open to public review. ALPR information gathered and retained by this department may be used and shared with prosecutors or others only as permitted by law.

The Chief of Police or his/her designee is responsible to ensure proper collection and retention of ALPR data and for transferring ALPR data stored in department vehicles to the department server on a regular basis, not to exceed 30 days between transfers.

All ALPR data downloaded to the server should be securely stored for 1 year after the creation of the data for use in law enforcement investigations and thereafter may be purged unless it has become, or it is reasonable to believe it will become, evidence in a criminal or civil action or is subject to a lawful action to produce records. In those circumstances the applicable data should be downloaded from the server onto portable media and booked into evidence.

## 422.5 ACCOUNTABILITY AND SAFEGUARDS

All saved data will be closely safeguarded and protected by both procedural and technological means. The Edgewater Police Department will observe the following safeguards regarding access to and use of stored data:

(a) All non-law enforcement requests for access to stored ALPR data shall be referred to the records supervisor and processed in accordance with applicable law.

(b) All ALPR data downloaded to the mobile work station and server shall be accessible only through a login/password-protected system capable of documenting all access of information by name, date and time.

(c) Persons approved to access ALPR data under these guidelines are permitted to access the data for legitimate law enforcement purposes only, such as when the data relate to a specific criminal investigation or department-related civil or administrative action.

(d) Such ALPR data may be released to other authorized and verified law enforcement officials and agencies at any time for legitimate law enforcement purposes.

(e) ALPR system audits should be conducted on a regular basis.

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