

# Chula Vista ALPR Surveillance Moratorium

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Submitted on behalf of:

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The screenshot shows the Vigilant ALPR software interface. At the top, there are status indicators for 'Cam 1', 'LEARN', 'GPS', and 'System', all of which are green. The main interface is divided into several sections:

- Left Panel:** A vertical menu with buttons for 'Setup', 'Import Hit List', 'Start Scan', 'Add Route', 'Search', 'Day/Night', 'Minimize', and 'Exit'.
- Map:** A Google Maps view of Chula Vista, California, with a red location pin and a green location pin.
- Camera Feed:** A live video feed showing the rear of a dark-colored SUV with license plate 5BGW383. Below the feed, the license plate number '5BGW383' and 'Driver Side' are displayed.
- Table:** A table listing detected vehicles with columns for 'Hits', 'Plate', 'Plate Number', and 'Camera'.

Hits	Plate	Plate Number	Camera
	5BGW383	5BGW383	Driver Side
	4VKD849	4VKD849	Driver Side
	6CLY748	6CLY748	Driver Side
	5ZAJ872	5ZAJ872	Driver Side
	6DOL530	6DOL530	Driver Side
	5HKJ164	5HKJ164	Driver Side

# Shifting Timelines

**December 6, 2020: San Diego U-T article reveals that CVPD is sharing ALPR data with ICE and CBP**

**January 20, 2021:** “The police chief said she just recently learned that Immigration and Customs Enforcement or Customs and Border Protection were part of the more than 800 law enforcement agencies that were given access to Chula Vista’s data. ‘I blame myself,’ Kennedy said during a meeting with the Community Advisory Committee on Jan. 14. **‘I didn’t even realize that there was ICE and Border Patrol on there.’**” (Voice of San Diego, “Chula Vista Police Chief Says She Didn’t Know Department Shared Data With Feds”)

**Now they say they knew and sought legal guidance in April 2020:**

**April 9, 2020:** “The ACLU submitted a Public Records Act Request (PRA), regarding the Department’s subscription to Vigilant’s Law Enforcement Archival Reporting Network (LEARN). ...The Department researched its Vigilant ALPR system and provided the list of Vigilant LEARN agencies the Department both shared and received data from. **Included on the list were Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the United States Border Patrol (USBP). Meanwhile, the Department sought legal guidance to ensure that data sharing was compliant with SB54.**” (CVPD Staff Report **March 23, 2021**)

**No wait, it was 2017, maybe?:** “**As part of the process of subscribing to the LEARN database [2017],** and sharing of data with other agencies, the Department’s perspective was focused on ensuring legal compliance, specifically with SB54, the California Values Act, and how it relates to solving and preventing crime in the interest of community safety. **To ensure that the ALPR program was in compliance with SB54, the Police Department consulted with the City Attorney’s office.** The City Attorney’s office concluded that the ALPR program and related data sharing was not in violation of SB54...” (CVPD Staff Report/Agenda Statement, **April 20, 2021**)

# What is ALPR?

Automated license plate readers (ALPRs) are high-speed, computer-controlled camera systems that are typically mounted on street poles, streetlights, highway overpasses, mobile trailers, or attached to police squad cars. ALPRs automatically capture all license plate numbers that come into view, along with the location, date, and time. The data, **which includes photographs of the vehicle and sometimes its driver and passengers**, is then uploaded to a central server.

**Vendors say** that the information collected can be used by police to **find out where a plate has been in the past, to determine whether a vehicle was at the scene of a crime, to identify travel patterns, and even to discover vehicles that may be associated with each other.**

**ALPR data is gathered indiscriminately, collecting information on millions of ordinary people.** By plotting vehicle times and locations and tracing past movements, police can use stored data to paint a very specific portrait of drivers' lives, determining past patterns of behavior and possibly **even predicting future ones—in spite of the fact that the vast majority of people whose license plate data is collected and stored have not even been accused of a crime.**

# What is ALPR?

ALPRs collect **license plate numbers and location data along with the exact date and time the license plate was encountered**. Some systems are able to capture make and model of the vehicle. **They can collect thousands of plates per minute**. One vendor brags that its dataset includes more than 6.5 billion scans and grows at a rate of 120-million data points each month.

When combined, ALPR data can reveal the direction and speed a person traveled through triangulation. **In aggregate over time, the data can reveal a vehicle's historical travel**. With algorithms applied to the data, the systems can reveal regular travel patterns and predict where a driver may be in the future. The data also reveal all visitors to a particular location.

The data generally does not include the driver's name. However, law enforcement officers can **use other databases to connect individual names with their license plate numbers**.

In addition to capturing license plate data, **the photographs can reveal images of the vehicle, the vehicle's drivers and passengers, as well as its immediate surroundings—and even people getting in and out of a vehicle**. A [2009 privacy impact assessment report](#) indicates that the photographs may even include bumper stickers, which could reveal information on the political or social views of the driver.

<https://www.eff.org/pages/automated-license-plate-readers-alpr>

“Just a picture of the license plate...”



# Ask CVPD: How is ALPR being used in Chula Vista?

**2018**

Total detections **523,581** / Hits **156**

0.0298% hit rate

**2019**

Total detections **149,018** / Hits **55**

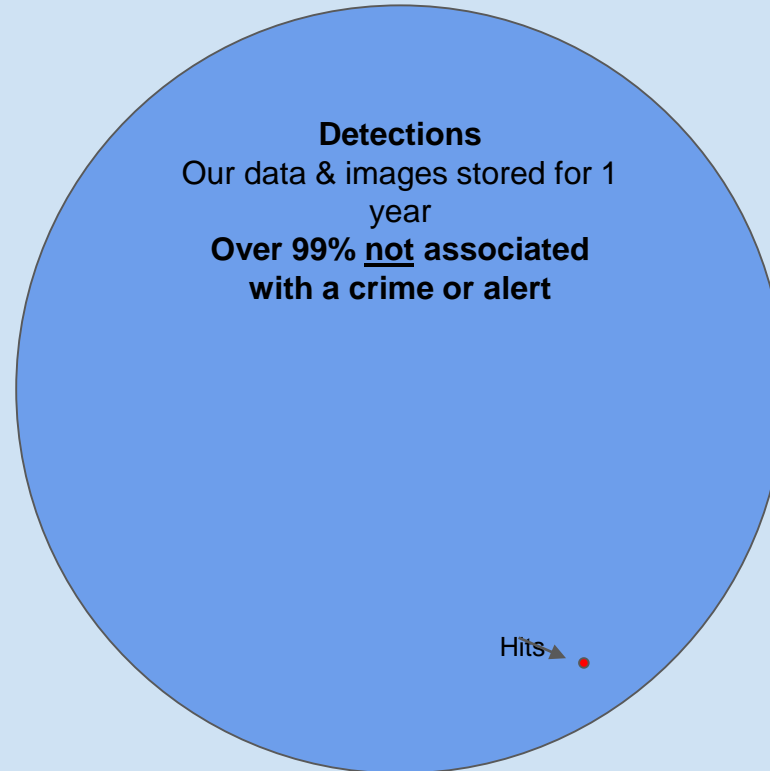
0.0369% hit rate

**2020**

Total detections **438,531** / Hits **235**

0.0536% hit rate

“Hits” = vehicles on “Hot List” at time of ALPR camera detection



# Oversight of CVPD - who makes decisions for the City?

- The CVPD ALPR data-sharing scandal clearly demonstrates the need for effective oversight of CVPD and police surveillance programs
- CVPD continues to cherry-pick and misrepresent information to justify its programs and requests
- CVPD staff are making decisions that need higher authority and scrutiny - even the Chief claimed she wasn't informed of ICE & CBP data-sharing
- City Council should demand full facts & understanding to make informed decisions on behalf of the community
- Why is CVPD still calling the shots and setting the agenda on this community issue?

## 7 - point response

1. CVPD cannot guarantee stored data won't be shared with Feds via CA fusion centers, other agencies, individual officers, abuse & misuse.
2. NO - need privacy oversight body above CVPD, not a handpicked group.
3. NO - quarterly "updates" to HRC with what expectation or content?
4. Not clear what this means but yes to forums and information before decisions.
5. NO - This is either utterly ignorant of the concerns or a cruel joke. Do better.
6. And a MORATORIUM until the review is done.
7. The "transparency" page was blank until after April 7, and now only has the CVPD presentation and report. The ALPR policy should be posted here.  
There are still SB 34 violations!
8. NO Vigilant renewal, NO new cameras (they were funded by a grant from DHS in coordination with CBP - what strings are attached?)



# What they say...

They say - it's just a picture of your license plate

**But... ALPR photos capture a larger area, often including people in and around the vehicle**

They say - you can only search with a license plate number

**But...you can search for all cars by location, track a vehicle's movements over time, and more**

They say - ALPR keeps our community safe

**But... 99% of stored images are not associated with any crime or investigation**

They say - "opinions and misinformation" are "spreading fear in our undocumented community"

**But... the fear is from knowing that CVPD secretly shared our data with ICE & CBP for 3 years!**

# Chula Vista Must Stop its ALPR Program

“Chula Vista has the important distinction in California to be designated as the first Certified Welcoming City for immigrant inclusion. As the second largest city in the county of San Diego, it risks undermining that recognition by continuing to use ALPR technology. More importantly, it risks undermining the civil liberties of all who live or pass through the city by not ending its poorly regulated ALPR program.”

San Diego Union-Tribune  
By PEDRO RIOS  
COMMUNITY VOICES CONTRIBUTOR



# Chula Vista needs your leadership!

The issue of surveillance technology is not going away.

Hard questions about privacy and surveillance need serious attention - not rubber stamps.

**PLEASE... PRESS PAUSE!**

Hold listening sessions in your districts before any decisions

Inform yourselves independently - don't rely entirely on CVPD reports and presentations

Require a serious review of the ALPR Program with documentation of past use and performance, privacy impacts, funding sources, and a plan for effective oversight going forward

The community does NOT want mass surveillance that harms our most vulnerable members and puts everyone's privacy and safety at risk!