

Comments on Milestone Cameras

A FAR better use of city funds than replacing the street lights on North Riverfront 1 year after installing what’s there now!

According the the Washington Post, the commission on civil rights and others find privacy rights abuse along with officials abusing the system capabilities for personal vendettas and stalking. Again, AI should not be used for law enforcement.

AI programming is known to be racist. Use of AI can lead to more biased law enforcement practices. AI is also incredibly harmful to the environment with significant energy and water use. Every search is the equivalent of dumping out a bottle of water. People also have the right to go about their daily business without being surviailed. I am very concerned the department could use this to assist ICE investigations and actively oppress community members

All AI models are highly susceptible to human bias, they are easiest and sexist and will be used to harm members of our community that are “illegal”. No human is illegal and no cops are good cops.

Anyone in public is constantly on camera for a variety of reasons. This will be a fantastic opportunity to enhance public safety and solve crime quickly and at a higher rate.

Anything that can help the Department of Public Safety solve crimes more efficiently and effectively is a great thing. It is an added benefit that the system is interconnected with other cities/counties making it easier for agencies to work together to keep communities safe.

As a software developer, I do not believe that using AI for something this importing is a good idea. AI technology is really mislabeled and has a lot of shortcomings that are not evident to the end user, therefore leading to a significant potential of issues.

Can't stop progressing with technology. Saves time and resources.

I have concerns about the effectiveness of the technology used and the potential abuses or misuses this could mean for the public. What guarantees do we have against abuse of surveillance in the name of "safety"?

I love milestone cameras!

I think an AI enhanced system in downtown would be a good preventative as well as greatly increasing efficiency.

I would hope that any footage determined by AI to be of a supposed suspect be reviewed by a human. AI is not the solution to every problem & is still very flawed & there are known struggles within it to differentiate between people of color. We can’t assume criminals are only POC & increasing surveillance of everyone in Mankato is not the solution. I would expect total transparency from law enforcement as to how this footage will be used & who has access to it.

I'm glad that the old cameras would be reused, I like how these cameras provide extra information and allow information to be found faster

I'm glad to see the older cameras would still be used - they can still help in other areas that are lacking and could benefit from surveillance.

I'm not really a fan of AI in general, and I think we have been fine so far, so why do this if it's not really necessary.

Invasion of privacy.

Investments in technology should benefit all Mankatoans, not serve only to make things easier for one profession in a community of tens of thousands. AI is the most mistake-prone and damaging of all new tech tools, and its benefits have never been properly studied or proven. Focusing on homelessness, food insecurity, and mental health treatment would be exponentially more beneficial use of \$130,000.00 than spending it on furthering a high-tech police state.

It's very helpful for the crime evidence.

My concern is with community-wide surveillance, which I don't think is justified due to its infringing on people's privacy.

I'm sure others in the community are concerned about the breadth and depth of any proposed city-wide surveillance system. It is worth noting that several court cases, including the U.S. Supreme Court (Carpenter vs. U.S.) and the 4th US Circuit Court of Appeals, relying on Carpenter (involving Baltimore) have ruled that the prolonged use of modern technology to monitor citizens' movements is unconstitutional and requires a warrant.

Additionally, a recent case is pending against the City of Norfolk, VA, regarding the Flock Surveillance System. The case involving Flock is Schmidt et. al. vs. City of Norfolk, et. al.. This case was filed on October 21, 2024. I’m unsure why the City would consider purchasing a system whose constitutionality is suspect and anything but settled.

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Overall I think very useful, but AI is still fairly new, and not 100% accurate. Would hate for officers to get lazy and rely on AI. Privacy also big concern.

Privacy is already attacked on so many fronts, online and in person, we are aware we are always being filmed, always being observed. We do not need yet more invasive technologies filming us at all times while we are in our communities. Crime rates are historically low, and we do not need to be trading our precious budgets and already-invaded privacy for what will likely be a null improvement. When we are monitored all day every day, from the moment we wake up, go online, go to work, go to the store, go home, how can we be sure that this is for our benefit and not vulnerable to exploitation? How can the city of Mankato ensure our data and privacy will be kept safe from people who want to track us for nefarious purposes, such as a stalker or doxxer? I strongly disagree that this is at all beneficial or needed.

Strongly support as long as there is transparency and accountability!

they are needed in and around the high crime apartments and neighborhoods, not where we already have cameras.

They are needed very badly to deter crime, protect residents and visitors, and to solve crimes if they happen. People expect cameras everywhere. Everyone even walks with a camera in their hand or pocket. Many homes have doorbell or security cameras. People know that know and we expect them to be everywhere in high crime areas especially.

This is a great piece of equipment but due to financial concerns I don't think it would be a great fir for Mankato. If the Mankato was a hot spot for crime then the amount of money wouldn't matter. Overall, would vote for these cameras if money wasn't an issue.

This is very important, especially in the downtown corridor where a lot of crime occurs, especially related to bar activity. This seems like a useful tool for law enforcement which will help them be more efficient. It seems common sense and inevitable that this technology will upgrade the existing infrastructure.

This proposal reflects a thoughtful and proactive approach to keeping our downtown area safe and responsive. I strongly support the use of AI analytics to aid in locating missing persons and accelerating investigations—this could be a game-changer for the community. I also appreciate the plan to repurpose existing cameras, which shows responsible and strategic use of city resources.

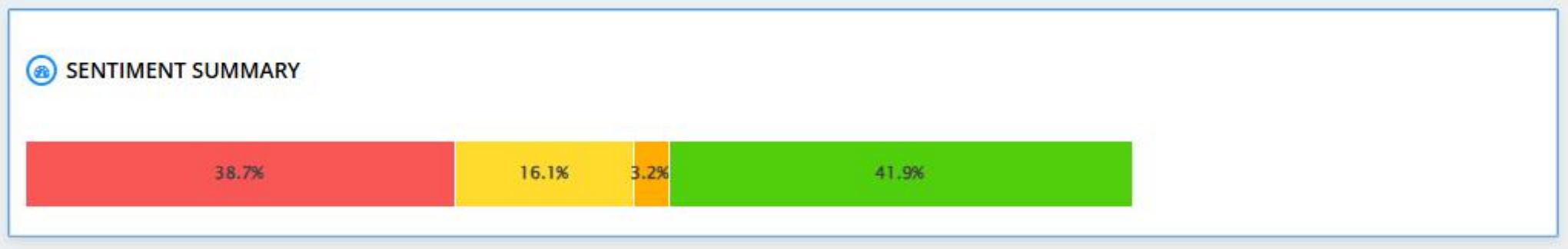
Too Much AI

We don’t need them and the cost is something we should not have to pay for. Our taxes in this state are ridiculous the way it is! Mankato is spending enough on all the other “projects” in downtown.

Who has access?

Maintenance costs?

Staff needed to develop and run system?



Key

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Orange = Neutral

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Comments on License Plate Recognition and Axon Cameras

Absolutely Not! This is nothing more than another way to invade people’s privacy. This will be abused to the nth degree and everyone knows it. There is no watchdog in place to make sure they are not misusing the technology. one thousand times “NO”!!

Activating ALPR in squad cars is a smart move—especially since the technology is already in place. Real-time alerts for stolen vehicles and missing persons can make a real impact in urgent situations. I’m glad to see Mankato exploring ways to enhance public safety with tools that are efficient, practical, and potentially life-saving.

Adding this technology in squad cars will be of great benefit, especially as the squad cars are mobile and moving around the city. Looking at the proposal, there are a ton of other police departments in the State who already use this technology. Mankato ought to be included in this category to ensure they are being progressive and innovative and LEADING THE WAY. Aside from crime solving, it seems this technology would also help with missing persons, amber alerts, and other welfare check/ BOLO acitivity

Another benefit is that it protects officers from crashes and distractions so they don't have to read license plates and call them in or type them into the computer.

Fantastic way for officers to be alerted of license plates in the system, especially those that may not be in the area of a camera, to catch those vehicles and react appropriately.

Helps officers stay safe without having to add plate numbers when driving. Saves time and more efficient.

I don’t think it’ll be utilized for the way its intended.

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Improving license plate recognition technology would be a positive investment in the community. Again, I would expect a double check system to be implemented to ensure accuracy.

It can enforce the parking restriction.

its good for safety when police need to look up license plate.

Only downside to me personally is the fact that it only stores up to 18 hours of footage. 9 times out 10 by the time you figure out that you recorded evidence without realizing it, the recording will be gone. Great equipment otherwise.

Only in favor of this because I’ve been followed by police multiple times while doing nothing wrong. I assume they’re running my plates but it is rather uncomfortable. Maybe if they can do that quicker, they won’t feel the need to follow me for 5 minutes.

Overall these cameras would help officers to proactively identify potential offenders and stolen vehicles.

Strongly support as long as there is transparency and accountability!

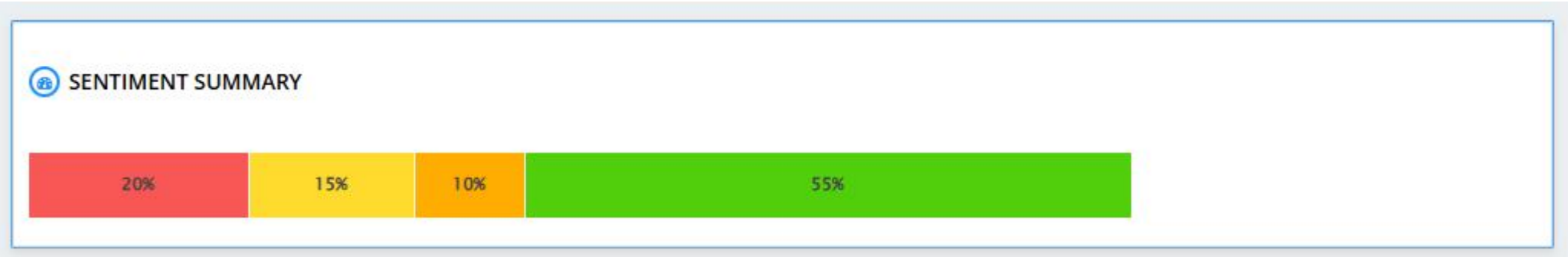
This could prove a useful technology for certain instances, but also be used overwhelmingly for nefarious purposes. The State of Minnesota has an abysmal track record of pulling over and murdering black and brown people over minor traffic offenses. If this technology furthers the excessive use of force that is rampant in MN policing, it must be banned.

This helps with identifying persons and can reduce the risk of the police of typing in the license plate numbers.

This sounds like a fantastic idea - my only concern likely comes from my lack of understanding on how this technology works. I'm assuming plates and sometimes be miss-identified through the technology when cars are dirty or covered in snow. I'm assuming an officer would have to verify the alert? I would hate for someone to be falsely accused of something because their plate was misread by technology.

Um.... I don't like ALPR

Would make it easier for officers to scan plates.



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Comment on Flock cameras

According the the Washington Post, the commission on civil rights and others find privacy rights abuse along with officials abusing the system capabilities for personal vendettas and stalking. Adding Flock cameras near city strengthens safety not just in Mankato, but regionally. Real-time collaboration with other agencies and the ability to help locate missing persons quickly would be beneficial to all.

Could be potential for mechanical issues

Currently in use by exactly how many, and which cities in Minnesota?

Helpful for serious issues like missing persons.

I do not like the idea of joining the national surveillance network. That is WAY too "big brother" for me

I guess I'm ok with this one if it helps find missing persons etc. I think the cost of the 13 cameras would be acceptable.

I have concerns about misuse of this to unwantedly monitor and track people. Again, what guarantees do we have that this technology will not be used in a breach of people's privacy in the name of safety? What accountability?

I love flock cameras!

I think that these cameras could be useful, but I would need to look into the company that provides the service.

If connected to a nationwide law enforcement network, it could possibly alert public safety and/or catch registered/known criminals coming into our city from out of state.

If the technology's primary use is to communicate the location of known missing person's locations, I agree with this. However, my previous concerns with privacy and who will have access to this technology and what sort of "intelligence" will be shared between law enforcement agencies are still present.

I'm sure others in the community are concerned about the breadth and depth of any proposed city-wide surveillance system. It is worth noting that several court cases, including the U.S. Supreme Court (Carpenter vs. U.S.) and the 4th US Circuit Court of Appeals, relying on Carpenter (involving Baltimore) have ruled that the prolonged use of modern technology to monitor citizens' movements is unconstitutional and requires a warrant.

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It can also help for crime.

Police can't be everywhere at every point in time. These are perfect technology to have eyes everywhere at every time. I can't think if a better deterrent to drug trafficking, human trafficking or criminal activity. We want Mankato to be a safe community and we want our public safety officers to be safe too. When crime does happen, we want to quickly be able to respond and gather evidence to find suspects, find witnesses, make an arrest, and successfully prosecute criminals. Video is one of the best ways to gather that evidence and save lives.

Proven to be a very effective tool in many other communities.

Strongly support as long as there is transparency and accountability!

These cameras can and will be used to crest a surveillance state. We are endangering the people in our community that are seeking asylum. It will create a state in which people will become easy targets for ice.

This camera store up to 30 hours of footage which isn't ideal but better than the AXON camera. Easy installation and faster response times.

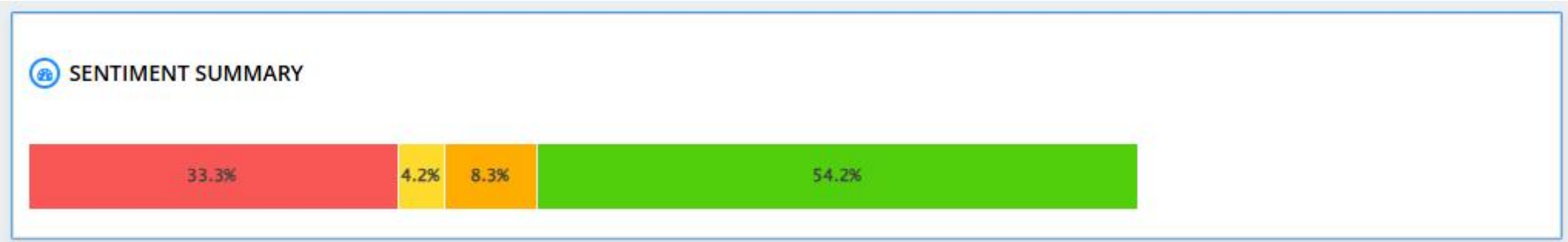
This Flock technology seems like it would be very helpful and increase police efficiency. It seems like it would also help with solving investigations. There are only so many roads in and out of Mankato so having FLOCK technology on heavily trafficked roads would be very helpful

This helps catch criminals, especially when trying to cross city lines.

This states this will "Provides real-time intelligence sharing between agencies" but at the same time you state "The Mankato Department of Public Safety is committed to using these tools responsibly, ensuring they are applied fairly and with proper cause". However, these are contradicting statements, since you give up control of how the technology is used as soon as you connect it to a nationwide network where you no longer have any influence over who operates the tech and how.

We don't need to spend money on this. Donate to the food bank.

With the reality of sex trafficking and other safety concerns, it's about time we connect to a nationwide law enforcement network to keep citizens safe.



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Comments on mobile trailer cameras:

Allows police to target changing areas of concern for a variety of reasons.
Depends on the purpose/event of using one of these. Great equipment to use for rallies or some sort of event that has many people in one area. Don't think this would be useful in other instances.

I am very much in favor of this. When everything was happening with George Floyd, I was very nervous to step outside at night. The first time I have ever seen one of these in action was near my home several months ago - a funeral was occurring nearby for what I was told was a suspected gang member. I actually felt safer and like I could walk around without concern of someone hurting me. And if something did occur, I felt more at ease knowing there would be camera footage. Having the flexibility of being able to move these around would be incredible for making citizens feel more safe and secure as well as helping to deter crime.

I don't believe these are necessary at all at "high profile events" (whatever that means) in Mankato as all events should be policed by actual officers and any additional cameras be used as last resort supplemental resource if an investigation is needed. I believe these would eventually end up in lower income neighborhoods & would not contribute to a welcoming sense of community.

I wonder about their effectiveness to "deter activity". How much added benefit do they provide if other camera equipment is implemented? Also they kinda ugly I would have appreciated this when crime rates started going up in my neighborhood

If crime is heavy in one area, these would be great to use in those areas to deter crime.

I'm concerned about the use of this tech to monitor certain neighborhoods or community events. Again bias can easily be introduced in the use of this tech.

I'm sure others in the community are concerned about the breadth and depth of any proposed city-wide surveillance system. It is worth noting that several court cases, including the U.S. Supreme Court (Carpenter vs. U.S.) and the 4th US Circuit Court of Appeals, relying on Carpenter (involving Baltimore) have ruled that the prolonged use of modern technology to monitor citizens' movements is unconstitutional and requires a warrant.

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Is there research showing this actually helps in high event situations?
It's expensive but defiantly helpful for the crime.

Mobile trailer cameras are a great solution for increasing visibility and safety during high-profile events or in areas with temporary concerns. I appreciate that they're intentionally visible—both as a deterrent and a reassurance to the community.

Strongly support as long as there is transparency and accountability!

That's just creepy.

These mobile trailer cameras are tried and tested in many jurisdictions, and I can't really think of any downsides to getting some for here.

they are easy target for crimes!

This is another no-brainer which would greatly help our law enforcement, especially as they observe crime trends in certain areas. This would greatly help with crime deterrence and case clearance.

This would be a lower priority and possibly could be a shared resource to or from another community if needed.

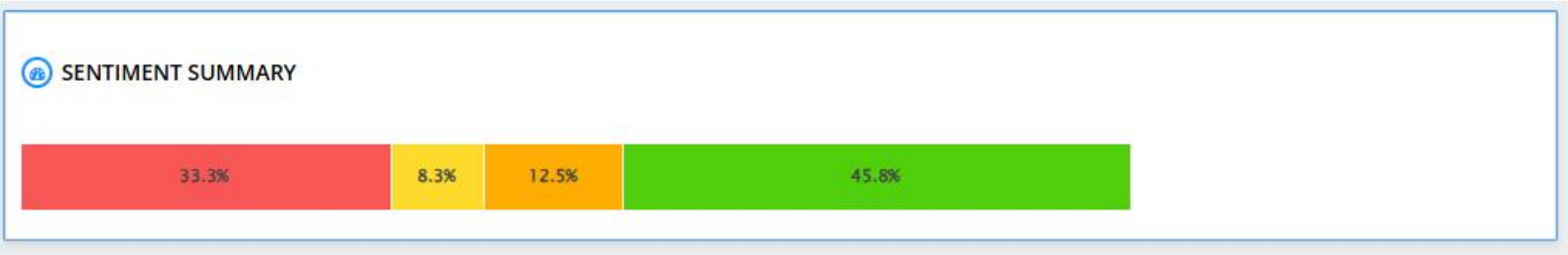
To Big unnecessary and costly. Sounds like "1984" the temporary surveillance can be done by the police and other safety officers when needed.

We don't need to spend money on this.

With more and more violence happening at large gatherings and/or events, this would allow officers to more efficiently monitor crowds, and may serve as a deterrent as well.

Would be great if protests turn violent or have hot crime spots that need to be reduced. Deterrence is a plus.

Yet more funding we do not have for something we do not need that will only encroach on our privacy more.



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What additional feedback or comments do you have about using technology to improve community safety in Mankato?

Again, cameras are everywhere today and each day more are being installed on property, homes, cars, buildings, etc. Mankato has been very responsible with policies and procedures - like the drone and body-worn camera policies. Criminals have so many tools and have a huge advantage over victims. In order to have a safe community, we need to provide Public Safety with effective and efficient tools and technology to protect us as well as themselves. These solutions are extremely cost effective and the best deterrent for crime that is available today. I would speculate that criminals will avoid Mankato with this technology in place. I have full trust in the city staff to use this technology responsibly and to protect private data.

All of this will do NO good until our weak and spineless County Attorney starts 1) doing more than slaps on the wrist 2) enforcing gun laws and sentencing for felon with a gun, obliterated serial numbers, crime while in possession of a gun, and 3) contacting the feds for federal charges on #2.

Cameras are over used

Even if it enhances public safety minimal use should be the goal. Having Big Brother watching contributes to mistrust and the perception that it is us against them. I am satisfied with the existing security, just because more is available does not mean it is wanted. Where will the survey results be posted? Even if the public is opposed, will it make any difference in the decision????????????? doubtful. Sounds like more heavy handed government

I am not a technical resident of the city as I live in South Bend township, but I work in Mankato, shop in Mankato and spend time in Mankato. Anything you can do to keep our community safer and make police officers jobs safer and more effective against crime is a good investment.

I appreciate the City's efforts to prioritize community safety through these thoughtful technology enhancements. It's encouraging to see transparency and public input being valued in the decision-making process. Thank you, City of Mankato!

I don't believe AI & increased surveillance is the answer to crime issues in Mankato. A well-trained & socially responsible police force should be the first line of defense. Mankato police should also have mental health professionals or social workers on staff to deal with individuals experiencing crises & have the training to de-escalate any and all situations without the use of violence if at all possible. I believe these Mankato PD does its job well in preventing crime in our community & I would expect any & all implementations of proposed technology be subject to intense public scrutiny to ensure that the public's best interests are the utmost priority.

I think cameras are very important.

I think it is important for Mankato PD to remain current with the trends and technology that is out there. These proposals seem like they are in line with that. These tools can greatly help law enforcement in the course of their duties.

I think that these technologies are more beneficial than harmful and can lead to good use in the city of Mankato. Let's get it done!

I think this technology upgrade to new and existing systems, as well as the new purchases (e.g. the portable trailer), would all be great uses of the City of Mankato's technology dollars and to promote safety in the community.

I welcome information that shows the effectiveness of any of this technology from other like-size communities that currently use this.

I would suggest reviewing the effectiveness of the technology with those cities that have had these proposed plans in place for at least two years. What was the impact? Cost effectiveness? Crime rates? Privacy concerns?

I'm sure others in the community are concerned about the breadth and depth of any proposed city-wide surveillance system. It is worth noting that several court cases, including the U.S. Supreme Court (Carpenter vs. U.S.) and the 4th US Circuit Court of Appeals, relying on Carpenter (involving Baltimore) have ruled that the prolonged use of modern technology to monitor citizens' movements is unconstitutional and requires a warrant.

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Proceed with caution.

Improving safety through technology should focus on providing real-time benefits to the citizens of the Greater Mankato Area. Public Safety should be at the very bottom of the list for technological investment, because improving the lives of Mankatoans elsewhere, lessens the reliance on an outdated system of policing.

Make sure that any surveillance data can not fall into the wrong hands. A lot of things can go wrong when bad people misuse power like this.

Maybe this technology could have helped solve the murder near All Seasons Arena.

Measures need to be taken to prevent misuse.

Most people want to live in a community in which they feel safe. Giving law enforcement all the tools available to create a safe community is money well spent. Making it more difficult for criminals to avoid detection and capture will make our community a safer place to live in.

My biggest concern is going to be in the potential to misuse this technology, especially in the cases of people suspected of crimes. How effective is the technology, especially in AI? What protections do the people have in this case? What avenues do the public have to keep police accountable with this technology?

Thank you for your time

My taxes are too high the way it is. We don't need to spend this kind of money on these tech items. Pretty soon there will cameras in our neighborhood, our cars (because we use public roads) and everywhere else. its creepy knowing you're being watched. What we have is good enough!

N/A

No technology or devices make any difference except in how you use them. Use them wisely.

Nobody likes being watched or followed. When the Trump administration becomes a dictatorship in the near future, this will only harm our citizens.

Overall some of these items are probably good, but there are some adjustments needed to ensure the data generated is used responsibly and does not end up being misused.

Say no to AI. Say no to Nazi's. Keep our community safe by fighting against fascism. No one is illegal on stolen land. Choose kindness.

Strongly support as long as there is transparency and accountability!

Thank you for being a department that is willing to make an investment in the safety of our community by using the technology available.

The privacy implications (legal and ethical) of implementing or improving cameras are significant. I'm not convinced that these improvements are warranted.

This "project" makes me feel less safe in the community actually.

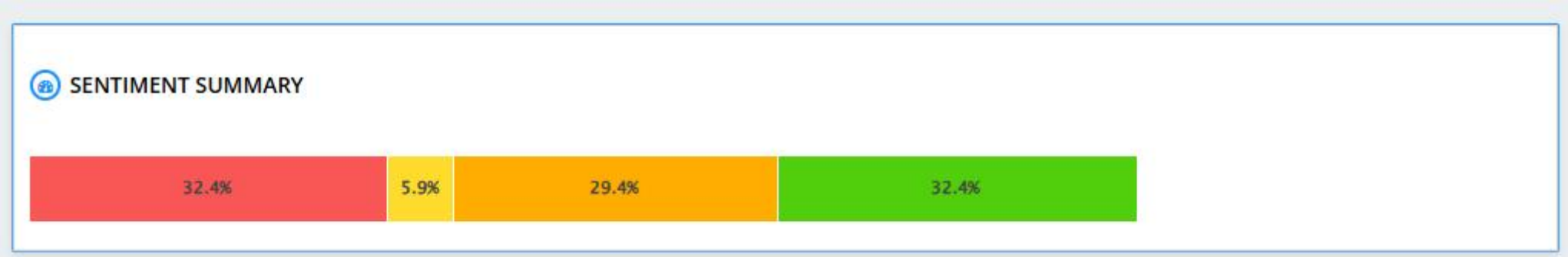
This is an unnecessary expense that will make Mankato residents less safe rather than more safe.

This technology is already in use by many cities across the state and country.

We absolutely need these pieces of technology implemented. I frequent social media websites and I see a lot of citizens stating Mankato is turning into "little Chicago" or "Little Minneapolis". I don't quite agree with them on that but it's sending the message that more and more people who live in town don't feel as safe as they do in other communities. Making our citizens feel safer is the first step to a successful community and allowing our city to grow and flourish.

We deserve a city that understands safety is built by ensuring everyone has the resources they need to care for themselves and their community. This means supporting social programs that help us meet our basic needs—not subjecting us to ineffective and invasive surveillance technology. You have the power to stop this expansion and prioritize programs that actually keep people safe. There is no valid reason to do otherwise.

This project would enable 24/7 tracking of residents' movements, feed personal data through error-prone AI systems, and potentially assist ICE in targeting vulnerable members of our community. Our community deserves investments in real safety—housing, food access, healthcare, education, and social support—not invasive and ineffective AI surveillance.



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Other Comments Received

Q4 What benefits of implementing new technologies in community safety are most important to you? (Other)

This is ALL a huge invasion of privacy ALREADY. we don't need this technology. Honestly, DEFUND THE POLICE a bit. Their presence fear mongers, it doesn't make people feel safe.

Accountability, transparency, safety of first responders. I have seen just how this technology works with AI and it really is amazing. Hundreds or thousands of hours of video footage can be searched in a matter of seconds to help protect people quickly.

I don't think the benefits outlay a person's right to privacy.

AI and technologies that have been shown to be often incorrect should not be used by law enforcement as evidence or motive. These technologies often invent responses and data that are made up because the machine does not understand the concept of what it is responding to.

What concerns, if any, do you have about adopting these technologies? (Other)

This whole "project" targets the already oppressed communities in this 'community'. How about taking some of this money and putting it into more county housing grants, so the people you're targeting in these areas can have a chance at getting a home some day, maybe donate a chunk to the food bank since the state of our federal government is in literal shambles. Let's think smarter with our dollars here. This whole entire thing SCREAMS surveillance state, and the drone that ALREADY fly's around every single night, IS MORE THAN ENOUGH.

I'm afraid this is a gateway to speed cameras and red light cameras. Also concerned that these will not be applied where they're needed to high crime areas like 5th and 6th streets, Homestead & Eastport Apartments, Hilltop Lane Apartments.

There are always vulnerabilities in any systems. These weaknesses could give hackers access just giving them stronger tools to use to spy. This would put the public, law enforcement and politicians at risk.

Cameras could lead to fewer officers out on patrol

Definitely Misuse of the technology by police. Especially with the license reader. I have no doubt in my mind that this will become a daily screening device for them. Just to see if they can find anything on anyone=entrapment! We are guaranteed the right to privacy and this is a direct violation of it!

Consistent patterns of racial prejudice by Public Safety has created an openly hostile, xenophobic agenda. If Mankato, MN, wishes to be a safe and thriving community, it must abandon and condemn all unconstitutional actions.

I am extremely uncomfortable with the potential of this technology infringing on citizens' right to privacy. Our community deserves investments in real safety—housing, food access, healthcare, education, and social support—not invasive and ineffective AI surveillance.