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Detroit residents speak out against adding more license plate readers throughout the city



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The debate rages on about installing more license plate readers throughout the city of Detroit. Many residents spoke out about them Thursday night during a public forum “I’m tired of being surveilled,” one commenter said. “We have too much big brother surveilling. Everything we do,” another said.



By: Peter Maxwell

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(WXYZ) — The debate rages on about installing more license plate readers throughout the city of Detroit. Many residents spoke out about them Thursday night during a public forum.

“I’m tired of being surveilled,” one commenter said.

“We have too much big brother surveilling. Everything we do,” another said.

Detroit police went before the Board of Police Commissioners requesting \$5 million to install more license plate readers in the city. Their reasoning—an increase in car thefts.

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“This is strictly a vehicle. A vehicle that has already been reported being involved in a crime or another serious matter,” Deputy Chief Franklin Hayes said.

Detroit police say they want to add 400 more license plate readers at 100 intersections.

Police say the readers will only be used for serious and violent crimes, locating amber alerts, suspects or fugitives, and other crime analyses.

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They also emphasized that these readers would not be used for traffic violations or take photos of people, but the ACLU has concerns.

“Gathering and storing data on people who are simply going about their daily lives is invasive governmental overreach,” Gabrielle Dresner with ACLU said.

The other major concern is who has access to the data.

“Don't think it's just going to be, 'Oh we're looking for a car.' Or looking for any amber alert. Pretty soon, anybody who has a warrant, child support...” one commenter said.

DPD says the cameras create readable data of license plates which include the state, make, and model of the vehicle, along with noticeable features.

“This isn't an effort to invade anyone’s privacy or anyone's constitutional rights or liberties. This is specific to vehicles that are reported stolen that’s it,” Deputy Chief Hayes said.

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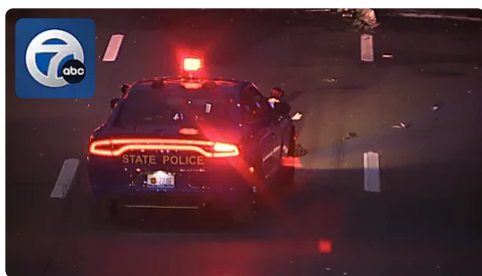
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