Surveillance Report.

Salem dropped Flock for eight city cameras running software from a little-known vendor. *The rules for that data are still not public.*

On July 23, 2026, Mayor Dominick Pangallo announced that Salem would let its contract with Flock Safety, the company behind plate-reading cameras now common across American suburbs, expire. The city said there were insufficient protections for the plate-reader data Flock's system generated.

Salem kept plate readers. This summer it installed eight Axis cameras that came with OdinEye software pre-installed, according to Police Chief Lucas Miller. The Boston Globe reports Salem appears to be the first Massachusetts city to use OdinEye, a product the paper could tie only to a Connecticut police detective. Miller told the Globe the data "resides in Salem" and that access is limited to a few detectives, a supervisor and a captain. The city has not signed an OdinEye contract and may look at other vendors. We found no council vote on the new cameras.

Why it matters

A plate reader photographs every car that passes and logs the plate, the time and the place. Weeks of them show where a person lives, works and worships. OdinEye is built so police can search plate data across towns that use different camera brands. Salem has not published how long it keeps plate reads or which outside agencies, if any, can search them.

"Salem's sanctuary ordinance bars sharing records with ICE. It does not mention plate-reader data."

Salem also runs other cameras. In 2017 the City Council approved police video cameras at four public sites, including Proctor's Ledge and Pickering Wharf. Unlike Cambridge, Somerville and Boston, Salem has no ordinance requiring council approval or yearly public reports on surveillance tools.

WHAT WE FOUND

Plate readers: Axis cameras, OdinEye software

● RULES NOT PUBLIC

Eight cameras installed mid-2026. Retention, sharing and contract not disclosed.

Police video at public sites

● ON RECORD

Council approved cameras at four sites in 2017, paid partly with port security and block grants.

Body-worn cameras

● ON RECORD

State grants of $79,834 (2021) and $23,555 (FY23). Atlas entry

CrimeTracer police records network

● SHARES DATA WIDELY

Statewide system pooling reports from 360+ agencies. ICE investigators could search it until about 2023. Cambridge Day · Atlas

Surveillance oversight law

○ CHECKED, NONE FOUND

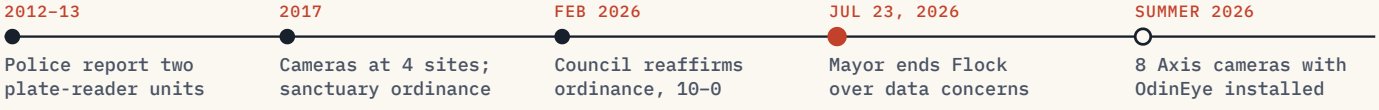
No local ordinance and no annual surveillance report.

Commercial data exchange

○ CHECKED, NONE FOUND

No Salem or Essex County agency, sheriff included, in FinePrint's records of the LexisNexis data exchange.

SALEM AND POLICE CAMERAS, A TIMELINE



FIVE QUESTIONS SALEM HASN'T ANSWERED

01 Will Salem sign with OdinEye or another vendor, and will the City Council get a vote?

02 How long are plate reads kept, and who approved that rule?

03 Which outside agencies or networks can search Salem's plate data through OdinEye?

04 Has anyone independently checked OdinEye's security?

05 Does the Sanctuary for Peace ordinance cover plate-reader and camera data?

AROUND ESSEX COUNTY

TOWN	PLATE READERS	DRONES	BODY CAMS	NOTE
Salem	●		●	Axis + OdinEye
Lynn	●			Flock
Haverhill	●			ELSAG
Peabody	●			
Lawrence	●	●		
Methuen		●	●	DJI drones
Andover		●	●	
Newburyport			●	
County Sheriff			●	Axon, since 2013

The Sheriff's Department says state law bars it from holding people on an ICE detainer alone (Patch, 2024). Nearly every county police department also uses CrimeTracer, and at least ten more have state body-camera grants. Source: Atlas of Surveillance. A blank cell means no public record, not proof of absence.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Ask at a meeting. Any resident can raise these questions during public comment at a City Council meeting. Agendas and minutes are online (links below). Quincy's council is weighing an ordinance requiring council approval of surveillance tools; Salem has none.

Request the records. Massachusetts law lets anyone ask for the camera purchase records, any OdinEye agreement, the data policy and the list of agencies with access. The state's public records guide explains how.

RESOURCES

CITY MEETING RECORDS

Council agendas and video
CivicClerk portal

Agenda Center
Boards and commissions

Agenda archive · Minutes archive
salemma.gov

City document library
Laserfiche

PAST RECORDS REQUESTS

Salem Police Department
MuckRock · 24 requests filed

Salem City Clerk
MuckRock

Essex County Sheriff
MuckRock · 26 requests filed

Essex County District Attorney
MuckRock · 8 requests filed

REPORTING AND DATA

What replaced Flock: OdinEye
Boston Globe · Nov 6, 2026

Salem to end Flock contract
Patch · Jul 23, 2026

CrimeTracer shares police data statewide
Cambridge Day · Aug 19, 2025

Atlas of Surveillance: Salem
EFF and University of Nevada, Reno

Plate reader (ALPR)
A camera that reads and logs every license plate it sees, with time and place.

OdinEye
Software that pools plate data from different camera brands so police can search it together.

CrimeTracer
A statewide network that lets police search hundreds of departments' reports at once.

Oversight ordinance
A local law requiring council approval and public reports for surveillance tools.

How we built this. FinePrint reviewed grant and procurement records compiled by the Atlas of Surveillance, past public records requests on MuckRock, FinePrint's records of agencies feeding commercial data exchanges, news coverage and city meeting records. We have not seen any contract or data policy for Salem's new plate readers. If you have one, or spot an error, write to us through fineprint.report.