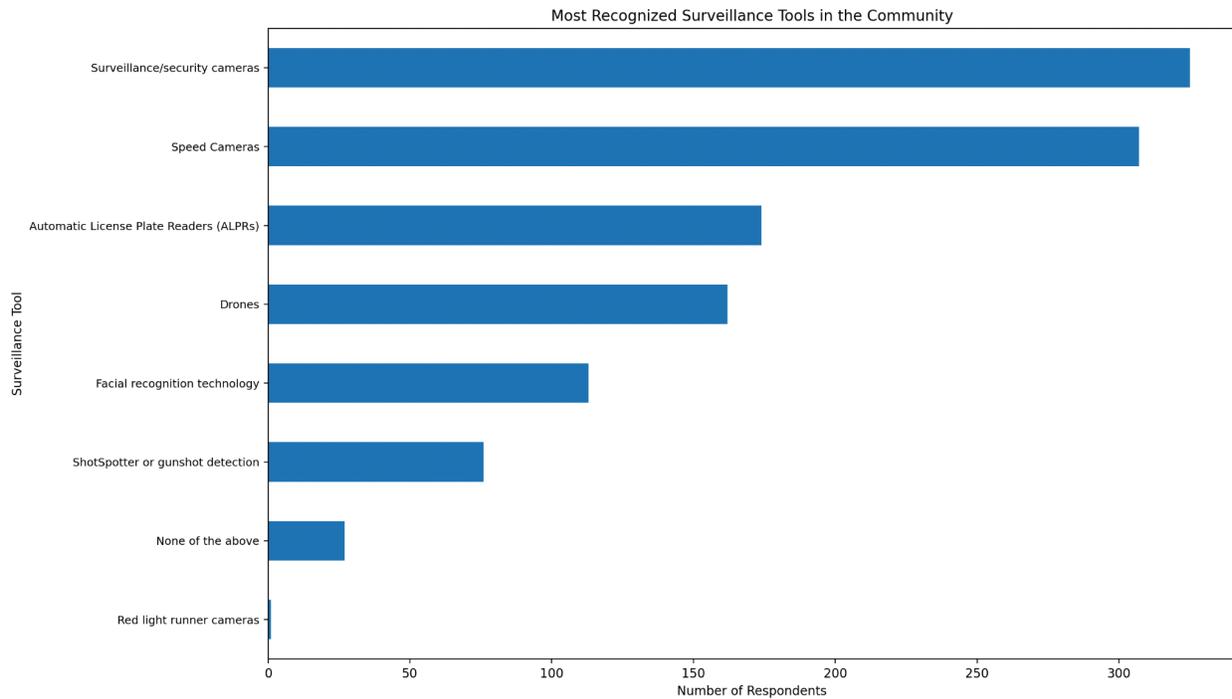Support Variables: Which of the following surveillance tools have you heard of or seen in your city? (Select all that apply) (8dl9hmt)

Question: Which surveillance tools are most recognized in the community?

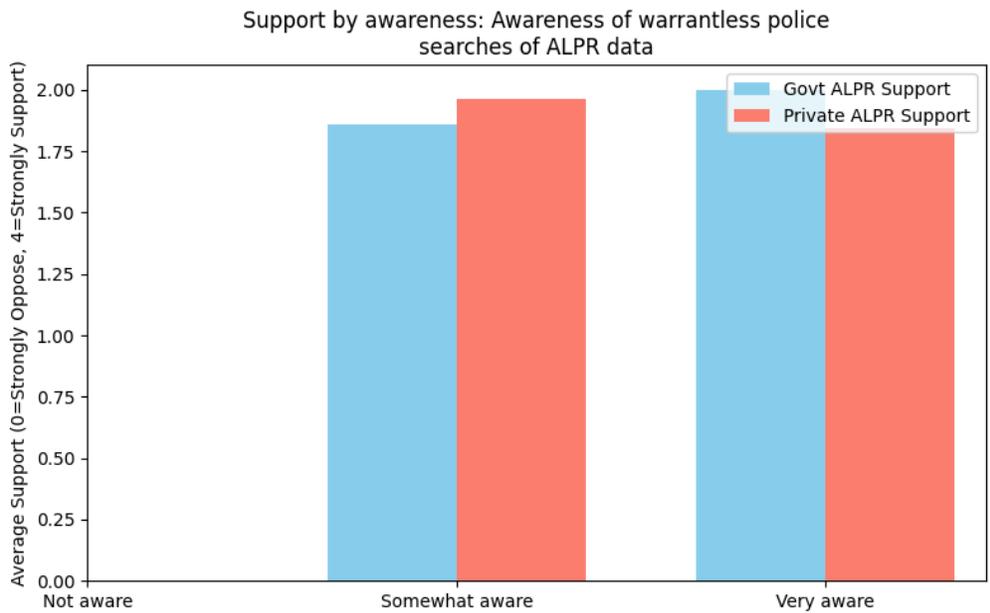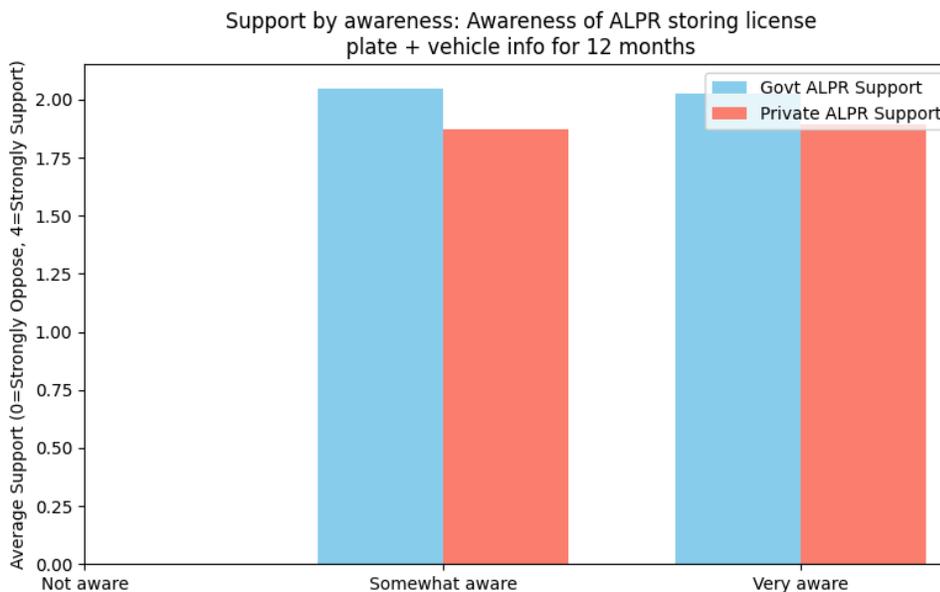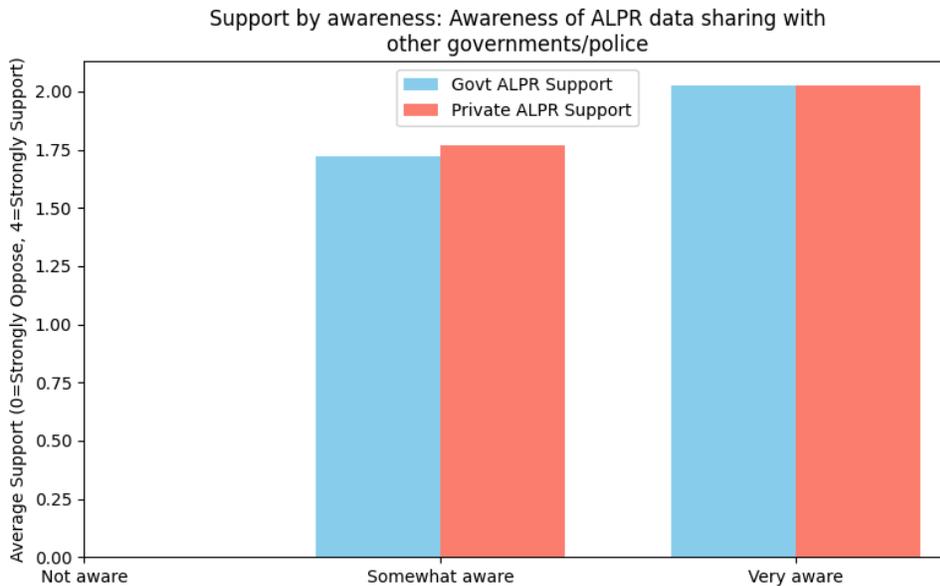Most Recognized Surveillance Tools in the Community

Conclusion: The survey findings align with existing literature showing that CCTV and other surveillance cameras are the most visible in public settings. This visibility is often reinforced by signage indicating that an area is under surveillance. As a result, community members are more likely to notice these cameras compared to automated license plate readers (ALPRs), which, despite widespread deployment, are less perceptible. However, as ALPRs receive increasing media attention, public awareness of these tools is also growing. Future research could usefully distinguish between community members' awareness through direct observation ("seeing") versus indirect exposure ("hearing about") and examine how these modes of recognition shape their perceptions and attitudes.

Support Variables:
- In some Bay Area cities, Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) cameras store an image of your license plate, vehicle make and model… (6s6r3ex)
- Police can search the Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) database for your data without a warrant or approval… (zke2ete)
- Police can legally share your license plate Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) data with other local governments/police department… (skzr4a8)
- How supportive are you of Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) cameras installed by local governments and used by law enforcement? (y7ka0mc)
- How supportive are you of private individuals or businesses installing Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) cameras and sharing the data voluntarily with police? (uktyzgu)

Question: How concerned are people about ALPR data being shared with federal agencies (ICE, FBI)?

Support by awareness: Awareness of ALPR data sharing with other governments/police

Support by awareness: Awareness of ALPR storing license plate + vehicle info for 12 months
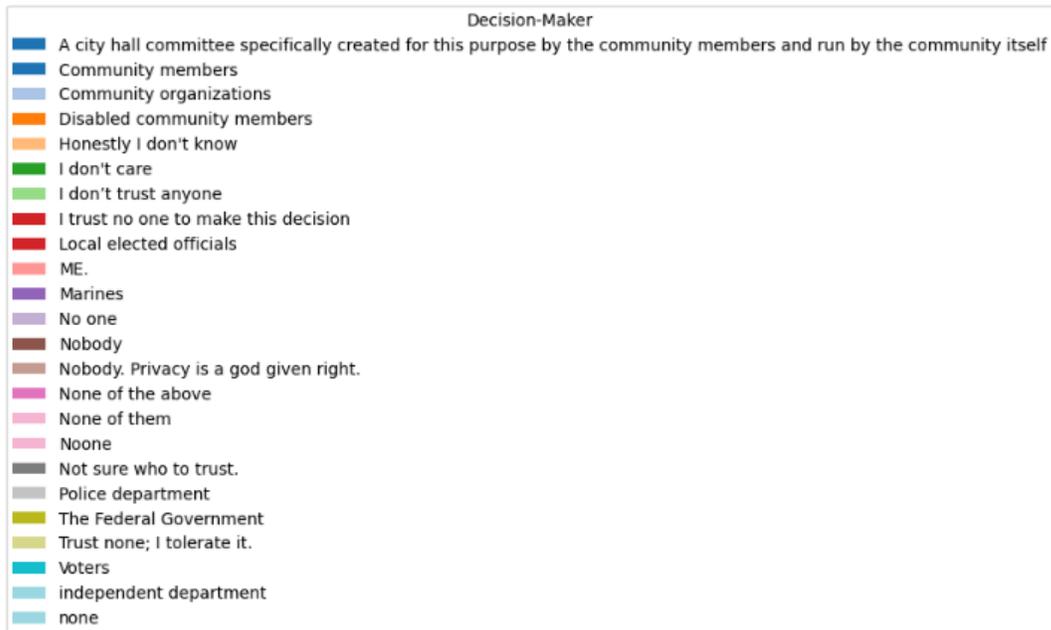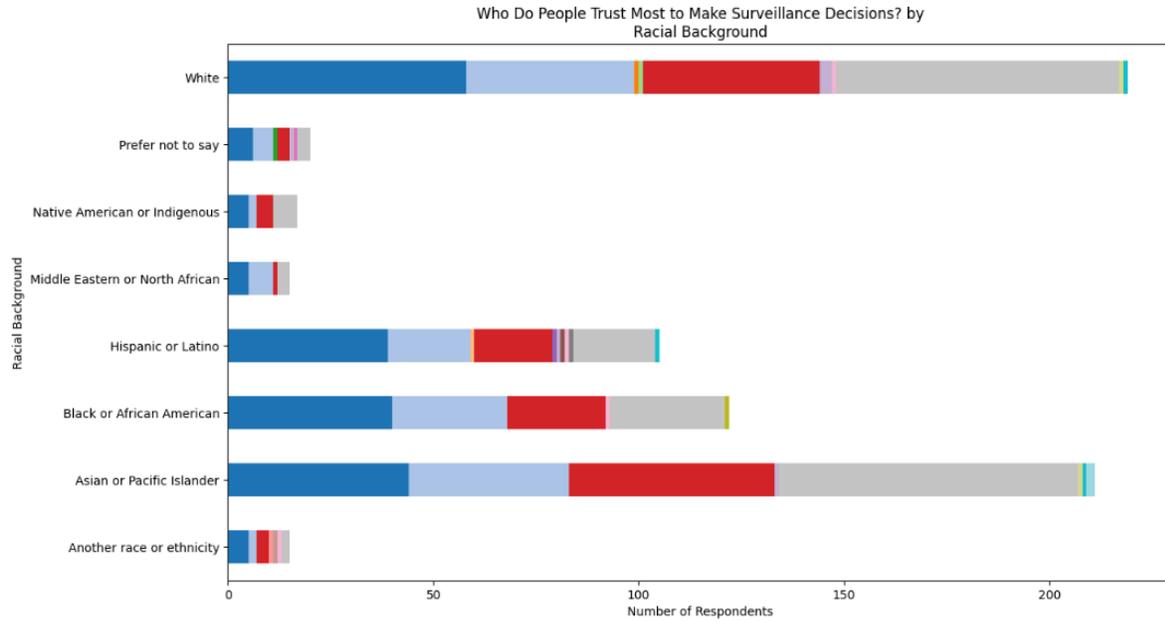
Conclusion: The findings suggest that the relationship between awareness and support for ALPRs is not straightforward. While advocacy perspectives often argue that greater public knowledge would generate stronger opposition, the survey results indicate only modest shifts rather than sharp increases in concern. One possible explanation is that citizens may be generally aware of ALPRs but do not fully understand the broader implications of their use, particularly regarding data retention and federal data-sharing. Future research should therefore distinguish between general awareness of ALPR technology and more specific awareness of how ALPR data is shared with agencies such as ICE and the FBI, as these dimensions of knowledge may shape public opinion in different ways.

Support Variables: Who do you trust to make decisions about how surveillance is used in your city? (Select all that apply) (w02ux9i); What is your race or ethnicity? (Select all that apply) (d8morv7)

Question: Who do people trust most to make surveillance decisions?

Who Do People Trust Most to Make Surveillance Decisions? by Racial Background

Decision-Maker
- A city hall committee specifically created for this purpose by the community members and run by the community itself
- Community members
- Community organizations
- Disabled community members
- Honestly I don't know
- I don't care
- I don't trust anyone
- I trust no one to make this decision
- Local elected officials
- ME.
- Marines
- No one
- Nobody
- Nobody. Privacy is a god given right.
- None of the above
- None of them
- Noone
- Not sure who to trust.
- Police department
- The Federal Government
- Trust none; I tolerate it.
- Voters
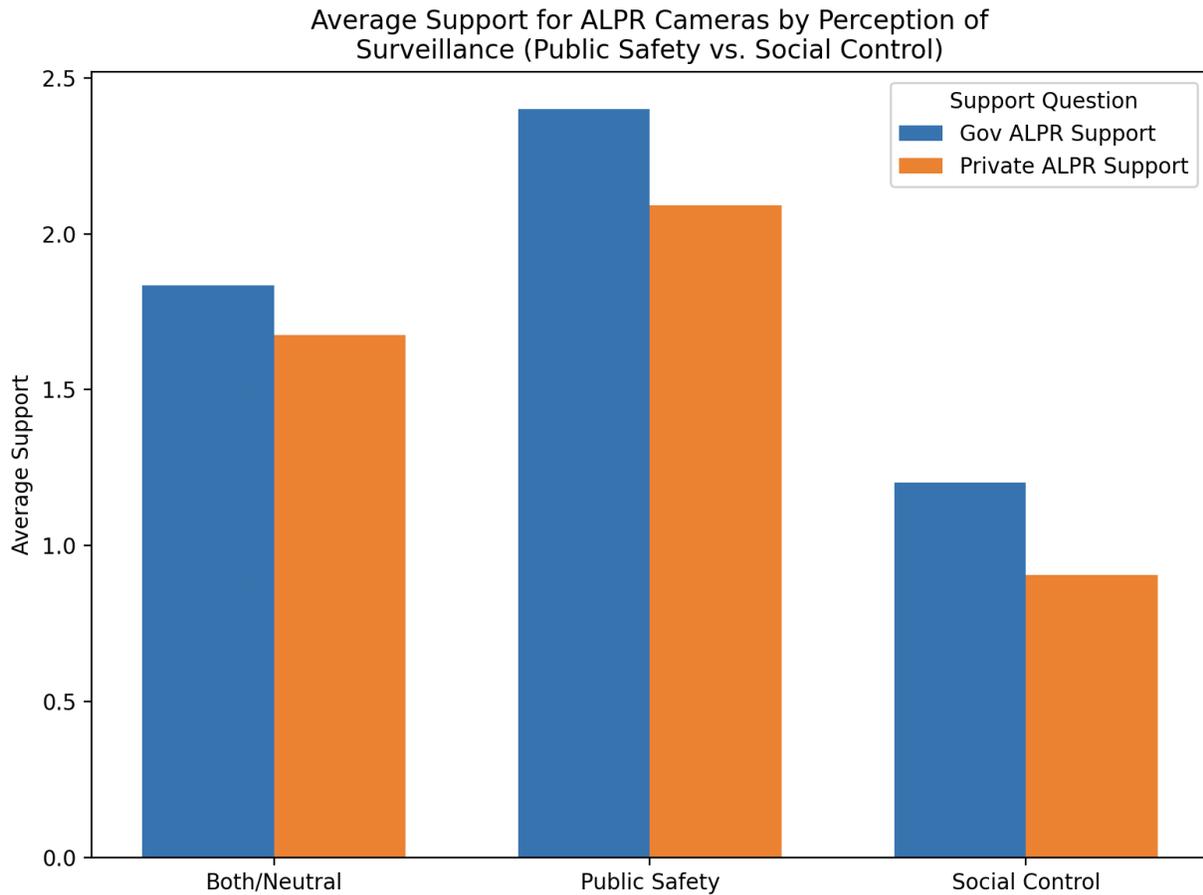- independent department
- none

Conclusion: White and Asian/Pacific Islander respondents express the highest levels of trust in the police, suggesting confidence in formal law enforcement structures to manage surveillance. In contrast, Black, Hispanic/Latino, and Middle Eastern respondents place greater trust in community members, reflecting a preference for grassroots or locally accountable oversight. Patterns of distrust also reveal systemic skepticism: communities of color tend to trust the police the least, aligning with broader research on over-policing and disproportionate surveillance harms. The implication for governance is that effective oversight of surveillance tools such as ALPRs will likely require hybrid models that balance institutional authority with meaningful community input.

Support Variables:
- How supportive are you of Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) cameras installed by local governments and used by law enforcement? (y7ka0mc)
- How supportive are you of private individuals or businesses installing Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) cameras and sharing the data voluntarily with police? (uktyzgu)
- Do you believe surveillance is being used more for public safety or social control?

Question: Do people view surveillance as more about public safety or social control, and does that perception predict support? (Out of 4)

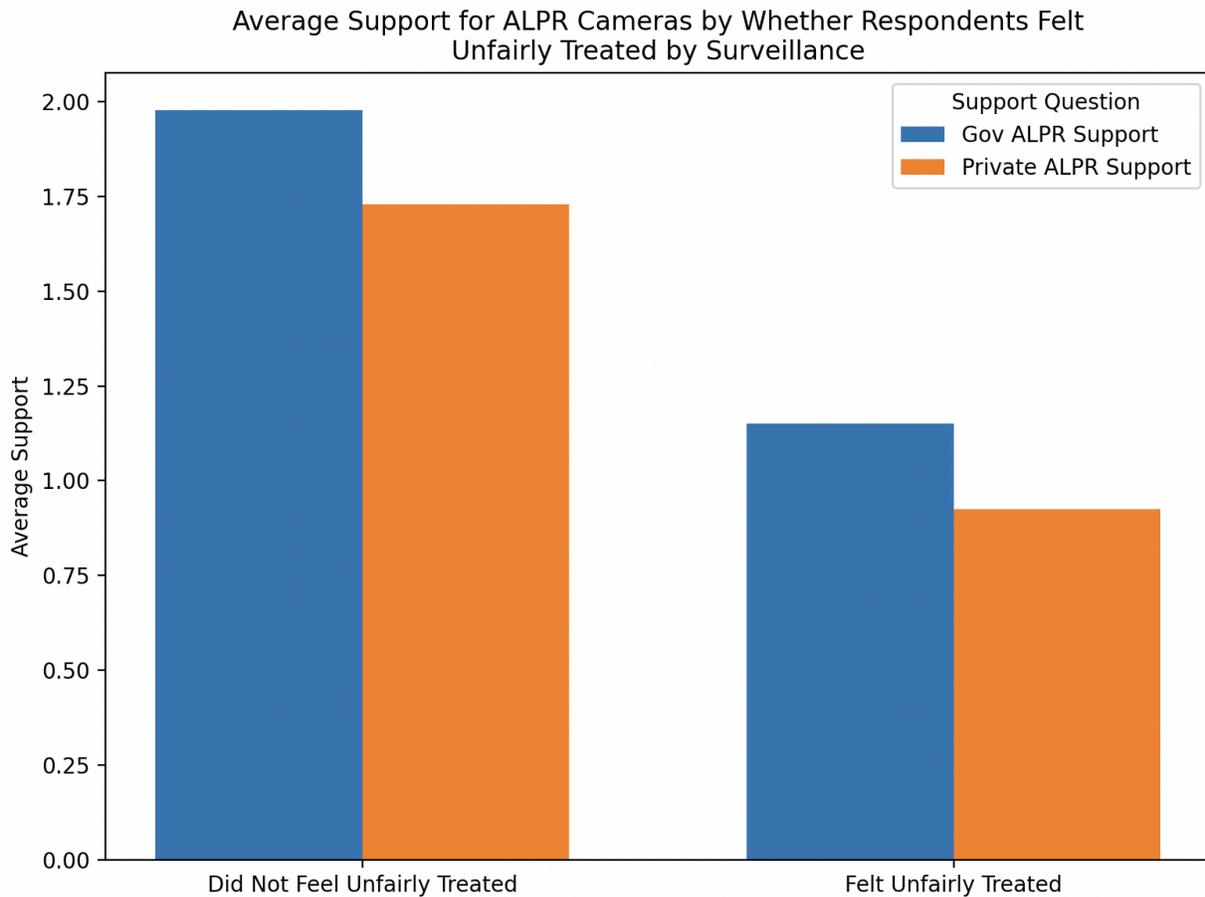Average Support for ALPR Cameras by Perception of Surveillance (Public Safety vs. Social Control)

Conclusion: The results indicate that perceptions of surveillance strongly shape support for ALPRs. Respondents who view surveillance primarily as a matter of public safety show the highest levels of support, especially for government-operated ALPRs. In contrast, those who view surveillance as a tool of social control express the lowest levels of support, with both government and private ALPRs falling below the midpoint of the scale. Respondents who see surveillance as serving both purposes show moderate support, though still leaning higher for government use than private use. Overall, the data suggest that framing surveillance as protective of public safety significantly increases legitimacy.

Support Variables:
- Have you ever felt uncomfortable or treated unfairly due to surveillance technology? (5bdjc2c)
- How supportive are you of Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) cameras installed by local governments and used by law enforcement? (y7ka0mc)
- How supportive are you of private individuals or businesses installing Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) cameras and sharing the data voluntarily with police? (uktyzgu)

Question: Have people who reported feeling unfairly treated by surveillance show lower support? (Out of 4)

Average Support for ALPR Cameras by Whether Respondents Felt Unfairly Treated by Surveillance
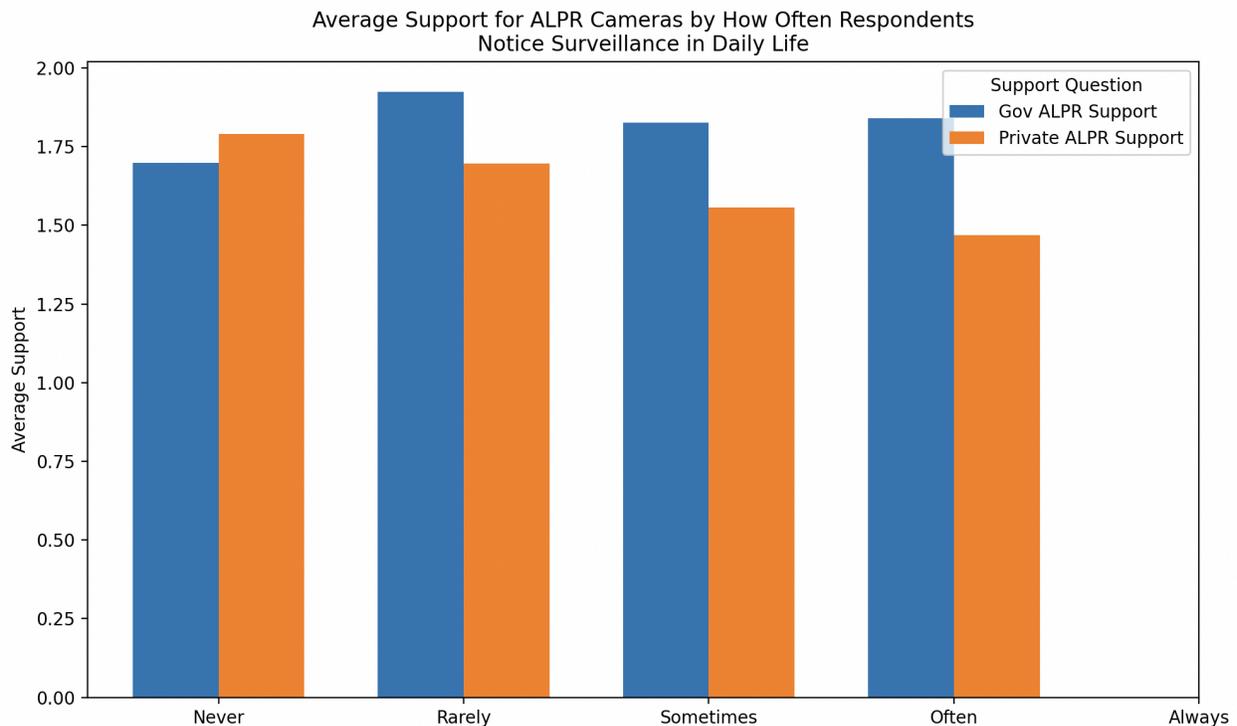
Conclusion: Respondents who have experienced unfair treatment due to surveillance demonstrate markedly lower support for ALPR cameras, whether operated by government or private actors. Those who did not report such experiences are more supportive, averaging closer to the midpoint of the scale. This pattern suggests that personal experience with harm or bias in surveillance directly undermines perceptions of legitimacy and reduces public acceptance of surveillance technologies. It also highlights how lived experiences of surveillance shape attitudes more strongly than abstract debates about safety or control. For policymakers, this finding underscores the importance of addressing inequities and harms in surveillance practices, as negative experiences appear to erode trust and long-term support.

Support Variables:
- How often do you notice surveillance cameras or sensors in your neighborhood or daily routine? (6itkmu)
- How supportive are you of Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) cameras installed by local governments and used by law enforcement? (y7ka0mc)
- How supportive are you of private individuals or businesses installing Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) cameras and sharing the data voluntarily with police? (uktyzgu)

Question: Does frequency of noticing surveillance cameras in daily life influence support/concern?

Average Support for ALPR Cameras by How Often Respondents Notice Surveillance in Daily Life
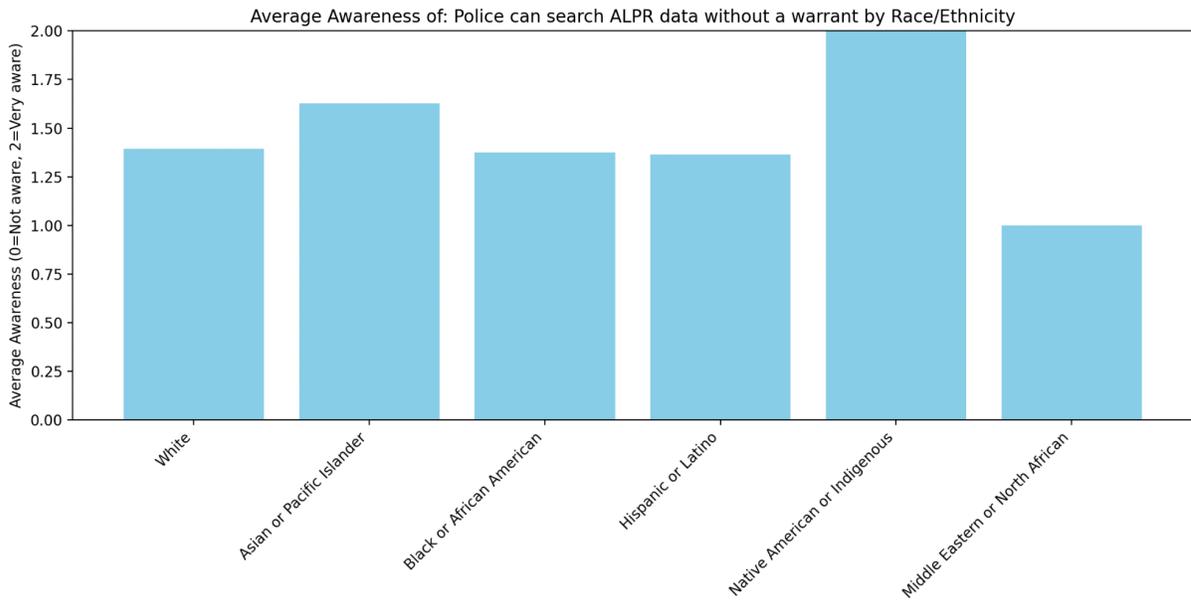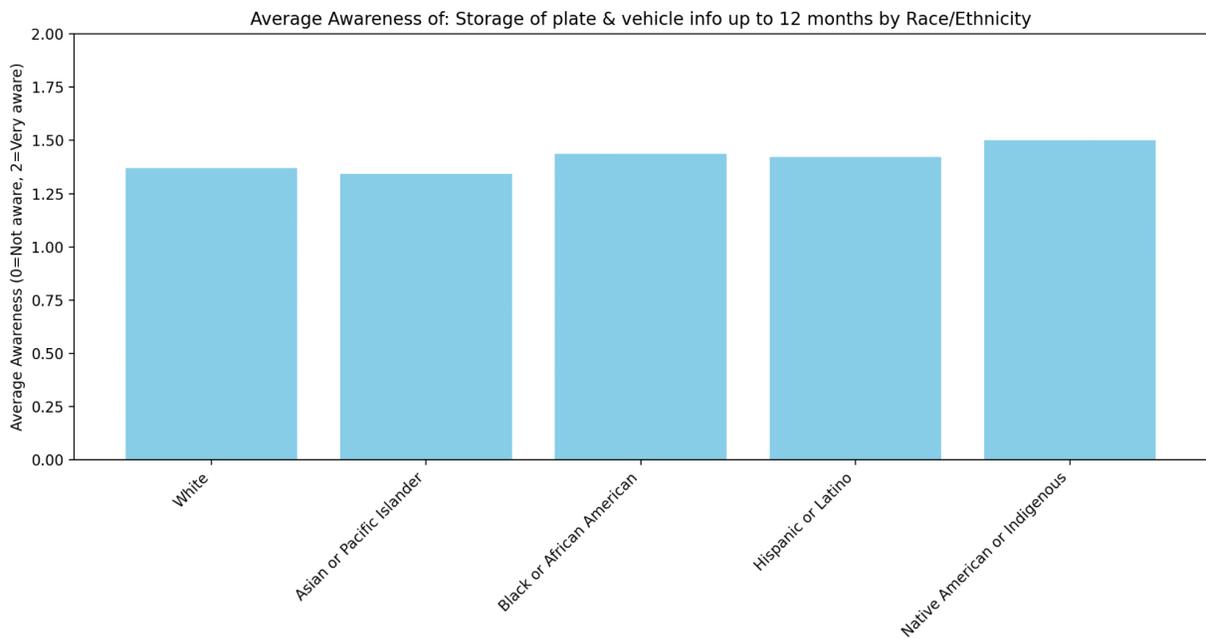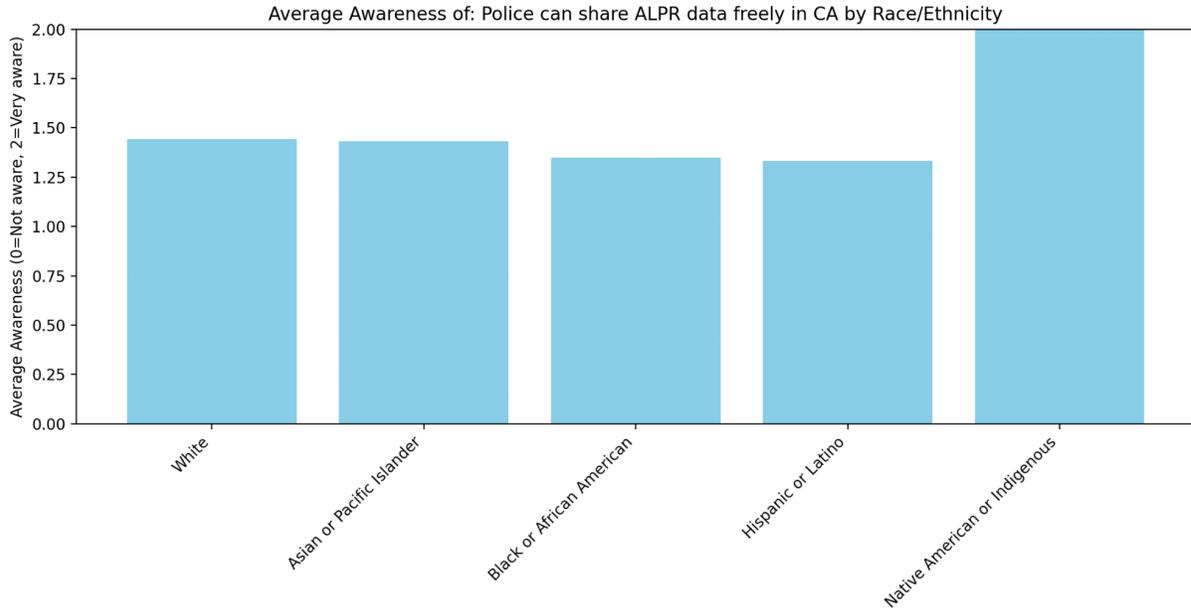
Conclusion: The frequency with which respondents notice surveillance in their daily lives appears to shape their support for ALPRs in nuanced ways. Those who rarely notice surveillance report the highest support for government ALPRs, suggesting that limited exposure may reinforce a perception of surveillance as protective rather than intrusive. By contrast, respondents who often notice surveillance show lower support for private ALPRs and only moderate support for government ALPRs, indicating that increased visibility may raise concerns about overreach or constant monitoring. Interestingly, those who never notice surveillance lean slightly more supportive of private ALPRs than government ones. Overall, the findings suggest that greater exposure to surveillance tends to reduce enthusiasm, especially for privately operated systems, while limited or no exposure may sustain higher baseline support.

Support Variables:

- In some Bay Area cities, Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) cameras store an image of your license plate, vehicle make and model… (6s6r3ex)
- Police can search the Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) database for your data without a warrant or approval… (zke2ete)
- Police can legally share your license plate Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) data with other local governments/police department… (skzr4a8)

Question: Which ALPR facts are least known, and does awareness of those facts differ by racial/ethnic background?

Average Awareness of: Police can search ALPR data without a warrant by Race/Ethnicity

Average Awareness of: Police can share ALPR data freely in CA by Race/Ethnicity

Average Awareness of: Storage of plate & vehicle info up to 12 months by Race/Ethnicity

Conclusion: The survey shows that public awareness of ALPR practices is generally low, with the least known fact being that police can freely share ALPR data with other jurisdictions in California. Across racial and ethnic groups, average awareness levels clustered closer to "not aware" than "very aware," underscoring a significant knowledge gap. Notably, Native American or Indigenous respondents reported consistently higher awareness across multiple ALPR facts, while White, Black, and Hispanic/Latino respondents tended to report moderate-to-low awareness. Asian or Pacific Islander respondents expressed somewhat higher awareness of warrantless searches, whereas Middle Eastern or North African respondents—though likely a

small sample—reported the lowest awareness of this fact. These findings suggest that communities with histories of disproportionate surveillance may be more aware of ALPR risks, while broader public knowledge remains limited, especially regarding unrestricted data sharing.