

Plate reader installed at intersection

By: Lou Raguse BUFFALO, N.Y. (WIVB) - A mission to curb crime is taking a new turn in the Queen City. Officials have now installed license plate scanners at the intersection of Bailey and Broadway. That neighborhood has seen a lot of crime, and longtime residents like Joe Gorniak wants to see something done. "The mayor says everything is doing good and improving, but I don't see it. I mean, take a walk down these streets at night and see how you would do," he commented. Mayor Byron Brown license plate readers recently installed at the intersection are one answer to fighting crime. The readers record every license plate that goes through the intersection. Brown says they would help investigators. For example, in the case of a drive-by shooting, the readers would help them pinpoint which vehicle was responsible. "Obviously individuals who know we have this kind of technology available in the area are less inclined to commit that crime because we are more capable of catching them and putting them in jail where they belong," Mayor Brown argued. The installation caught many people off-guard because the mayor did not make his plans public. Brown says these readers are just being tested. "We need to go to the City Council first to have the City Council approve the installation," the mayor explained. If the plan moves forward, former District Attorney Frank Clark believes they could be a helpful tool for prosecutors. Clark said, "Unless the cost is prohibitive, I think it has a real potential benefit." Local defense attorney Lori Hoffman suspects the scanners will end up being used for issuing tickets for things like unlicensed drivers. "To try and generate as many tickets as possible," she stated. But residents hope that's not the case. Legally-speaking, it's not an invasion of privacy. These are the same readers that officers already use in their squad cars. And Amherst and Cheektowaga both have stationary readers installed as well.