



City Council
259 N. Wilma Avenue
Ripon, CA 95366

MEMO

To: Honorable City Council
From: Ed Ormonde, Chief of Police
Date: 12/10/2019
Subject: Red Light Camera

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The Police Department is recommending one Redflex Traffic Enforcement System – Red Light Enforcement for eastbound traffic as a long-term solution to the safety of the Main Street and Jack Tone Road intersection.

BACKGROUND:

Ripon is facing a significant challenge that is affecting the quality of life for our residents and businesses, as regional cut-through traffic is clogging our local roadways with motorists that do not live, shop, or work in Ripon. These drivers use Ripon streets as a freeway bypass to get to a final destination south of San Joaquin County.

There are a number of factors that have created this traffic congestion: (1) an increase in the number of commuters traveling to the Bay Area for work, (2) severe congestion on the 120 bypass and Highway 99, (3) an increase in the number of trucks from recent e-commerce development within nearby cities, and (4) the rise of navigation apps that direct regional commuters to our residential streets to save a few minutes during peak traffic times.

Currently there are several local and regional projects are happening to reduce the congestion on our streets caused by the cut-through commute traffic. The City of Ripon has moved forward with a project to adjust the timing of traffic signals along W. Main Street to reduce the impact of cut-through traffic congestion and better accommodate changing traffic patterns.

Starting early November 2019, the metering project implemented the following changes: (1) Meter the number of vehicles entering the City of Ripon at the Jack Tone and Main traffic signal. Once the number of vehicles traveling eastbound on West Ripon Road reaches a certain threshold, the traffic signal at Jack Tone and Main will automatically be adjusted to begin metering the number of vehicles entering Ripon in order to reduce the congestion caused by

vehicles bypassing the freeway. Turn restrictions may be implemented in the future on Ruess Road and Highland Avenue if motorists attempt to avoid this signal by driving on these streets. (2) Coordinate the timing of traffic signals located on Main Street at Robert Avenue and Wilma Avenue. The programming of the traffic signals along Main Street will be synchronized to allow motorists to more efficiently travel along Main Street with minimal stops and delays.

Shortly after the metering began on Main St. and Jack Tone Rd. the department began to see a significant number of red-light violations at the intersection for eastbound traffic. At times we were witnessing upwards of 20 red light runners per hour. On November 6, the department began dedicating one patrol officer to the intersection of Main St. and Jack Tone Rd. for traffic enforcement between the hours of 4:00 PM and 6:00 PM, in hopes that a presence would curtail the violations and reduce the opportunity for traffic collisions.

During the 2-hour period of time for each of the 16 total weekdays that officers have been conducting enforcement at the Main St. and Jack Tone Rd. intersection, officers have conducted 84 traffic stops for violations resulting in 43 citations issued, which include 30 red light violations.

While making visual observations and receiving feedback from officers, it was determined that stationing an officer at the intersection was not a long-term solution. Safety concerns for motorists and officers increased along with an increase in violations with higher volumes of traffic.

The department began searching for a long-term solution to the high number of red light violations at this intersection. Researching several area jurisdictions with problematic intersections and red-light violations led the department to Redflex Traffic Systems.

Redflex Traffic Systems is a supplier of digital traffic enforcement systems and solutions, which include red light cameras. Redflex red light enforcement digital loops provide enforcement of intersection red light offences, up to six lanes of approaching or receding traffic, with positive vehicle and lane identification.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

On November 20, Department staff participated in a conference call with Redflex and obtained the following information:

A Redflex red light enforcement system would range in cost from \$4,000 to \$4,500 per month (per camera). There is no upfront cost, as the installation and maintenance of the system is covered in the monthly payment.

A minimum of a 3-year contract is required. A traditional contract term is for 5 years. A minimum of two cameras is suggested, but Redflex is willing to accept a contract with one camera.

The following support services are included by Redflex in the monthly costs:

Redflex will review each submission for a violation;
Upon confirmation of a violation, they will attempt to identify the driver;
Upon confirmation of the violation and identifying the driver they will send a completed package to the department for final review;
After our confirmation Redflex will print and send violation notices;
RedFlex assumes responsibility for arranging with San Joaquin County courts, which includes sending them citation data;
Redflex staff will be available to answer questions from persons who receive notices.

The Police Department would be responsible for:

Determining business rules (what constitutes a violation);
Designating staff to be trained on the System;
Final review of infractions;
Making the video available for any violator wanting to see it; and
Attending court if the citation is to be contested.

Redflex will also set up a video survey of any intersection upon request to monitor and then prepare a report of violations at that intersection prior to installing a traffic enforcement system.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The annual fiscal impact to the City is an estimated \$48,000 to \$54,000. This figure can be estimated to be \$144,000 to \$162,000 over the life of the contract. The exact amount will not be known until a site evaluation is completed. The expense of this camera would be paid from the general fund.