



The Effectiveness of Red Light Traffic Camera Enforcement

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Issue

Is the installation and use of red light traffic cameras a cost effective and productive strategy for reducing the incidence of vehicle collisions or are cities using these camera installations primarily as a source of revenue?

Background

Over the past four years, eight cities in San Mateo County have installed traffic cameras at numerous intersections. The cameras monitor and record red traffic light violations and have the stated objective of reducing the incidence of vehicle collisions at the traffic intersections that are monitored. In addition to running a red light (going straight through an intersection), in some cases the cameras also monitor whether a motorist stops at a red light before making a right hand turn. This recorded video is reviewed by police agency personnel. If sufficient evidence exists to support prosecution, the violator is issued a citation to appear in traffic court. The cities' police agencies have adopted this technology to supplement their traffic enforcement efforts.

Besides driving straight through a red light, there are two types of right-turn violations at a red light. The first is failing to stop completely before turning. This violation is cited under Vehicle Code (VC) section 21453(a) because the action reflects a failure to stop and thus is categorized as red light "running" in the same sense as driving straight through the intersection. The second type of right-turn violation involves coming to a full stop, but then proceeding to turn right in an unsafe manner. This turn could be unsafe because of the presence of pedestrians, on-coming traffic, or other conditions. This latter offense carries a much lower fine under VC section 21453(b).

The 2008-2009 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury issued a report entitled "Red Light Cameras Increase Safety" and addressed the issue "Are photo enforcement red light cameras in Redwood City effective as traffic safety devices?" The report focused exclusively on Redwood City and the one red light camera installed at Whipple and Veterans Blvd. This current report expands on the previous report by incorporating all cities in San Mateo County that have red light cameras installed. However, the fundamental issue of traffic safety remains the same. The 2008-2009 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury report recommendation to Redwood City was:

Develop an annual review process which compares the number of collisions pre and post installation of the photo enforcement camera. Determine whether the equipment is serving as an effective deterrent and whether additional safety features should be implemented.

Redwood City in its response stated that "... steps will be put into place within the next 30 days that will allow an annual review to take place." A review was held with the Chief of Police and other senior police officials in late April, 2010.

Vendors

All of the traffic camera systems used by police agencies in San Mateo County are provided by two private firms. Two cities, Millbrae and South San Francisco, contract with American Traffic Solutions¹. The remaining cities contract with Redflex Traffic Solutions². Although there are two separate vendors, the provisions of the individual contracts are substantially the same. All of the equipment, installation and maintenance of the traffic camera system are the responsibility of the company providing the service. The contracts usually run five years with options to extend. Contracts can also be terminated earlier than 5 years, but with financial consequences. The equipment belongs to the vendor and is not the responsibility of the city.

The Redflex Traffic Systems agreement specifically refers to vehicle collisions in its recitals:

WHEREAS, it is a mutual objective of both Redflex and the Customer to reduce the incidence of vehicle collisions at the traffic intersections that will be monitored pursuant to the terms of this Agreement.

The American Traffic Systems agreement makes no such reference to an objective of reducing vehicle collisions.

Citation Revenue and Operating Costs

The 2010 fine for failure to stop at a red signal under VC 21453(a) is \$446.00; however only a portion of this is funded back to the city that issued the citation. The total amount of the fine and the proportion that each city receives is determined by state statute.

Although the precise amount each city receives is different, in general, the portion of the fine paid to the city is approximately 33%, with the rest going to the county and the state. This amount is the same whether the citation is issued by an officer or as the result of a violation recorded by the camera system.

The cost associated with each red light camera consists of a fee paid to the vendor and the cost of employees who review and authorize citations. The contracts require that a flat monthly fee be paid for each installation. The monthly fees range from \$5,395 to \$6,350.

Based on the survey received from the cities, only the City of San Mateo provided full time dedicated sworn staff to the evaluation of the video recorded by the cameras. In all other cases, each individual city uses part-time sworn officers' help to evaluate possible violations, appearance in court, and answering questions from the general public. Millbrae and San Carlos contract with the City of San Mateo for their administrative support.

¹ American Traffic Solutions Inc.
7681 East Gray Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85260

² Redflex Traffic Systems, Inc.
23751 N. 23rd Ave, Ste 150
Phoenix, AZ 85085

The number of citations increases significantly within a few months once a camera system is commissioned. (See chart on page 7) However the number then tends to decline and level out.

Warning Signs and Public Education

The 2008-2009 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury report made several recommendations related to signage and public education:

Install a photo enforcement camera notification sign alerting traffic traveling eastbound on Whipple Avenue approaching Veterans Boulevard.

Continue the practice of widespread public notice of activation of new automated red light photo enforcement cameras at intersections.

Continue expanding RWCPD web-site to include public education about the photo enforcement camera notification system.



All current jurisdictions provide signage before entry into the city and most before entry into the red light intersection which complies with the statutory requirement. However, the signage is not always clearly visible unless the driver is looking for it. In some cases the signage can be found in the right hand lane some yards before the intersection. By contrast the signage used in San Carlos is posted on the signal stanchion itself and clearly visible to oncoming traffic (See Appendix A for more pictures of signage used).

The cities and intersections which had red light cameras installed and were surveyed included the following:

<u>Jurisdiction / Intersections</u>	<u>Installed</u>
Burlingame	
El Camino Real @ Broadway	3/22/2009
Daly City	
San Pedro @Junipero Serra	3/11/2008
Junipero Serra @ Washington	6/24/2009
John Daly @Sheffield	7/1/2009
Hickey @ Gellert	7/7/2009
Menlo Park	
Bayfront Expressway @ Willow Rd-WB	5/1/2008
El Camino Real @ Ravenswood / Menlo	9/1/2008
El Camino Real @ Glenwood	10/1/2008
Millbrae	
Millbrae Avenue @ Rollins RD (NB & SB)	9/18/2006
Redwood City	
Whipple Avenue @ Veterans Blvd	3/1/2008
Veterans Blvd @ Whipple Ave.	8/1/2009
San Carlos	
Brittan Avenue @ Industrial	11/25/2008
San Mateo	
Hillsdale Blvd @ Saratoga and Saratoga @ Hillsdale Blvd	4/20/2005

<u>Jurisdiction / Intersections</u>	<u>Installed</u>
Hillsdale @ Norfolk	7/29/2005
4th Avenue @ Humboldt	10/31/2006
South San Francisco	
El Camino Real @ Westborough Blvd	8/15/2009
El Camino Real @ Hickey Blvd.	8/15/2009

Since completion of the survey in September 2009, a number of new red light cameras have been installed throughout San Mateo County. The above table is not an up-to-date representation of all red light cameras installed as of the release of this report.

Investigation

In its investigation the 2009-2010 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury (Grand Jury) reviewed each of the contracts negotiated by the cities with red light camera installations. Follow up questions and interviews were conducted with some of the agencies. The Grand Jury also reviewed a number of current local and national news articles on the subject.

The Grand Jury surveyed all the police agencies in San Mateo County. The survey asked each agency if they had red light cameras or if they were considering them. For those with cameras, the survey requested information on how they administer their traffic camera programs and their effect. The inquiry asked for the amount of staff time required to administer the program, revenues received, and accident statistics before and after the camera systems were implemented.

The four areas that the investigation focused on were:

- Are the cameras meeting their objective of reducing accidents?
- Is the outlay of city funds to lease the systems justified by the results?
- Are the camera systems an effective supplement to the actions of police officers?
- What expenses and revenues are generated by employing red light traffic cameras?

The Grand Jury requested data on accident frequency prior to camera installation and after installation of the camera. The data as provided by the jurisdictions did not have enough precision and was not comparable between jurisdictions and therefore no accident statistics will be reported here.

Findings

1. The cities choose locations for the two suppliers of red light cameras to evaluate. The vendors then recommend the location of cameras based on studies which evaluate the potential number of possible red light violations and not necessarily the number of accidents that can be prevented.
2. Police Departments and traffic engineers provide their input as to where cameras should be installed with primary emphasis on safety rather than the number of citations that can be issued. Ultimately, both the city and the vendor must agree on the location for installation.
3. The red light camera systems installed in the county are generating significant revenue for the cities. In 2009, the amount the cities receive per citation ranges from \$119.17 (San Mateo) to \$142.49 (San Carlos).

4. Three cities, Belmont, South San Francisco, and Burlingame have recently instituted red light traffic camera programs. The inception dates are too recent to report reliable empirical data. For the remaining cities, the grand jury estimated the potential monthly revenue based upon data received from the cities.

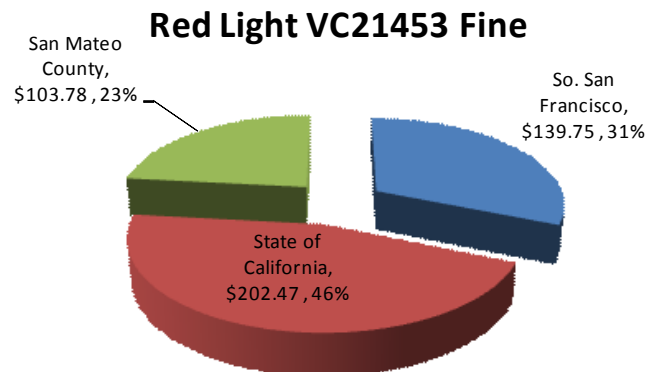
<u>Jurisdiction / Intersections</u> <u>through Sept. 30, 2009</u>	<u>Average Monthly³</u>	
	<u>Citations</u>	<u>Potential City Revenue</u>
Daly City		
San Pedro @ Junipero Serra	177	\$23,276
Washington @ Junipero Serra	121	15,912
John Daly @ Sheffield	243	31,955
Hickey @ Gellert	119	15,649
Total Daly City	660	\$86,792
Menlo Park		
Bayfront Expressway @ Willow Rd	137	\$20,550
El Camino Real @ Ravenswood & Menlo	327	49,050
El Camino Real @ Glenwood	166	24,900
Total Menlo Park	630	\$94,500
Millbrae		
Millbrae Avenue @ Rollins RD	343	\$49,351
Redwood City		
Whipple Avenue @ Veterans Blvd	89	\$11,522
Veterans Blvd @ Whipple Ave.	*418	*54,114
Total Redwood City	507	\$65,636
San Carlos		
Brittan Avenue @ Industrial	53	\$6,280
San Mateo		
Hillsdale Blvd @ Saratoga	361	\$43,020
Hillsdale @ Norfolk	61	7,257
4th Avenue @ Humboldt	165	19,663
Total San Mateo	587	\$69,940

**Average was calculated based on data from November 2009 through March 2010*

³ Average number of citations and average revenue earned is based on data provided by the respective police agency to the Grand Jury's survey. The number of citations and the revenue data as reported were for varying lengths of time – some for a few months; some for a year or more. An average monthly number was computed based on data provided as of September 30, 2009 and used here so as to make the information comparable from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

The cities receive a portion of the total fine levied on the motorist. Please see the chart under finding #10 which uses South San Francisco as an example for the allocation of the red light violation fine. Each city surveyed provided the

5. The data as reported indicated that in all the jurisdictions above, the revenue earned from citations exceeded direct costs such as the vendor’s fee and employee costs. (Recently, the City of San Carlos extended the yellow light time to comply with state standards and found that the number of citations fell dramatically. As a result the revenue from red light citations could no longer cover the associated costs.)
6. Based on interviews and responses to survey questions, the reporting of accident statistics is not being used as a measure of the effectiveness of red light cameras. The primary emphasis appears to be on the number of citations issued. Based on the data provided by the cities, there was no overall trend indicating a noticeable change in accident rates before and after installation of red light cameras.
7. Most cities are protected from losses by a “cost neutral” clause in their contracts. In the event that fine revenue received does not cover the monthly cost of the contract, the city is only required to pay the actual amount that it did receive. San Carlos and San Mateo among other cities have voluntarily nullified the “cost neutral” clause in their contracts following a recent court case where a citation issued with this clause in place was dismissed by the court.⁴
8. A significant portion of the citations issued from red light cameras are for motorist failure to stop before making a right hand turn. The same fine is applied to both violations.
9. The fine for failure to stop before making a right hand turn seems out of proportion to similar offenses and as a result is often appealed to the traffic court. The state mandated fine in 2010 for failure to stop at a stop signal or failure to halt before turning right on a red light is \$446.00. Traffic School is an additional \$60.00. By contrast, the fine for failure to halt at a stop sign is \$214.00; and the fine for going 15 mph over the speed limit is \$214.00.
10. Using South San Francisco as an example, if a motorist is cited for either running a red light or not coming to a full stop before turning right, the \$446.00 fine would be distributed among the city, the county and the state as follows:



amount it receives for each citation. This amount was multiplied by the average monthly citations to derive average monthly revenue.

The potential revenue is based on the number of citations issued in any given month; however the transmittal of the funds from the county to the cities actually occurs some months later. In addition citation fines may be reduced by the traffic court if appealed. The revenue data presented is before payment to the vendor.

⁴ In a September 2009 ruling, a San Mateo Superior Court Judge threw out a ticket from a San Mateo City red light camera based on the argument that the city’s contract is illegal. California law states that a company such as Redflex or American Traffic Solutions can’t charge based on the number of tickets the camera issues.

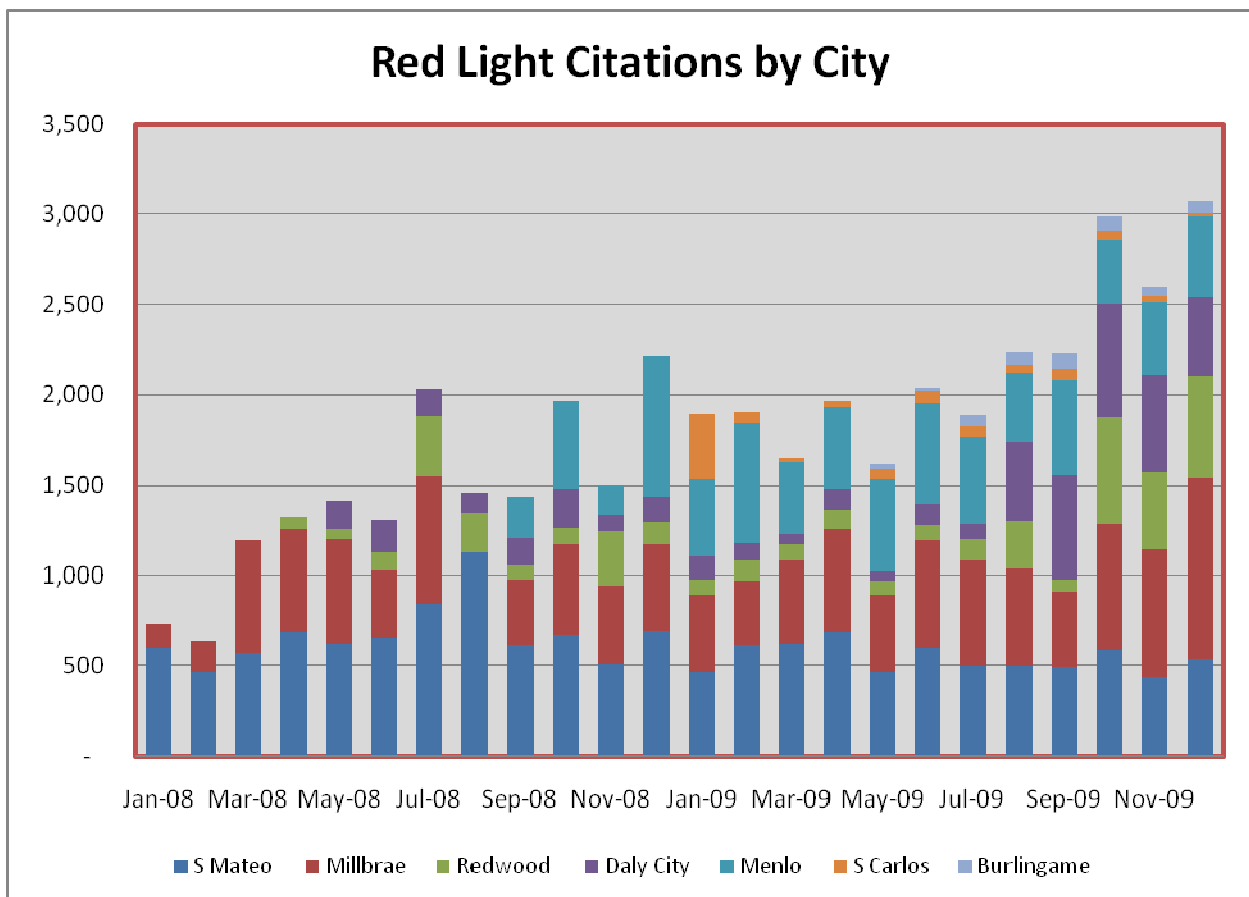
11. The number of citations that the Superior Court must adjudicate from red light cameras has increased significantly from 2008 to 2009. The Superior Court of San Mateo County reported the following information:

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Red Light Citations	17,211	30,948	80%
All Other Citations	113,023	133,871	18%
Total Citations	130,234	164,819	27%

12. The San Mateo County Superior Court system has become overwhelmed with citizens challenging the \$446 citation. The local court is not receiving any additional funding for this increased level of activity which requires additional staffing and resource commitment.

13. Local court personnel who have already been reduced by 20% from layoffs and mandated furloughs are in arrears by approximately six months in processing traffic complaints.

14. Based on court statistics the chart below provides an indication of the increasing volume of red light camera citations being issued over the two years ending December 31, 2009. South San Francisco was not included because on Feb. 5, 2010, the City had announced that it would be refunding/dismissing all tickets issued from the beginning of the program up to Jan. 27, 2010 - this was later extended to Mar. 10, 2010. The impact on the Superior Court from the increase in citations is not a consideration when cities are evaluating whether to install the cameras.



15. There is not uniformity among all cities regarding criteria used in the evaluation of possible violations and the decision to issue citations.
16. Not all cities are using warning signs at red light intersections as a tool to slow down drivers and thereby reduce the number of vehicle accidents. Appendix "A," contains a selection of pictures of the warning signs used by the cities. Some such as San Carlos are clearly visible placed high and on the signal itself. Others such as those used in Menlo Park are in the far right, some distance from the intersection and often partially hidden by trees and other highway signs. In Daly City there were no warning signs at the intersection of Junipero Serra and Washington.
17. Police departments view the use of red light cameras and the associated signage as "behavior modification", basically educating the public that they must be careful to observe moving violations at all intersections.
18. The cameras operate 24 hours per day seven days per week compared to a police officer who, if available, would monitor the intersection only sporadically.

Conclusions

The 2009-2010 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury concludes that:

1. There are no uniform protocols established throughout San Mateo County for evaluating possible infractions and determining the issuance of a citation, thus making court decisions difficult and undermining the trust of the county's citizenry.
2. Although the purpose for the installation and maintenance of red light cameras may have been public safety, they have also come to represent a significant source of funding for the cities.
3. Cities have not established consistent and standardized reporting and evaluation processes to determine if the red light camera, at any particular intersection, is in fact, reducing the number of vehicle collisions.
4. With some exceptions, signage is not being used as a tool for slowing down oncoming traffic and thereby reducing the accident rate.
5. The use of red light traffic cameras is cost-effective and financially viable when compared to utilizing police officers to perform equivalent enforcement. All of the cities that have implemented this technology and still have the "cost neutral" clause in place have covered contractual costs and administrative costs.
6. The camera technology provides an effective method of enforcing a vehicle code violation that has a high probability of causing an accident.
7. Cities, when determining whether to install a red light camera, have failed to consider the impact on the Superior Court of San Mateo County and on the citizenry who need to access that court.
8. Within the county there should be no differences between the cities in the criteria used for the issuance of a citation.

Recommendations

The 2009-2010 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury recommends the following to the City Councils of the cities of San Mateo County:

1. Consideration of where a red light camera is to be installed should be driven by the number of vehicle collisions occurring at that intersection and not the potential amount of revenue generated from citations. Because of the impact on the courts as well as the citizenry, a final decision should be made by the respective city council in open hearings.
2. Each jurisdiction installing a red light camera should measure its ongoing effectiveness by the number of accidents caused from red light violations before and after installation.
3. Establish consistent and regular reporting of accident rates to senior officials including the respective city councils. This should be done at least annually. When reports indicate that accident rates have not been reduced, action should be taken to investigate why and removal of the red light cameras should be considered if they are not effective.
4. Working through the county Police Chiefs and Sheriff Association and/or the City Managers Association, establish and require consistent protocols to be used by all county cities for evaluating possible violations and the issuance of a citation. Such county-wide standards can allow courts to more quickly and efficiently evaluate appeals that come before it.
5. Install prominent signage, at the camera intersection, highly visible to all approaching traffic warning motorists of the camera. This should include signage warning motorists to come to a full stop before turning right on a red light.
6. Working through the county Police Chiefs and Sheriff Association and/or the City Managers Association, consider centralizing the administrative tasks of evaluating possible violations and issuance of citations. This would not only achieve budgetary savings but would also insure consistent and professional application of the protocols affecting San Mateo Drivers.

The Effectiveness of Red Light Traffic Camera Enforcement

Appendix A

Selected Pictures of Red Light Cameras and Warning Signs



NB on El Camino & Glenwood



SB on El Camino at Menlo



NB on El Camino at Ravenswood



EB on Willow & Bayfront Exp.



SB on El Camino & Valparaiso
There are no cameras in the EB direction

PHOTO ENFORCED
Warning Signs Used
In **Menlo Park** tend to be in the
far right hand lane and some
distance from the intersection.



This Warning Sign used in **Redwood City** is located right on the signal itself. It is noticeable to anyone making a right turn but not to a driver in the two left lanes.

EB on Whipple & Veterans



These Warning Signs used at Brittan and Industrial in **San Carlos** are located right on the signal itself. They are up high enough for all drivers to see them. San Carlos also has a warning sign prior to the intersection.



This is the only Warning Sign used at the intersection of Millbrae Ave and Rollins Rd in **Millbrae**. It is not clearly visible to all drivers.

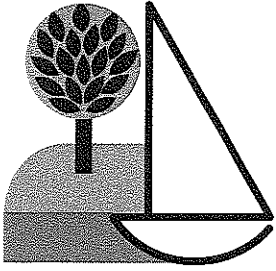
South San Francisco



Hickey & El Camino



This warning to stop before turning right is located on southbound El Camino Real



City of Foster City

ESTERO MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

610 FOSTER CITY BOULEVARD
FOSTER CITY, CA 94404-2222
(650) 286-3200
FAX (650) 574-3483

July 20, 2010

Hon. Clifford V. Cretan
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center; 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Re: City of Foster City's Response to the Grand Jury Report Regarding the Effectiveness of Red Light Traffic Camera Enforcement

Dear Judge Cretan:

We are in receipt of the Grand Jury Report dated June 7, 2010 regarding the Effectiveness of Red Light Traffic Camera Enforcement. In view of the fact that the City of Foster City does not have any Red Light Traffic Cameras and does not intend to install any Red Light Traffic Cameras, this issue does not apply to us; therefore, the City neither agrees nor disagrees with the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations. If in the future the City of Foster City were to consider the installation of Red Light Traffic Cameras, the City would take this Grand Jury Report under advisement at that time.

The City Council approved this response to the Grand Jury Report at its regular meeting of July 19, 2010.

Sincerely,


Rick Wykoff
Mayor



CITY OF HALF MOON BAY

City Hall, 501 Main Street Half Moon Bay CA 94019

July 7, 2010

Honorable Clifford V. Cretan
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center; 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

RE: Grand Jury Findings and City of Half Moon Bay Responses

Dear Judge Cretan:

At its July 6, 2010 meeting, the Half Moon Bay City Council reviewed and approved the following responses to the Grand Jury's June 7, 2010 entitled "The Effectiveness of Red Light Traffic Camera Enforcement" (the "Report").

Findings:

The City Council neither agrees nor disagrees with the findings contained in the Report, inasmuch as all of the findings pertain to agencies that have implemented the use of red light traffic cameras as an enforcement mechanism, and the City of Half Moon Bay does not and currently has no plans to utilize red light traffic cameras in the near future.

Recommendations:

The City Council has not implemented any of the Grand Jury's recommendations. Should the City Council consider utilizing red light traffic cameras in the future, it will consider implementing such recommendations after analyzing whether each recommendation is warranted or reasonable.

Very truly yours,

Michael Dolder
Interim City Manager
City of Half Moon Bay

cc: Mayor and City Council
City Clerk
PDF to grandjury@sanmteocourt.org



City of Millbrae
621 Magnolia Avenue, Millbrae, CA 94030

PAUL SETO
Mayor
DANIEL F. QUIGG
Vice Mayor
MARGE COLAPIETRO
Councilwoman
GINA PAPAN
Councilwoman
NADIA V. HOLOBER
Councilwoman

July 27, 2010

Honorable Clifford V. Cretan
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center; 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Dear Judge Cretan:

The Millbrae City Council and I have reviewed the San Mateo County Grand Jury report on The Effectiveness of Red Light Camera Traffic Enforcement. The Grand Jury also requested that the City of Millbrae provide a response to the findings and recommendations contained in the report.

Attached you will find the City of Millbrae's official response to the June 7, 2010 letter from the Superior Court. The City Council has reviewed and approved this letter and the attached responses to the Grand Jury report during our regular meeting held July 27, 2010.

The members of the Millbrae City Council and City staff are dedicated to providing traffic safety in our community. We appreciate the Grand Jury's time and effort into compiling the report on The Effectiveness of Red Light Traffic Camera Enforcement. We hope you will find our commentary helpful.

Sincerely,


Paul Seto, Mayor
City of Millbrae

City Council/City Manager (650) 259-2334	City Clerk (650) 259-2334	Public Works/Engineering (650) 259-2339	Recreation (650) 259-2360	Police Department (650) 259-2300
Personnel (650) 259-2334	Finance/Water (650) 259-2350	Community Development (650) 259-2341	Building Division (650) 259-2330	Fire Department (650) 259-2400

City of Millbrae Comments
Grand Jury Report on The Effectiveness of Red Light Traffic Camera Enforcement
July 27, 2010

The City of Millbrae reviewed the San Mateo County Grand Jury report on The Effectiveness of Red Light Traffic Camera Enforcement. The City of Millbrae concurs with the 2008 Grand Jury findings that red light cameras increase safety, which is the sole purpose of the Millbrae photo enforcement program.

Responses to the Grand Jury Findings:

- Findings 1 & 2 – Partially Agree
 - Staff from the Police Department and Engineering Department at the City of Millbrae selected locations for photo enforcement in order to enhance traffic safety. Intersections were selected based on several factors that effect traffic safety, such as roadway configuration, traffic volume, collision history and violation frequency. For example, the City of Millbrae utilizes photo enforcement at the intersection of Millbrae Avenue and Rollins Road. This is a multiple lane intersection that has a significant amount of vehicular and pedestrian traffic due to a BART Station, a Caltrain station, and recent commercial developments at this location. The traffic volume at this intersection has increased over the years as more and more people take advantage of public transportation. The multiple lanes and traffic volume at this intersection make it difficult for officers to safely enforce violations. Each violation has the potential to result in a collision. An effective method to prevent collisions is to reduce the number of violations. Enforcement is a proven prevention method.

- Findings 3, 4 & 5 – Partially Disagree
 - While the City of Millbrae receives fines that exceed the red light photo equipment costs, not all red light camera systems are generating revenue. Some cities report revenue, others report a “break even” amount, and some report fines from violations do not cover the equipment rental expenditures.

- Finding 6 – Partially Disagree
 - The City of Millbrae does view collision statistics as one of several factors to consider when evaluating the effectiveness of photo enforcement. This cannot be the exclusive method. Roadway configuration, traffic volume, and the number of violations must also be considered. For example, the amount of vehicular traffic on Millbrae Avenue and the number of traffic lanes at the intersection with Rollins Road make it difficult for officers to safely enforce violations. While we agree the trends for collision history vary, the goal is to eliminate the violation that causes or contributes to the collision; therefore, the number of violations must be considered as well.

- Finding 7 - Disagree
 - Several years back, the City of Millbrae amended its contract with the equipment vendor to eliminate any “cost neutral” clause, and currently pays a pre determined fixed cost for equipment rental.

- Findings 8 & 9 - Agree
 - The City of Millbrae does have more violations associated with right turns. Regardless of the direction, a red light violation has the potential to cause a serious accident, whether that is with a pedestrian in the crosswalk or a vehicle lawfully entering an intersection. Accordingly, the fine should be uniform.

- Finding 10 - Agree
 - The fines received from red light camera citations vary, and it’s estimated that the City of Millbrae receives approximately \$120 of the \$446 fine set by the state.

- Finding 11 – Agree
 - Red light cameras provide 24-hour enforcement, which could not be staffed by traditional enforcement. It is not a surprise that the number of citations has increased, especially since more cities have employed the use of photo enforcement.

- Finding 12 – Partially Disagree
 - The Grand Jury Report notes that the County receives a percentage of the fine, which could and should be used to offset what is assumed to be a temporary increase in workload. It is the goal of photo enforcement to reduce potential collisions as a result of fewer violations; therefore, the numbers of citations should gradually decrease as motorists become aware of photo enforcement. The City of Millbrae offers violators an opportunity to view the footage prior to contesting the violation in court. This helps to relieve some of the burden on the courts.

- Findings 13 & 14 - Agree
 - The City of Millbrae has also reduced the number of staff devoted to traffic enforcement over the past several years. The Grand Jury reports that eight cities over four years have installed photo enforcement. This is a relatively short time frame. As mentioned in finding 12, the burden should ease over time. The City of Millbrae will continue to work with the courts in any way we can to help improve the processing photo enforcement citations.

- Finding 15 – Partially Disagree
 - The California Vehicle Code defines what constitutes a violation. Photo enforcement technology assists officers in observing violations. The City of Millbrae contracts with the City of San Mateo for photo enforcement review and red light violation processing, which does bring consistency amongst some of the agencies in San Mateo County. This is also one of the Grand Jury’s recommendations.

- Findings 16 & 17 – Partially Disagree
 - The City of Millbrae complies with the California Vehicle Code requirement that photo enforcement signage is posted in the City. We favor the use of any additional tool, such as signage, that will gain voluntary compliance with traffic laws, and agree that public education is a valuable component of traffic safety.

- Finding 18 – Agree
 - Red light cameras provide 24-hour enforcement, which could not be staffed by traditional enforcement. As noted in finding 6, roadway configuration and traffic volume also play a role. The City of Millbrae finds red light photo enforcement on Millbrae Avenue safer than traditional officer enforcement due to the heavy volume of traffic and the multiple lanes of traffic.

Responses to the Grand Jury Recommendations:

- Recommendation #1 - Implemented
 - The City of Millbrae agrees that the number of vehicle collisions should be one of the factors to consider when determining where cameras should be installed. The number of violations should also be a primary factor that is considered as each one represents a potential injury collision. The reason to utilize photo enforcement is to reduce violations that lead to collisions and not for financial gain. The California Vehicle Code requires each City to hold a public hearing prior to beginning a photo enforcement program. The City of Millbrae did hold a public hearing prior to beginning a photo enforcement program.

- Recommendation #2 - Implemented
 - A reduction in collisions is one factor the City of Millbrae considers when evaluating the on-going effectiveness of its red light photo enforcement program. A reduction in the number of violations is another factor we use when evaluating success. Fewer violations result in fewer opportunities for collisions.

- Recommendation #3 - Implemented
 - The City Council receives regular reports on accident statistics in the City of Millbrae. The City Council believes that traffic safety is crucial to all of our roadways and should not be limited to those few intersections where photo enforcement is used. The City of Millbrae will continue to look at the number of violations when evaluating the effectiveness of photo enforcement. The goal is to reduce the number of violations as well as the number of accidents.

- Recommendation #4 – Partially Implemented
 - The City of Millbrae is a participant in the San Mateo County Red Light Photo Enforcement Users Group. We would welcome a protocol developed by the San Mateo County Police Chiefs and Sheriff Association which would enhance the consistency that already exists in the county. The City of Millbrae contracts with the City of San Mateo and both agencies offer motorists the opportunity to view the footage and contest the alleged violation before the citation appears in court. This process helps to reduce the number of appeals made to the court. The courts are provided with a percentage of the fine from red light violations, which should be used for efficient dispositions to red light photo enforcement citations.

- Recommendation #5 – Partially Implemented
 - The City of Millbrae complies with the photo enforcement requirements set forth in the California Vehicle Code. This includes the posting of signs that notify motorists of the presence of photo enforcement at the intersection where the equipment is used. The Grand Jury recommendation suggests that additional signage include warning motorists to come to a complete stop. The City does not post this additional reminder as this is implied by the official traffic control device, similar to stop signs and speed limit signs.

- Recommendation #6 – Partially Implemented
 - The City of Millbrae already centralizes the photo enforcement management by contracting with the City of San Mateo, and agrees with the Grand Jury recommendation that this is an efficient method.



CITY COUNCIL 2010

MARK N. ADDIEGO, MAYOR
KEVIN MULLIN, VICE MAYOR
RICHARD A. GARBARINO, COUNCILMEMBER
PEDRO GONZALEZ, COUNCILMEMBER
KARYL MATSUMOTO, COUNCILMEMBER

BARRY M. NAGEL, CITY MANAGER

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

July 28, 2010

The Honorable Clifford V. Cretan
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

RE: Responses to the 2009-10 Grand Jury Report on the Effectiveness of Red Light
Traffic Camera Enforcement

Dear Judge Cretan:

In accordance with instructions provided by Court Executive Officer John C. Fitton in his letter dated June 7, 2010, we submit the following responses to the 2009-2010 Grand Jury report filed on June 7, 2010.

FINDINGS:

1. The City of South San Francisco evaluated several intersections prior to placing the cameras at the chosen intersections. The criteria used to make the final selection was the number of accidents at the intersections, the number of red light violations, the number of potential accidents that could be prevented by reducing the number of red light violations and the ability of the South San Francisco Police Department to effectively enforce these violations. The City makes the final decision on which intersections are evaluated for red light cameras and which intersections to operate red light cameras.
2. The City of South San Francisco agrees with this finding, except that the City makes the final decision on which intersections to operate red light cameras.
3. Due to a procedural error, the City of South San Francisco has not realized significant revenue generation to date.

4. The City of South San Francisco agrees with this finding as it relates to the City of South San Francisco.
5. Since the data upon which the finding is based does not include information from the City of South San Francisco, the City does not take any position on this finding.
6. The City of South San Francisco does not agree that the primary emphasis of this program is the number of citations issued. We have been evaluating the number of citations issued along with the number of accidents prior to the inception of the program. This evaluation is ongoing and decisions to either maintain the cameras at these intersections or move them to other intersections will be based on both of these factors. The red light cameras have not been operating in South San Francisco long enough to provide sufficient information on trends on accident rates after camera installation.
7. The City of South San Francisco had a cost neutrality clause in the original contract. This was removed via a contract amendment approved in November 2009.
8. The City of South San Francisco agrees with this finding.
9. The City of South San Francisco agrees with this finding.
10. The City of South San Francisco agrees with this finding.
11. The City of South San Francisco would like to see a better breakdown of the citations issued before commenting on this finding. Is the increase in red light citations completely attributed to red light cameras? How much of the increase is due to increased enforcement by the local jurisdictions?
12. The City of South San Francisco is not in a position to confirm information in this finding which relates to Court operations. However, the City would recommend that the County of San Mateo allocate a portion of the fine amounts be utilized to increase the staff of the courts to deal with the increased number of citations.
13. The City of South San Francisco is not in a position to confirm information in this finding which relates to Court operations. The City of South San Francisco believes that the court has been in arrears in the processing of traffic complaints for some time. We would like to see more data before attributing this to the implementation of red light cameras.
14. The City of South San Francisco would question if we need to evaluate the impact on the courts whenever we institute an enforcement program for any violations of

the State of California codes. Also, the information on the refunds/dismissals of red light camera citations in this finding needs to be corrected. Citations issued under the City's red light camera program from the beginning of the program (August 14, 2009) through February 28, 2010 were dismissed and refunds of fines issued.

15. The City of South San Francisco along with all the cities utilizing the red light camera program meets regularly and discusses the issue of uniformity.
16. The City of South San Francisco has installed warning signs in compliance with State law requirements that are clearly visible to motorist at all approaches to intersections utilizing red light camera technology.
17. The City of South San Francisco agrees with this finding.
18. The City of South San Francisco agrees with this finding.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The City of South San Francisco agrees that a consideration for placing the red light cameras should be the accident rate at intersections and not the potential for revenue generation. We would recommend that the number of red light violations also be considered as a factor as every instance of a vehicle running a red light is a potential traffic accident. The decision as to where the cameras will be placed should be made by the traffic professionals in the respective cities.
2. The City of South San Francisco agrees that the effectiveness of the red light cameras should be measured by comparing before and after accident statistics. We also believe that the number of violations at these intersections should be another factor considered.
3. The City of South San Francisco agrees that a reporting criterion be established to keep the respective senior city officials informed to include City Councils. As stated prior, accident rates should be considered along with the number of red light violations in making a decision on whether to continue operation of red light camera enforcement.
4. The City of South San Francisco agrees that a consistent standard be established and is currently working with other cities in San Mateo County through the County Chiefs Association to accomplish this recommendation. However, each individual jurisdiction is responsible for decisions on enforcing traffic violations occurring in its jurisdiction.

The Honorable Clifford V. Cretan

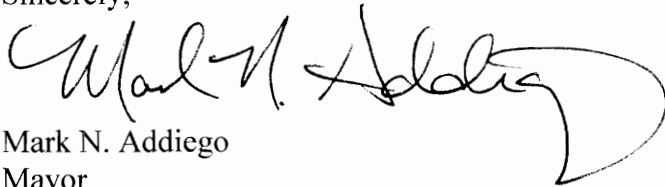
July 28, 2010

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5. The City of South San Francisco currently has warning signs on all approaches to intersections controlled by red light cameras. In addition there are signs that advise motorists that it is permitted to make a right turn on a red light after stopping.
6. The City of South San Francisco agrees that exploring the centralization of the review component may be a viable alternative to the current system. We will need to further study this recommendation prior to making a commitment one way or the other. However, each individual jurisdiction is responsible for decisions on enforcing traffic violations occurring in its jurisdiction.

These responses were reviewed and approved by the governing board of the City of South San Francisco at a public meeting on Wednesday, July 28, 2010.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark N. Addiego". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Mark N. Addiego
Mayor



HILLSBOROUGH POLICE DEPARTMENT

1600 Floribunda Avenue
Hillsborough
California
94010

Matthew O'Connor
Chief of Police

August 10, 2010

Honorable Clifford V. Cretan
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

RE: San Mateo County Grand Jury Report on the Effectiveness of Red Light Traffic Camera Enforcement

Dear Judge Cretan,

Please accept this letter as the official response from the Town of Hillsborough to the San Mateo County Grand Jury report dated June 7, 2010, regarding the examination of the effectiveness of red light traffic camera enforcement.

Due to the fact that the Town of Hillsborough does not utilize red light traffic enforcement cameras, and does not plan on utilizing such devices in the future, the findings and recommendations are necessarily quite limited. The only recommendation the Town might suggest is that it appears that a portion of the revenue generated by red light traffic enforcement violations should be allocated to the courts to help offset the increased clerical and courtroom time that red light traffic camera citation processing now requires.

This letter was approved by the Hillsborough City Council at its regular meeting on August 9, 2010. Please feel free to contact me if there are any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicholas Gottuso".

Captain Nicholas Gottuso
Patrol Division Commander



The Town of
Woodside

June 23, 2010

The Honorable Clifford V. Cretan
Judge of the Superior Court
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

RE: 2009-10 GRAND JURY REPORT - *THE EFFECTIVENESS OF RED LIGHT CAMERA ENFORCEMENT*

Dear Judge Cretan:

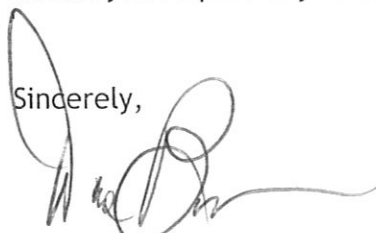
The Town Council of the Town of Woodside reviewed the referenced Grand Jury Report during its meeting of June 22, 2010. On behalf of the Town Council, I would like to offer the following.

The Town of Woodside maintains only one signalized intersection within its municipal boundaries, and the signals at this location serve to regulate and provide safe access to and from Cañada College. There are no cameras installed at this location and the Town has no reason to consider installing cameras to record red light violators as there is no history of such violations at this intersection. Thus, at the current time, the Grand Jury's Report, including its findings and recommendations do not currently apply to the Town.

P.O. Box 620005
2955 Woodside Road
Woodside, CA 94062

The Town greatly appreciates the efforts of the Grand Jury. On behalf of the Town Council, I would like to extend our thanks for the opportunity to review the work of the 2009-10 Grand Jury. Although the report does not currently apply to the Town of Woodside, we will certainly consider its conclusions and recommendations in the future should the Town ever decide that it wished to install red light cameras within its municipal boundaries

Please do not hesitate to call our Town Manager, Susan George, at (650) 851-6790, should you require any further information.

Sincerely,


Dave Burow
Mayor