



REPORT TO COUNCIL City of Sacramento

915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2604
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Public Hearing
September 23, 2008

Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

Title: Agreement: Red Light Camera Program

Location/Council District: Citywide

Recommendation: Adopt a **Resolution** authorizing the City of Sacramento to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Sacramento County to administer the Red Light Camera Program in the City.

Contact: Evangeline Lucas Lee, Associate Engineer, (916) 808-7612; Angie Louie, Senior Engineer, (916) 808-7921

Presenters: Evangeline Lucas Lee, Hector Barron

Department: Transportation

Division: Traffic Engineering

Organization No: 3439/15001161

Description/Analysis

Issue: The Sacramento City Council and the County Board of Supervisors entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in September 2003 to allow the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department to manage the Red Light Camera Program at City intersections. The current MOU will expire in December 2008. Staff recommends renewing the MOU for an additional five years.

Policy Considerations: The City managed the Red Light Camera Program in 1999. From 1999 through 2003, the Program operated at a loss of about \$50,000 a year. Partnering with other agencies to leverage resources and improve and expand public safety is consistent with Council action and direction. The Department of Transportation has determined that it is in the best financial and operational interest of the City to continue to allow the County of Sacramento to manage the Red Light Camera Program in the City.

Environmental Considerations:

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): This report concerns administrative activities that will not have any significant effect on the environment, and that do not constitute a "project" as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) [CEQA Guidelines Sections 15061(b)(3); 15378(b)(2)].

Sustainability Considerations: Not applicable.

Other: None

Commission/Committee Action: None

Rationale for Recommendation: This report recommends that the City Council adopt a resolution authorizing the City of Sacramento to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Sacramento County to administer the Red Light Camera Program in the City. The City has benefited from the program in terms of public safety and reduced red light collisions while not incurring any costs.

Financial Considerations: There is no cost to the City for the County's management of the Red Light Camera Program. All revenues generated by citations at City camera locations will be given to the County. If the City cancels the MOU, the City will be responsible for the remaining monthly costs.

Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD): No goods or services will be procured.

Respectfully Submitted by: 

Hector Barron
City Traffic Engineer

Approved by: 

Jerry Way
Director of Transportation

Recommendation Approved:



Ray Kerridge
City Manager



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Attachment 1**BACKGROUND****Red Light Camera Program Background**

In 1999, the Police Department, together with the former Department of Public Works, implemented an automated red light camera enforcement system to enhance public safety in the City of Sacramento. The program began with 10 cameras rotated among 11 major intersections. The initial locations were chosen based on factors such as red light collisions, total collisions, volumes, etc. Those intersections were:

1. Alhambra Boulevard/J Street
2. Broadway/21st Street
3. El Camino Avenue/Evergreen Street
4. Fair Oaks Boulevard/Howe Avenue
5. Folsom Boulevard/Howe Avenue-Power Inn Road
6. Mack Road/Center Parkway
7. Mack Road/Valley Hi Drive-La Mancha Way
8. W Street/16th Street-US 50 off-ramp
9. Howe Avenue/College Town Drive*
10. Arden Way/Exposition Boulevard-Ethan Way*
11. Capitol Avenue/30th Street*

* currently decommissioned locations

In 2002, an audit of seven red light camera programs throughout the State conducted by the State of California showed that the City, along with other public agencies, did not maintain effective control over their programs to comply with state law. The City suspended the issuance of red light camera citations for five months as a result of the audit. Furthermore, the audit estimated that the City's program operated at a loss of approximately \$50,000/year. As a result of the audit findings, the City evaluated the resources and program changes that would be needed to comply with the findings of the audit to provide better oversight. The City found that it would require hiring of dedicated Police personnel, a facility to process citations, etc. A comparison between program expenses and program revenues showed a projected loss of \$153,000 if the City were to operate its Program in compliance with the audit findings.

The County was also operating an independent automated red light enforcement program. The County determined that they could manage the City's cameras in compliance with the audit findings within its current staffing level and program expenses. Management of the City's cameras would be at no cost to the City as long as the citation revenue associated with automated red light camera enforcement was turned over to the County. As a business decision, the City entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the County in 2003 to allow the County to operate the program within the City limits to gain both operational and financial efficiency. The current vendor contract and MOU is set to expire in December 2008.

Safety Benefits

The Red Light Camera Program has proven to be a significant traffic safety benefit. Since the inception of the program, the total number of red light violations and the percentage of red light related collisions has decreased. Reductions in traffic violations and collisions usually result in less deaths and injuries to motorists and the general public. In 1997 there were 723 collisions citywide related to red light violations. In 2007, that number was reduced to 630, a 12.9 percent decrease in red light collisions. At intersections with the red light cameras, there were 35 collisions related to red light violations prior to camera installation. In 2007, there were 24 collisions at camera locations related to red light violations, a 31 percent reduction in red light collisions. This shows that the program is a very effective deterrent to red light violations.

City/County Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Program Management

Currently, the County of Sacramento Sheriff's Department manages the Sacramento Metropolitan Red Light Photo Enforcement Program which includes 20 red light cameras, 10 in the County, and 10 in the City. The Sheriff's Department has a contract with the red light camera vendor and a City/County MOU permits the Sheriff's Department to operate the program within City Limits. The County's contract with the current vendor, ACS, and the City/County MOU will expire in December 2008.

With expiration of the current MOU, staff re-evaluated operating a Red Light Camera Program separate from the County. Program management includes reviewing citations, attending court proceedings, weekly site visits with the vendor, and all associated paperwork. In order to manage its own Red Light Camera Program, the City would need to dedicate at least two full time Police personnel and associated equipment. Based on the budget situation, the Police Department does not have resources at this time to provide dedicated staff and program management. Based on current citation revenue and program expense information, it is projected that a City operated program would generate a loss of about \$170,000 a year. The monthly cost per camera may also increase if the City entered into a separate contract with the vendor. From a financial and efficiency standpoint, staff recommends that the County continue to manage the City's Program.

As with the current MOU, the proposed MOU between the City and County allows the County to manage the Red Light Camera Program in the City at no cost to the City. The County will be responsible for the monthly expenses for the program and will receive the citation revenue to offset the costs of the program. The MOU also states the responsibilities of each agency such as signal timing, sign installation, location selection, inspection requirements, etc. It also provides the minimum requirements for which a citation may be issued in the City. The MOU would be in effect for three years

with a two year extension option. The City may cancel the MOU with the County with 90 days prior notice at no cost obligation to the City.

New Camera Vendor

A Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued by the County in February 2008 for new red light camera vendors. There were four vendors who submitted proposals: ACS State and Local Solutions, Redflex Traffic Systems, Nestor Traffic Systems and American Traffic Solutions. An evaluation committee, including City staff, reviewed and scored each of the proposals. Redflex Traffic Systems received the highest ranking. Additionally, Redflex was the lowest bid among the four vendors.

The County will be executing a three year contract with a two year option with Redflex in October 2008. The monthly cost for each of the initial 20 locations in the City and County would be \$4,200/month, and each additional location would be \$5,050/month.

Existing and Proposed Camera Locations

Under the existing MOU, the County manages ten cameras at eight locations in the City. With the existing wet film technology, one camera is required to capture violations for each traffic movement that is enforced. New digital camera technology allows one camera to capture multiple violations for each approach which could include multiple traffic movements (left, through, right).

The proposed MOU provides for the installation of ten red light cameras in the City. Due to the success in reduction of red light collisions at the existing intersections since the installation of the cameras, staff recommends re-installing the existing ten cameras at the eight locations.

New cameras in the City may be installed based on the mutual consent of the City and County after an extensive review of the location based on criteria. The primary criteria for new camera locations will be based on safety, considering the incidence of red light running related collisions. Other considerations include frequency of violations, feasibility of camera installations, and other engineering measures to reduce red light running incidences. New cameras will cost \$5050/month but under the MOU, the City has no cost obligation since all revenues associated with the new camera will be given to the County to manage the camera.

Next Steps

Upon approval of the MOU by the City Council, the County will bring the vendor contract and MOU to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

Once a contract is approved, the new vendor will submit plans to replace the 10 cameras at the City's current eight locations, as well as the 10 locations in the County.

It is estimated that the City's existing camera locations will be out of service for four months while the new equipment is being installed.

Additionally, staff will compile a list of potential locations to be reviewed for new red light cameras. This list will be based on high collisions related to red light running, input from the Council, Police Department feedback, and citizen complaints. The locations will first be evaluated for possible engineering measures to reduce red light violations prior to being considered for a red light camera. Staff will return to Council with a list of recommendations for new cameras within six to eight months.

Attachment 2

RESOLUTION NO.

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

**ADOPT THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE
RED LIGHT CAMERA PROGRAM**

BACKGROUND

- A. The City of Sacramento implemented a Red Light Camera Program in 1999 to enhance public safety within the City Limits.
- B. The City entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the County of Sacramento in 2003 to allow the County to operate the program within City Limits.
- C. From inception, the Red Light Camera Program has been very effective in reducing the number of red light collisions throughout the City.
- D. The Memorandum of Understanding and the current vendor contract will expire in December 2008.
- E. The County has selected Redflex Traffic Systems, Inc. as its Red Light Camera vendor.
- F. A new Memorandum of Understanding is required for the County to continue to operate the Red Light Camera Program within the City Limits. The Memorandum of Understanding will be in effect for a maximum of five years.

**BASED ON THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE BACKGROUND, THE CITY COUNCIL
RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:**

- Section 1. The City Manager is authorized to execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the County of Sacramento to operate a Red Light Camera program within the City Limits.

