

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:**Covina council meeting of Mar 1 - red light cams - 2 more years?

**Date:**Sun, 28 Feb 2016 15:26:25 -0800

**From:**Jim <jim

**Reply-To:**jim

**To:**mayor@covinaca.gov, jking@covinaca.gov, kstapleton@covinaca.gov, wallen@covinaca.gov, jmarquez@covinaca.gov, cityclerk@covinaca.gov

To City staff: Please distribute this email and its attachments to the members of the city council, and to the public.

2-28-16

Venue: Covina council meeting of Mar. 1, item NB1, red light camera contract

Honorable Councilmembers:

The staff report is suggestive that all the credit for the claimed reduction in accidents should go to the red light cameras; it doesn't

mention the many other influences acting over the years, such as:

1. Changes in traffic volume due to the 2008 recession and recovery,
2. Now most cars have anti-lock brakes and side-curtain air bags - which may be much of the reason for the statewide 20% reduction in injury accidents over the last decade,
3. More effective identification and arrest of DUI drivers and repeat offenders, and the greater availability of alternate ways to get home, like Uber and Lyft.
4. Improvements Covina engineering staff has made at the intersections, such as better lighting, signage, pavement markings, and signal timing. Staff at the San Francisco MTA recently did a study (copy attached) showing a strong time correlation between engineering improvements they made and a reduction in accidents at their camera enforced intersections, but little or no correlation between the installation dates of the cameras and the reduction in accidents.

Finally, because 72% of the City's camera tickets are for right turns, please consider this statement found in a Dec. 26, 2014 Wall

Street Journal interview of an red light camera industry leader:

"Mr. [James] Saunders [then-president of RedFlex] suggests jurisdictions refrain from issuing a [rolling right] ticket except when a pedestrian is in the crosswalk." The headline was, "Can the Red-Light Camera Be Saved? - Money-hungry politicians

discredit a hopeful safety innovation.” (A Jan. 22, 2015 column in the Dallas Morning News confirmed the statement The Journal had attributed to Saunders: "When I asked Redflex spokeswoman Jody Ryan about her boss' comments urging cities to lighten up on rolling reds, she answered, "It only makes sense that Jim is going to say, 'Look, we need people to be thoughtful about how they are implementing these programs and how they are issuing citations.' It wasn't that shocking.")

I suggest that since the number of right turn violations has remained high despite years of photo enforcement (the 20% recidivism by Covina residents is the highest I have seen anywhere), the City should study its records to determine *when* during the red phase the most dangerous of those violations are occurring and then install "blank out" signs programmed to light up and prohibit right turns during the high risk portion of the phase.

Regards,

Jim

Attachments, or below in thread:

My previous letters to you  
The San Francisco study

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:**Covina council meeting of May 6 - red light cams - 2 more years

**Date:**Sun, 04 May 2014 21:22:50 -0700

**From:**Jim <[jjim](mailto:jjim)>

**Reply-To:**[jjim](mailto:jjim)

**To:**[clacroix@covinaca.gov](mailto:clacroix@covinaca.gov), [MHeaviside@covinaca.gov](mailto:MHeaviside@covinaca.gov), [mayor@covinaca.gov](mailto:mayor@covinaca.gov), [jking@covinaca.gov](mailto:jking@covinaca.gov), [kstapleton@covinaca.gov](mailto:kstapleton@covinaca.gov), [wallen@covinaca.gov](mailto:wallen@covinaca.gov), [jmarquez@covinaca.gov](mailto:jmarquez@covinaca.gov)

To City staff: Please distribute this email and its attachments to the members of the city council, and make them available to the public.

Venue: Covina council meeting of May 6, item CNB1, red light camera contract

Honorable Councilmembers:

If I was a member of the Covina city council I would be concerned to read - on page four of the four page staff report prepared for the May 6 meeting, copy attached - that a crucial deadline had been missed and that as a result the contract renewed automatically for two more years, presenting the council with a fait accompli that it is powerless to reject or modify unless it gets permission from ATS. And I would be further concerned when I remembered that the City was warned about the deadline well ahead of time - because a citizen wrote to the City about it in early 2013 (copy attached), and spoke about it during public comments at the December 3, 2013 council meeting.

I should also mention that on April 22 the City of Highland city council voted to close their camera program.

Regards,

Jim

Attached in pdf format:

My letter to Covina city council, March 30, 2014, with its attachments:

1. My letter to Covina city council, May 11, 2013
2. Statements by authorities in other towns
3. Staff report prepared for April 1, 2014 Covina city council meeting
4. Accident statistics ("Viability Study") prepared in 2009

Staff report prepared for May 6, 2014 meeting

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3-30-14

Venue: Red light cameras, item CC5, Covina council meeting of April 1, 2014

Honorable Councilmembers:

Please continue this item to a later meeting, as the one page staff report (copy attached below) is missing many of the elements normally reviewed by city councils in cities considering the continuation of a red light camera program.

1. There are no accident statistics. The most recent accident statistics I could find were prepared in 2009 (copy attached below), and those showed that after the cameras were installed there was a 28% increase in fatalities. Accident statistics *could* be presented during the upcoming meeting, but that would give the public no appropriate amount of time to review them. Thus I suggest that the hearing of this item be moved to a meeting at least two weeks after the accident statistics have been made available to the public. The contract is expiring now, but I am sure that the vendor is eager to retain the City's business and will agree to provide an extension so that there is time to let the public have a look at the statistics. I also want to recommend that the statistics be prepared by an independent professional having credentials in statistical analysis; the advantage of doing that is that the report will include advice as to which percentages are statistically significant, and which are not.

2. There is no information about the number of tickets issued each year. Figures from [www.highwayrobbery.net](http://www.highwayrobbery.net) show that ticketing has gone up a lot instead of falling as it should have after years of photo ticketing. Ticketing during 2013 was 54% higher than in 2011. Further, there is no mention that most of the tickets are for right turns; in March 2013 68% of all tickets were in the rightmost lane thus likely to be for right turns. In December 2013 65% of all tickets were in the rightmost lane.

3. There is no discussion of a Termination for Convenience ("escape") clause. Without one, you will be locked into the contract with no way out. Two weeks ago, after the Santa Ana city council voted 7-0 to close their camera program when the contract expires in June 2015 - Councilmember Vincent Sarmiento commented, "If there was a way to get out of this contract, I'd push for it now," and Councilmember Sal Tinajero commented, "If it was up to me, I'd get rid of it today."

4. There is no discussion of alternatives to cameras, something I discussed in my May 11, 2013 letter to you (copy attached below).

5. There is no mention of the Prevailing Wage action against ATS in the City of South San Francisco (which voted last week to close its ATS program). Has anyone investigated to see if ATS paid Prevailing Wages for the construction work it did in Covina?

6. The staff report should have mentioned that in addition to Santa Ana's vote to close their program, the following Southern California cities closed their programs in 2013 or 2014: El Cajon, Escondido, Inglewood, Murrieta (an ATS customer), Poway, San Diego (an ATS customer), and South Gate. Further, there is no discussion of the statements made by the authorities in those and other towns, that the cameras made no significant difference. Those statements are attached below, for your review.

7. Finally, there is no mention of the potential "un-signing bonus." If you discontinue the program now, you will stop paying camera rent immediately but you will continue to collect on the outstanding tickets. I estimate that another 3000 tickets would be paid over the next year, bringing \$450,000 to the City.

Sincerely,

Jim

Attached below:

1. My letter to Covina city council, May 11, 2013
2. Statements by authorities in other towns
3. Staff report prepared for April 1, 2014 Covina city council meeting
4. Accident statistics ("Viability Study") prepared in 2009

cc: Media

Attachment 1: Previous letter, May 11, 2013:

5-11-13

To City staff: Please distribute this email to the members of the City Council, and place it on the next Council agenda under written communications from the public.

Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers:

The red light camera contract between the City and ATS may be expiring in September. That may seem a long way off, but if you wish to be released from the contract or even modify it you must act now as the contract is written so that it will automatically renew unless you give 120 days notice.

Monthly ticket counts available online at <http://highwayrobbery.net/redlightcamsdocsCovinaMain.html> show that ticketing in 2012 was 30% higher than in 2011. That increase in ticketing suggests that the cameras are not making City intersections any safer. (With red light cameras, ticketing is supposed to decrease over time.)

If you decide to terminate the program, you will hear concern that without the cameras, there will be mayhem in the streets of Covina. Whether or not you believe that, I suggest that at the same time - or before - you remove the cameras, you improve the engineering at the intersections with the quick and cheap countermeasures suggested in this passage (mostly from the Alternatives page at highwayrobbery.net):

Anyone who watches the crash videos circulated by the Industry will notice that most of the crashes occur many seconds into the red. In 2004 the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI), with sponsorship by the Texas DOT, studied 41 crash videos obtained from red light cameras and confirmed what the public has been noticing: "With one exception, all of the right-angle crashes occurred after 5 seconds or more of red." They also reported that the average was 8.9 seconds into the red. (Link to the study: <http://thenewspaper.com/rlc/docs/04-alternatives.pdf> See pages 5-15 and 5-16.)

Those real late runners (5+ secs. late) aren't doing it on purpose. Recent evidence suggests that most of them are visitors who, because they don't live in town, simply don't know that there's a signal up ahead. They are lost or distracted, and by the time they notice that the signal is there, it is too late to stop. [Late edit: In February 2014 the City of Commerce revealed that 98.5% of its tickets go to visitors, and in March 2014 the City of Lynwood revealed that 77% of its tickets go to visitors.]

A minority of the violations are by "locals" who forgot there's a camera up ahead because they were distracted, or impaired.

Because they won't know or won't remember that there's a camera up ahead, the presence of a camera won't keep the visitors or the distracted/impaired locals from making the real

late runs. To cut those real late runs, a city should install visual cues to make its most dangerous intersections more prominent and to warn motorists, "signal ahead." Most of these engineering countermeasures are cheap and quick to do. And none of them carry the camera side effects of increased rearenders and increased congestion. (The presence of cameras adds significantly to congestion by making drivers so fearful of a ticket that they hesitate to make perfectly legal turns, screech to a halt on fresh yellows when it would have been legal *and safer* to have proceeded, and drive well below the already-low speed limit so that they can execute those premature stops.)

2005 research sponsored by the Florida Department of Transportation concluded that improving street markings (painting "signal ahead" on the pavement) near intersections would reduce red light running by up to 74 percent. (<http://thenewspaper.com/rlc/docs/05-simulator.pdf> Section 3.4, p. 69 of the document, or p. 84 of the pdf.) A large red light camera study sponsored by the San Diego Police Department rated engineering countermeasures such as better markings as "most effective" in reducing unintentional running, while enforcement, including cameras, was considered "less effective." (<http://www.highwayrobbery.net/redlightcamsdocsSanDiegoMain.html#SDdocs2> Table 6.3, p. 80 of the document, or p. 97 of the pdf.)

The 2004 TTI study (at page 5-9, link above) noted that countermeasures like increasing the diameter of signal lamps from 8" up to 12" or adding signal heads had the potential to decrease crashes by 47 percent. The 2005 Florida research recommended the installation of a signal pole on the "near" side of intersections. (The link is above. See p. 135 of the document, or p. 150 of the pdf.)

The 2004 TTI study (at page 5-9, link above) noted that adding backboards (back plates) to the signals had the potential to decrease crashes by 32 percent. [Or, enlarge the backboards you have.]

I suggest putting up larger and lighted name signs for the cross street, and larger bulbs in the street lights, at known dangerous intersections.

### In Summation

Rather than allowing the contract to renew itself for more years of cameras, rearenders and congestion, ask staff to report about countermeasures as alternatives to cameras - or even try some of them.

The cameras should be replaced by measures that are known to work.

Sincerely,

Jim

cc: Media

## Attachment 2: STATEMENTS BY AUTHORITIES IN OTHER TOWNS

Riverside (cameras installed in 2006): "Upon review CalTrans has determined that the accident rates do not warrant the camera systems at any of the five CalTrans locations and has requested their removal." Riverside Director of Public Works/City Engineer Thomas J. Boyd, in report prepared for Public Safety Committee meeting of 6-18-12, page 2-3.

Source: <http://www.highwayrobbery.net/TrcDocsRivers2012JuneStaffRepCloseProg.pdf>

More from Riverside: "It's impossible to attribute causality to one thing. I don't know whether and to what degree the red light cameras have contributed to a reduction in traffic crashes." Chief of Police Sergio Diaz.

Source: 7-14-12 Press Enterprise interview <http://blog.pe.com/2012/07/14/police-chief-on-red-light-cameras-data-not-conclusive/>

More from Riverside: "I have spoken publicly against the program several times in the past, once before the public safety committee and twice before the entire council. Each time, I expressed my dislike of the general concept of the program, the unethical tactics used to collect fees, inconclusive data regarding their effectiveness and the realization of corporate profits at the expense of our citizens. My position on these matters has not changed." Retired 28-year Riverside fire captain, in letter submitted for the Oct. 2, 2012 city council meeting. Source:

<http://www.highwayrobbery.net/TrcDocsRiversideContractOpinionByRetdFireCapt.pdf>

Emeryville (cameras installed in 2004, removed in 2012): "Staff also analyzed the number of accidents for the same seven year period and found that the red light cameras did not significantly impact the number of accidents." "Finance has estimated that elimination of the program would result in a \$200,000 per year savings to the City." Chief of Police Ken James, in reports submitted for 5-15-12 city council meeting.

Source:

<http://web01.emeryville.org/sirepub/pubmtgframe.aspx?meetid=87&doctype=agenda>

City of Los Angeles (cameras installed in 2000, removed in 2011): "It was completely wrong." "It was strictly designed to bring in revenue and didn't do anything for public safety." Councilmember Dennis Zine, who prior to his twelve years (termed out) on the council served 28 years with the LAPD, 18 years of which was on motors. Source: Los Angeles Daily News, 3-27-12, <http://www.dailynews.com/general-news/20120328/red-light-scofflaws-will-catch-a-break>



San Bernardino (cameras installed in 2005, removed in 2012): "It was the consensus of the Council that the City has lost business because of the red light cameras and they're not making the City any safer." Minutes, 1-24-11 city council meeting.  
<http://www.highwayrobbery.net/TrcDocsSanBernContr2011JanMins.pdf>

El Monte (cameras installed in 2003, removed in 2008): "A comparison of traffic collisions at Redflex monitored intersections vs. non-Redflex monitored intersections revealed that there is no statistical difference in the number of traffic collisions because of Redflex monitoring." Chief of Police Ken Weldon, in memo presented at 10-21-08 council meeting.  
<http://www.highwayrobbery.net/TrcDocsElMonteContrTerminateWeldonMemo.pdf>

More from El Monte: "We're spending a lot of staff time on this just to gain \$2000 a month." "It doesn't reduce accidents -- that's what our studies and results have come back." City Manager James W. Mussenden. Source: Granicus video of council meeting of 10-21-08, at 1:28:40, available on City's website at <http://www.ci.el-monte.ca.us/IWantto/View/VideosonDemand.aspx>

Upland (cameras installed in 2003, removed in 2009): "The system appears to have little influence on the number of red light related collisions at monitored intersections. At times, rear end collisions have actually increased." Chief Steve Adams, in memo presented at 3-9-09 council meeting.  
Source: <http://www.highwayrobbery.net/TrcDocsUplandStaffReport2009Mar9.pdf>

Whittier (cameras installed in 2004, removed in 2010): "Initially, the red-light program did change behaviors because it did lessen the number of red-light violations but over the long term it didn't appear to lessen the number of injury accidents." Assistant City Manager Nancy Mendez.  
Source: 12-6-10 Whittier Daily News  
<http://www.highwayrobbery.net/TrcDocsWhittierArticleProgTerminated.pdf>

Loma Linda (cameras installed in 2006, removed in 2010): "I believe these red light cameras are ways for city governments to legally extort money from their citizens." "The month after we lengthened the yellow light by one second, the number of violations that we have seen dropped by 90 percent." Mayor Rhodes Rigsby, M.D.

Source: KABC - TV, 12-3-10,

[http://abclocal.go.com/kabc/story?section=news/local/inland\\_empire&id=7824510](http://abclocal.go.com/kabc/story?section=news/local/inland_empire&id=7824510)

Gardena (cameras installed in 2005, removed in 2011): "Our research in Gardena has revealed there is no significant traffic safety impact as a result of the use of the red light cameras. At almost every intersection where we have cameras, collisions have remained the same, decreased very slightly, or increased depending on the intersection you examine. When combining the statistics of all the intersections, the overall consensus is that there is not a noticeable safety enhancement to the public." Chief of Police Edward Medrano, in memo presented at 2-9-10 council meeting. Source: <http://www.highwayrobbery.net/TrcDocsGardenaContr2010staffRepFull.pdf>

Bell Gardens (cameras installed in 2009, removed in 2012): "To date, 95% of the funds collected from verifiable violations have been paid to RedFlex Traffic Systems for operating the cameras. The remaining 5% of funds collected have been utilized to partially offset costs of personnel to manage the system. The red light camera program has contributed to a moderate decrease in the overall number of accidents; however, no change in the overall number of injury accidents. Furthermore, the police department has recognized unanticipated personnel costs to manage the program. Based on this analysis, the red light camera program is not significant enough of a community safety benefit to justify the continuation of the program beyond the existing three (3) year agreement term that expires on March 29, 2012." Staff report presented at 9-26-11 council meeting. <http://www.highwayrobbery.net/TrcDocsBellGdnsContr2011staffRep.pdf>

Hayward (cameras installed in 2008, removed in 2013): "In response to Council Member Zermeño's question for reasons why cities chose to drop out of the Red Light Camera program... City Manager David commented that another reason was the lack of strong evidence in the industry that red light cameras were effective in reducing collisions." Minutes, 10-11-11 council meeting. <http://www.highwayrobbery.net/TrcDocsHaywardStaffRep2011Oct11mins.pdf>

More from Hayward: "There is no concrete data that supports the fact that red light cameras are supposed to reduce collisions." "That's not been our experience here in Hayward. We've had much better results with a redeployment of our motor officers. I think that having that personal contact with our community members makes a lasting impression. It's an opportunity for us to change behavior when it's wrong versus getting a ticket in the mail 2-4 weeks down the road." Hayward Police Chief Diane Urban, during 3-6-13 city council meeting. <http://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2013/03/06/hayward-to-get-rid-of-red-light-cameras/>

Hawthorne (cameras installed in 2004): "The hope is that driving behavior is corrected, not just through that intersection but through the rest of the time you're driving here." "You need to study accidents overall. Some of the data that you don't have is accidents for their entirety in our city. You know what, you're right, they're not going down. I wish they were." Hawthorne Police Captain Keith Kauffman, during 3-13-12 city council meeting.

<http://highwayrobbery.net/redlightcamsdocsHawthMain.html#Council2012>


Escondido (cameras installed in 2004, removed in 2013): "Staff's analysis is the data on accident rates is inconclusive." "We didn't find any change between photo enforced intersections and citywide. You're just as likely to be injured at a photo enforced intersection as you are citywide. So we didn't find anything to demonstrate that severity had been reduced." "Photo enforcement has the highest cost of all the countermeasures." Escondido Assistant Director of Public Works Julie Procopio. Source: Video of council meeting of 8-21-13, at 1:26:50, available on City's official archive site, at

<http://escondido2.12milesout.com/>

**Effectiveness of Other Counter Measures**

Counter Measure	Crash Reduction Factor *	Cost per Intersection /Year
Left Turn Protected Phasing	27%	\$5,000
Retroreflective Backplates	13%	\$2,000
Countdown Pedestrian Heads	20%	\$4,800
Improve Signal Coordination	27%**	\$2,400
Automated Enforcement (RLPE)	12%	\$89,800

\* FHWA study estimates  
 \*\* Right Angle Crashes Only



Slide shown by staff at 8-21-13 Escondido council meeting

More from Escondido: "Some of the best footage of really drastic collisions comes from red light cameras." "The cameras are there, the collisions still happen." Councilwoman Olga Diaz. Source: Video of council meeting of 8-21-13, at 1:30:00.

South Gate (cameras installed in 2003, removed in 2013): "The most disappointing thing from staff's perspective is the lack of change in behavior at the intersections." "If you look at the statistics that were provided by RedFlex, you didn't see a dramatic impact in the behavior over the years. In fact, a limited correlation between the implementation of

RedFlex and the change in behavior. That's disappointing in the deployment, not just in this city, but everywhere." City Manager Michael Flad at council meeting of 9-10-13.  
Source: [audio clip](#) [audio of full item](#)

Moreno Valley (cameras installed in 2008, removed in 2009, City of Riverside camera on shared border removed in 2012 at Moreno Valley's request): "We took the heat without having any control over it." "I'm happy to see all those red light cameras go. ...The few people that like them just haven't looked at the reality of what it does. It takes away the discretion of a police officer." Moreno Valley Mayor Richard Stewart. Source: Riverside Press Enterprise article 8-6-12 <http://www.pe.com/local-news/riverside-county/riverside/riverside-headlines-index/20120806-moreno-valley-red-light-camera-to-be-shut-off.ece>

The San Mateo County Superior Court (seven cities in the County have cameras, earliest installed in 2005): "Are we doing right by the public?" "It's questionable whether the trade-offs are appropriate." "There's a balance there, and I don't think we have found it." CEO John Fitton, San Mateo Superior Court, on 11-13-09.  
Source:  
<http://www.highwayrobbery.net/TrcDocsSanMateoCountyArticles2009Nov13CourtExecAngry.txt>

More from the San Mateo Superior Court: "I would advise cities who are contemplating installing red light cameras to move cautiously. I know these systems generate revenue for cities, but safety-wise there are questions about whether the red light cameras reduce accidents." CEO John Fitton, on 2-16-10.  
Source: KGO-TV,  
<http://www.abclocal.go.com/kgo/story?section=news/local/peninsula&id=7280823>

From the San Mateo County Grand Jury: "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." "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." Source: 2010 Grand Jury Report  
<http://www.highwayrobbery.net/TrcDocsSanMateoGrandJuryFinalRep.pdf>

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Attachment 3:

**CITY OF COVINA**  
**AGENDA ITEM COMMENTARY**

**MEETING DATE:** April 1, 2014

**ITEM NO.:** CC 5

**STAFF SOURCE:** Kim J. Raney, Chief of Police  
David Povero, Police Captain

**ITEM TITLE:** Consider extension of contract with American Traffic Solutions for Red Light Camera System

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**STAFF RECOMMEDATION:**

Approve contract extension with American Traffic Solutions for red light camera services for the City of Covina.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

None.

**BACKGROUND:**

American Traffic Solutions (ATS) began providing red light camera services for the Covina Police Department back in April 2007. At that time, the Covina Police Department, through ATS, implemented a red light camera system at three major intersections in the city. The initial agreement was for five (5) years with the option of two (2) additional two (2) year terms. That initial five year agreement expired in April 2012, and at that time the agreement was extended for two years. It is due to expire in April 2014.

The objectives of the original contract provided a turnkey solution for dual camera systems at three major intersections with the intent to increase traffic safety while reducing traffic violations and collisions.

The contract extension will extend the term for an additional two years (through April 2016). This extension will not include any additional changes and will meet the standard objectives of the contract.




As noted above, the current contract with American Traffic Solutions expires next month and the Police Department needs a current contract in place to continue with its traffic safety efforts to reduce violations and collisions at these three roadway intersections. During this two-year extension period, the Police Department will be evaluating its red light camera system to determine if the system is reaching its goal of enhancing traffic safety through reduced traffic violations and collisions.

**RELEVANCE TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN:**

None.

**EXHIBITS:**

A. Professional Services Agreement for Red Light Camera System

<b>REVIEW TEAM ONLY</b>	
City Attorney: 	Finance Director: 
City Manager: 	Other: _____

Attachment 4:



# COVINA POLICE DEPARTMENT

## INTER – OFFICE MEMORANDUM

**Date:** June 1, 2009  
**To:** Scott Pierson – Police Lieutenant  
Matt Eddings – Police Sergeant  
**From:** J. Malinoski - Traffic Department  
**Re:** *Red Light Camera Program – Viability Study*  
**CC:** Derek Webster – Police Captain

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### Overview

In September of 2006 The City of Covina entered into an agreement with American Traffic Solutions, Inc. (ATS) for the purpose of installing and implementing a red light camera monitoring system and program. The system was installed in three major intersections within the city: 1). Azusa Ave at Cypress Street; 2). Grand Ave at Badillo Street; and 3). Barranca Ave at Rowland Street. The goal of the program was to reduce the significant number of traffic collisions occurring at these intersections and corresponding injuries by increasing the level of safe driving via the mere presence of the equipment as well as the automated issuance of red light violation citations.

The purpose of this memorandum is to communicate an analysis of the program's viability after two years of operation. The program became operational in April of 2007 after completing a thirty – day warning period. Given this, the analysis contained in this study utilized data from two years preceding the program (April 2005 – March 2007) and compared it against two years of data post program implementation (April 2007 – March 2009).

The program currently monitors (7) approaches contained within the above intersections: N/B Azusa Ave at Cypress Street; N/B Barranca Ave at Rowland Street; E/B Rowland Street at Barranca Ave; W/B Rowland Street at Barranca Ave; N/B Grand Ave at Badillo Street; S/B Grand Ave at Badillo Street; and E/B Badillo Street at Grand Ave.

### Impact – Traffic Collisions

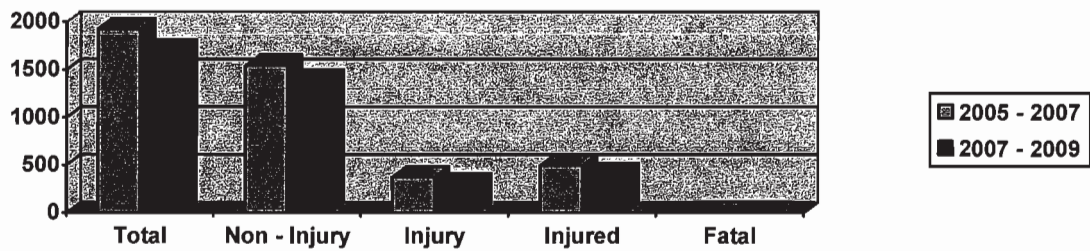
#### **Global**

There were a total of 1928 traffic collisions in the City of Covina from April 2005 – March 2007 (herein 2005 – 2007). 1545 were non – injury; 376 were injury – with a total of 497 persons injured; and 7 were fatal.

There were a total of 1703 traffic collisions in the City of Covina from April 2007 – March 2009 (herein 2007 – 2009). 1389 were non – injury; 306 were injury – with a total of 410 persons injured; and 9 were fatal. This represents the following net change:

<i>Traffic Collisions:</i>	<b>-11.7%</b>
<i>Non – Injury Collisions:</i>	<b>-10.0%</b>
<i>Injury Collisions:</i>	<b>-18.6%</b>
<i>Persons Injured:</i>	<b>-17.5%</b>
<i>Fatal Collisions:</i>	<b>+28.6%</b>

**Traffic Collisions Global**



**Intersections – Red Light Camera Installations**

The three intersections with camera installations showed a significant decrease in traffic collision occurrence in the two years post program installation. Azusa Ave at Cypress Street reduced the most dropping from (76) collisions 2005 – 2007 to (56) collisions 2007 – 2009 or **-26%**. This is followed by Grand Ave at Badillo Street which reduced from (66) collisions 2005 – 2007 to (50) collisions 2007 – 2009 or **-24%**. Barranca Ave at Rowland Street reduced from (22) to (19) during the same comparison periods or **-14%** (see **Table 1.0**)

**Intersections – Other**

**Table 1.0** further depicts all other major intersections in the city that do not have a camera installation but had at least (10) collision occurrences in *either* comparison period. Out of (40) intersections studied – (25) showed a decrease in collisions from 2005 – 2007 to 2007 – 2009 or **62.5%**

Given the high number of intersections showing reduced collisions, it appears that the program is having an affect on safer driving habits *throughout* the city and not just on the intersections with camera installations.

Table 1.0

INTERSECTION	COLLISION OCCURRENCE		CHANGE	% CHANGE	CAMERA INSTALLED
	2005 - 2007	2007 - 2009			
Azusa/Badillo	40	23	-17	-43%	
Azusa/Covina	31	16	-15	-48%	
Azusa/Cypress	76	56	-20	-26%	X
Azusa/San Bernardino	44	33	-11	-25%	
Azusa/Arrow Highway	41	51	10	24%	
Barranca/Badillo	15	15	0	0%	
Barranca/Covina	12	16	4	33%	
Barranca/Cypress	14	8	-6	-43%	
Barranca/Puente	11	7	-4	-36%	
Barranca/Rowland	22	19	-3	-14%	X
Barranca/San Bernardino	16	11	-5	-31%	
Barranca/Workman	17	10	-7	-41%	
Citrus/Arrow Highway	13	22	9	69%	
Citrus/Badillo	18	13	-5	-28%	
Citrus/College	7	12	5	71%	
Citrus/Covina	27	26	-1	-4%	
Citrus/Cypress	20	19	-1	-5%	
Citrus/Front	13	10	-3	-23%	
Citrus/Rowland	16	14	-2	-13%	
Citrus/Workman	14	9	-5	-36%	
Glendora/Badillo	9	17	8	89%	
Glendora/Covina	7	15	8	114%	
Glendora/Cypress	14	8	-6	-43%	
Grand/Arrow Highway	28	18	-10	-36%	
Grand/Badillo	66	50	-16	-24%	X
Grand/Covina	39	26	-13	-33%	
Grand/Cypress	10	14	4	40%	
Grand/Puente	10	20	10	100%	
Grand/Rowland	11	9	-2	-18%	
Grand/San Bernardino	21	18	-3	-14%	
Hollenbeck/Badillo	24	18	-6	-25%	
Hollenbeck/Puente	11	12	1	9%	
Hollenbeck/Rowland	13	5	-8	-62%	
Hollenbeck/San Bernardino	14	12	-2	-14%	
Hollenbeck/Workman	18	24	6	33%	
Lark Ellen/San Bernardino	21	23	2	10%	
Rimsdale/San Bernardino	9	13	4	44%	
Second/Badillo	9	17	8	89%	
Second/Rowland	10	7	-3	-30%	
Vincent/San Bernardino	28	31	3	11%	

## **Mitigating Factors**

### ***Effect of Increase in Gasoline Prices on Relative Traffic Volumes***

2007 and 2008 saw significant rises in gasoline prices. This time period corresponds with the implementation period of the red light camera program. As a result, this viability study sought to evaluate if the reduction in traffic collisions illustrated above perhaps could also be attributed to a reduced vehicle traffic volume as a result of a dramatic rise in gas prices.

The United States Congressional Budget Office (CBO) conducted a study<sup>1</sup> to evaluate the effect experienced on traffic volumes by rising gasoline prices using four years of data collected from metropolitan freeways in California and on statewide gasoline prices over that period.

On average, over all locations, the price of gasoline in a given week had a negligible effect on the volume of weekend traffic, but on weekdays higher gasoline prices had a small effect. A 10 percent increase in the price of gasoline is estimated to reduce volumes of driving by as little as 0.2 percent to 0.3 percent in the short run and by 1.1 percent to 1.5 percent in the long run should a price increase persist.

A 20 percent increase in price – or 50 cents if the base price is \$2.50 per gallon, would reduce freeway traffic by an average of 0.4 percent in the short run and by 1.4 percent in the long run.

The study provided some insight on the effect an increase in gasoline prices had on vehicle speeds. The results were similar to the effect on traffic volumes. Thus the reduction in vehicle collisions experienced in the implementation period of the red light camera program does not appear to be mitigated by the rising fuel prices.

## **Revenue and Cost**

### **Citations Issued**

The red light camera program issued a total of 2736 citations in FY 2008 or an average of 228 citations per month. The program has issued a total of 3102 citations through June of FY 2009 or an average of 259 citations per month. The FY 2009 average was affected by the re-paving construction of Barranca Ave. which caused the cameras on this street to be turned off. Turning the cameras back on was further delayed due to re-calibration requirements of the amber phase times.

Since the program's inception, 8116 violations have been captured by the cameras and 6249 have been approved by officers for the issuance of a citation – or 71.16%. A

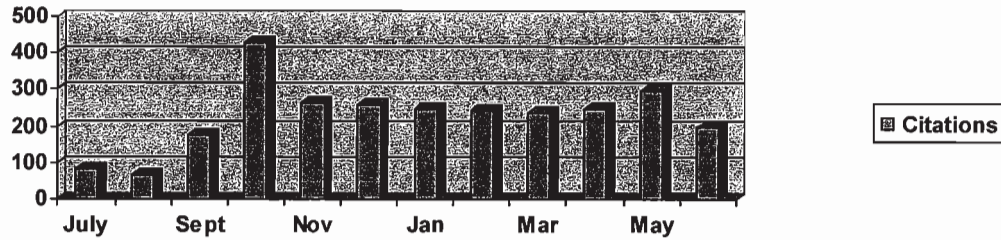
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<sup>1</sup> Congressional Budget Office 'Effect of Gasoline Prices on Driving Behavior and Vehicle Markets' – January 2009

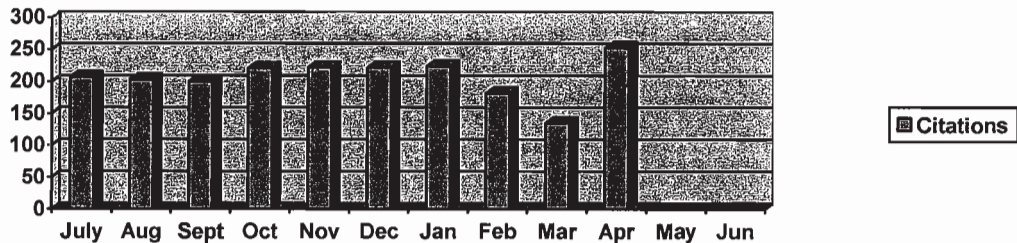


predominate reason for a violation being rejected is due to the inability to locate an individual's record and match it to the driver – i.e. an unlicensed driver.

**Red Light Camera Citations Issued FY 2007 - 2008**



**Red Light Camera Citations Issued FY 2008 - 2009**



**Citations Paid - (Revenue)**

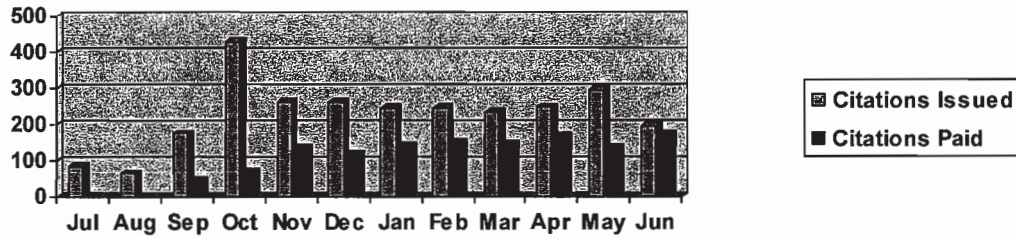
Of the 2736 citations issued in FY 2008, a total of 1259 fine payments were received or approximately 46%. Fine payment data for citations issued in FY 2009 is available through the month of June. Through this month, there were 3102 citations issued by the red light camera program. There were 1905 fine payments received during this same period – or approximately 75%.

The courts do not provide any data on what specific citations were paid, thus it is not possible to reconcile what specific citations were actually paid to specific citations issued. When revenue is paid to the City from the courts – we in essence take their word that the amount paid to us is the amount due us via fine payments received.

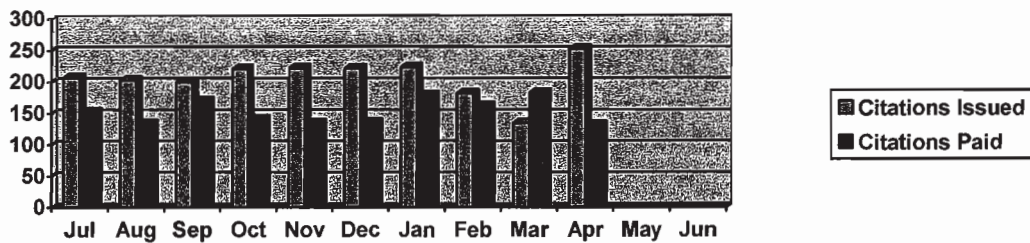
***Comparison of Fine Payment Collection Statistics***

ATS currently services 65% of the red light camera program markets throughout the United States. However, this includes only (8) cities in the State of California. The City of Covina is the only city served by them in Los Angeles County. According to current collection statistics surveyed by ATS within the State of California – collection rates of fine payments range from 55 – 80%. Thus our collection rate of 75% appears to be acceptable.

Citations Issued vs. Citations Paid FY 2007 - 2008



Citations Issued vs. Citations Paid FY 2008 - 2009



**Revenue and Operational Costs**

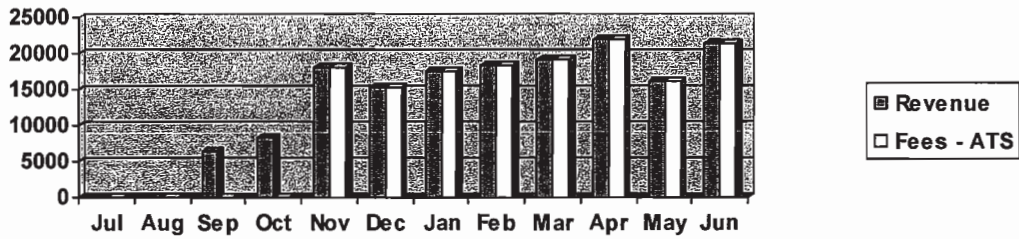
In FY 2008, the red light program generated \$162,548 in total revenue or an average of \$16,255 per month. Total fees paid to the ATS for that year were \$147,832 resulting in an operating profit of \$14,716. In FY 2009 thus far, fine payments have generated \$226,937 in total revenue or an average of \$18,912 per month. The fee agreement was re-negotiated this fiscal year to a flat monthly fee of \$16,185 (\$2,200 per approach plus \$785 for three live video feeds). So far, \$191,043 in fees has been paid to ATS resulting in an operating profit of \$32,894.

**Administrative Costs**

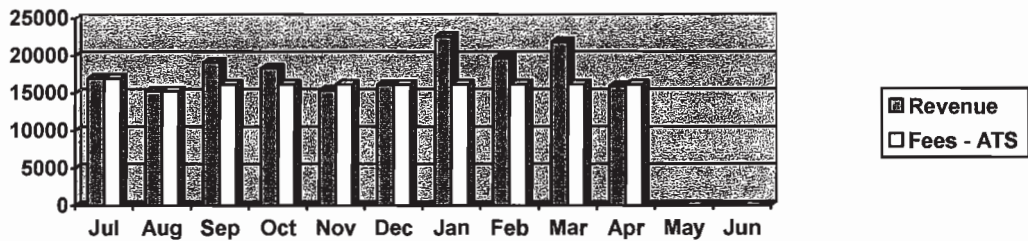
Approximately (1) hour each day is spent by traffic officers to administer the red light camera program. This includes reviewing violations, issuing citations, providing information to violators and other administrative functions. An additional (1) hour is spent on average per week testifying in traffic court. Further, Rachel Leo receives and tracks financial data provided to the department by the courts as it relates to this program (i.e. revenues from paid citations and fees paid to ATS). It is estimated that she spends (2) hours per month executing these duties.

Assuming a \$50 per hour employee cost; a total of 6.5 hours of labor costs dedicated to this program weekly; at 52 weeks per year – it is estimated that \$16,900 in *soft costs* are incurred annually administering this program. Thus, for all intents and purposes, the program appears to be performing at a ‘break-even’ status. However, fine payments are up significantly in Q3FY09. This status will have to be monitored to evaluate its sustainability.

Revenue vs. Cost FY 2007 - 2008



Revenue vs. Cost FY 2008 - 2009



**Summary in Detail**

**Table 2.0** summarizes in detail by fiscal month citations issued, citations paid, revenue received, fees paid and collection of fines as a percentage. In reviewing this table it is important to remember that the court does not provide any reconciliation of citations paid to citations issued. A lump sum payment is issued with only the raw number of citations paid indicated.

The data represented under ‘collection as a percentage’ assumes a 60 – day payment cycle from citation date of issue. For example, there were 132 citations paid in the month of April 2009. This table assumes that this number represents a collection of 73% of the 182 citations issued in the month of February 2009. This assumption takes into account the time period provided by the courts for payment of fines; violators who request a trial or a trial by declaration as well as violators who ignore the violation notice all together.



Table 2.0

	<b>FY2008</b>	<b>Citations Issued</b>	<b>Citations Paid</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Fees Paid</b>	<b>Collection %</b>
<b>2007</b>	<b>July</b>	85				
	<b>August</b>	64				
	<b>September</b>	175	44	6279		52%
	<b>October</b>	429	67	8437		105%
	<b>November</b>	262	131	18008	18008	75%
<b>2008</b>	<b>December</b>	260	115	15411	15411	27%
	<b>January</b>	246	140	17526	17526	53%
	<b>February</b>	244	148	18397	18397	57%
	<b>March</b>	234	145	19101	19101	59%
	<b>April</b>	247	166	21914	21914	68%
	<b>May</b>	295	131	16173	16173	56%
	<b>June</b>	195	172	21302	21302	70%
	<b>Totals</b>	2736	1259	162548	147832	62%
	<b>Averages</b>	228	46%	16255	18479	

	<b>FY2009</b>	<b>Citations Issued</b>	<b>Citations Paid</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Fees Paid</b>	<b>Collection %</b>
<b>2009</b>	<b>July</b>	207	153	16982	16982	52%
	<b>August</b>	203	134	15291	15291	69%
	<b>September</b>	200	170	19128	16185	82%
	<b>October</b>	221	141	18359	16185	69%
	<b>November</b>	222	135	15415	16185	68%
	<b>December</b>	222	136	16105	16105	62%
	<b>January</b>	224	179	22571	16185	81%
	<b>February</b>	182	162	19641	16185	73%
	<b>March</b>	135	183	21838	16185	82%
	<b>April</b>	322	132	15956	16185	73%
	<b>May</b>	456	160	19196	16185	119%
	<b>June</b>	508	220	26455	16185	68%
	<b>Totals</b>	3102	1905	226937	194043	75%
<b>Averages</b>	310	61%	22694	19404		



**Opportunities**

**Reduction in Crime**

As illustrated in **Table 1.0**, an analysis of current data reveals traffic collisions are down approximately 12% overall – a reduction experienced by 62.5% of forty major intersections studied in the city since the implementation of the city’s red light camera program.

**Table 3.0** illustrates the occurrence rates for key crimes and/or events requiring a police officer’s handle for the two comparison periods contained in this study as well as the differences between the two periods.

While it is not proposed that the implementation of a red light camera program is directly responsible for a 15% reduction in larceny crimes or a 14% reduction in assault crimes; it is worth evaluating what impact the implementation of a red light camera program has had on an officer’s ability to be more pro-active in his or her beat as a result of a 12% reduction in time spent investigating traffic collisions.

**Table 3.0**

	2005/2007	2007/2009	Difference	% Difference
<b>Homicide</b>	3	19	16	533%
<b>Rape</b>	15	20	5	33%
<b>Assault</b>	1314	1130	-184	-14%
<b>Robbery</b>	151	156	5	3%
<b>Burglary</b>	867	764	-103	-12%
<b>Larceny</b>	2588	2191	-397	-15%
<b>Auto</b>				
<b>Thefts</b>	458	418	-40	-9%
<b>Arrests</b>	7818	6640	-1178	-15%
<b>Citations</b>	15541	13397	-2144	-14%

**Commercial Enforcement**

A significant amount of commercial traffic travels through the City of Covina on a daily basis. A major portion of this traffic weighs in excess of 26000 lbs. This gross weight is damaging certain roadways within the city despite posted approved truck routes. ATS has developed technology which senses the gross weight of vehicles and uses the same red light camera technology to issue citations to vehicles traveling in violation of posted routes given their weight.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **Conclusions**

#### ***Program Viability***

Based on the results of this study it is believed that the red light camera program is in fact a viable resource used by the department in its effort to maintain and/or enhance the quality of life for the residents of the City of Covina.

- ***Reduced Collisions***
- ***Reduced Injuries***
- ***Reduced Property Damage***
- ***Increased Pro-Active Policing***
- ***Cost Neutral***
- ***Global Reach***

In the last two years, the city has experienced 225 less vehicle collisions with 87 less persons injured as a result. The program appears to have reaching effects to safer driving habits in intersections throughout the city as illustrated with a reduction of collisions in nearly 63% of major intersections. The city has experienced a reduction in certain crimes persons and property crimes and has achieved an increased ability for proactive officer patrols given the significant reduction in collision investigations – at zero cost to the tax payer!

### **Recommendations**

#### ***Public Relations***

A recent public opinion poll conducted by Public Opinion Strategies<sup>2</sup> revealed that 69% of the public supports red light camera programs with only 29% of the public opposing such a program. The national survey was based on interviews with 800 likely voters. The results are subject to a sampling error of plus or minus 3.46 %.

It is recommended that the department begin to leverage the successes achieved via the program to further and/or improve relations with the public as it relates to the program. The public might appreciate that 87 less people were injured in the last two years since the program's inception with zero cost to the taxpayer and zero profit to the city. ATS can assist with the preparation of a quarterly press release highlighting some positive effect as a result of the program's existence.

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<sup>2</sup> Public Opinion Strategies, Alexandria VA, April 19 – 22, 2009 Red Light Camera Opinion Poll

***Dormant Red Light Cameras***

Given the program's success thus far, coupled with the achievement of a relative problem-free operational status; consideration might be given to bringing a dormant camera monitoring the left turn approach of westbound Badillo Street to southbound Grand Ave back on line. During a 24 – hour monitoring pre-installation phase, there were (23) red light violations observed in this approach. At approximately \$436 per violation; the \$2200 in added cost would be paid for with the collection of (5) citations.

***Continued Viability Studies***

Continued monitoring of the program' viability every two years is recommended to ensure the program continues to serve the resident's of the city as an acceptable resource given its cost/benefit.