

City of Tualatin Photo Red Light Program



City of Tualatin

2011 Legislative Report

03/01/2011

City of Tualatin Police Department

Project Manager

- **Kent W. Barker, Chief of Police**

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The City of Tualatin provides this report in accordance
with ORS 810.434 (4) and ORS 192.245.

Table of Contents

- I. Introduction, Background & Building
- II. Public Information Campaign
- III. Process and Outcome Evaluation
 - A. The Effect of the Use of Cameras on Traffic Safety
 - B. The Degree of Public Acceptance of the Use of Cameras
 - C. The Process of Administration of the Use of Cameras

I. Introduction, Background & Building

Introduction

The City of Tualatin began utilizing intersection safety cameras, also known as Photo Red Light Camera Enforcement, in December 2010. Intersection Safety Cameras consist of cameras installed at a specific intersection, in order to enforce traffic laws by photographing drivers when they run the red lights. The intersection safety cameras are connected to the traffic signals as well as sensors that monitor the traffic flow at the intersection's crosswalks. The traffic signal is continuously monitored by the system and the cameras are triggered when a vehicle enters the intersection at a pre-established minimum speed and following a specific amount of time after the signal has turned red. Cameras record the date, time of day, time elapsed since the beginning of the red signal, and vehicle speed.

Typically, there are four photographs mailed to each offender, which include the vehicle as it is entering the intersection after the light turns red, a close-up of the driver's face, a close-up of the vehicle's license plate, and the vehicle exiting the intersection.

The most frequent traffic complaint received by the Tualatin Police Department involves "Red Light Violators". Intersection safety camera enforcement has shown to be a more cost effective, safer method of decreasing red light violations. The conviction rate has also proven to be higher. Statistics not only show a decrease in red light violations, but also a significant decrease in injury crashes resulting from drivers running red lights.

In order for police to have a substantial impact on red light violations at an intersection, they would have to constantly be present at that intersection. This would take several officers being assigned strictly to one location, which is not feasible, nor does it provide a benefit to the rest of the city. The benefit of the intersection safety camera system is that it can be present at the designated intersection all of the time.

Another benefit is safety. When an officer stops a violator in traffic, the risk to the officer's safety as well as the driver greatly increases. In addition, surrounding traffic becomes more congested. The intersection safety camera system enables traffic to continue to move smoothly and allow officers to safely provide their services to other citizens in need.

Background

Intersection safety cameras were first mentioned during the 2006-2007 City of Tualatin budget process. It was mentioned again during the 2007-2008 budget process, at which time it was further discussed and the members of the Tualatin City Council directed the police department to do further research. A presentation was given by Tualatin's Police Chief, Kent Barker, to the Tualatin City Council in September 2007. It was at this time and at the direction of the members of the Tualatin City Council to enter into a letter of intent to have a vendor conduct an evaluation of the most dangerous intersections in Tualatin.

In December 2007, a survey/evaluation was conducted by Redflex at the top four intersections in Tualatin with the highest crash/injury rates, at that time. The results of the study confirmed that the highest number of red light violations were at Lower Boones Ferry Road and Bridgeport Road/72nd Avenue.

In May 2008, the results of the survey/evaluation were brought to a city council work session. The members of the Tualatin City Council directed Chief Barker and the City of Tualatin to enter into a contract with Redflex to install up to eight intersection safety camera systems within the city, but to start with just one intersection first. The intersection selected was Lower Boones Ferry Road at Bridgeport Road/72nd Avenue.

In November 2009, a second survey/evaluation was conducted by Redflex at the intersections with a high crash/injury rate. The results confirmed that the highest number of red-light violations were at Tualatin-Sherwood Road and Avery Street.

Building

Permits were issued for the Tualatin-Sherwood/Avery Street intersection first. And this was the only system operating during the calendar year 2010. The system became operational the 1st day of November and a warning period was instituted until December 10, 2010. Citations were issued to violators from December 11th through December 31, 2010.

At this time, the only intersection with an intersection safety camera is at:

- Tualatin-Sherwood Road and Avery Street

II. Public Information Campaign

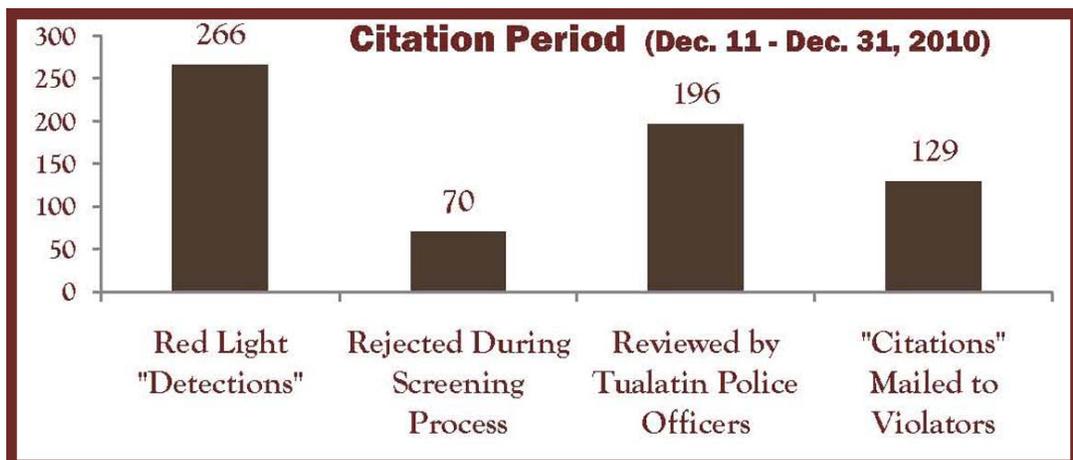
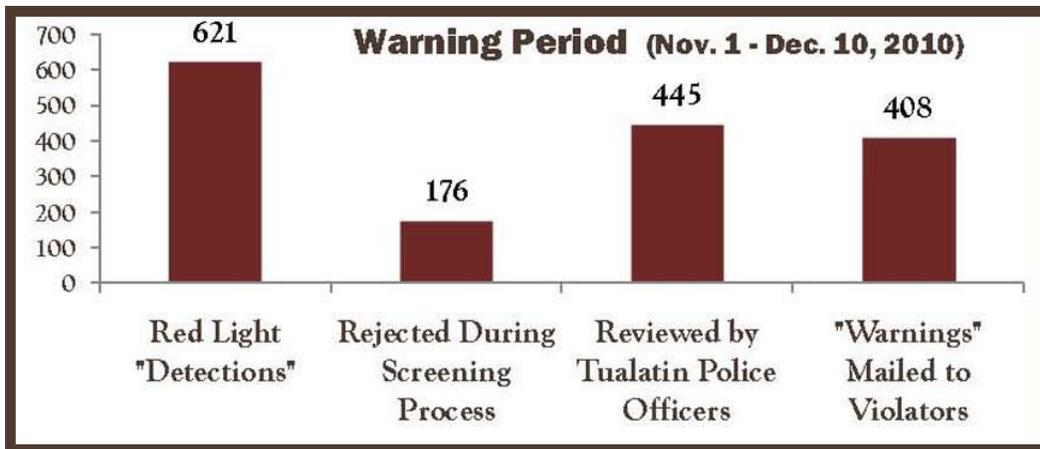
The City of Tualatin conducted an extensive public information campaign. This campaign began in September 2007 and continued through the time of installation and implementation in December 2010. The campaign consisted of presentations at public meetings and City Council work sessions, numerous news articles in local newspapers, press releases provided to all local media outlets, brochures made available to the public, and a dedicated web page linked to our City's website. The following is a chronological list of events intended to inform the public:

- September 24, 2007, City Council Work Session presentation
- September 27, 2007, The Times Community Newspaper coverage
- December 17-18, 2007, Redflex video survey of top five crash intersections
- May 12, 2008, City Council Work Session presentation
- May 15, 2008, The Times Community Newspaper coverage
- September 2, 2008, Tualatin Rotary Club presentation
- November 20, 2008, Tualatin Chamber of Commerce presentation
- March 27, 2009, The Times Community Newspaper coverage
- October 20, 2010, City of Tualatin Photo Red Light webpage made available
- November 1, 2010, Tualatin Today Community Newsletter coverage mailed to all Tualatin residents
- November 11, 2010, The Times Community Newspaper coverage
- November 12, 2010, Oregonian Newspaper coverage
- November 22, 2010, City Council Presentation and CCTV Public Broadcast
- November 23, 2010, City of Tualatin webpage updated
- December 1, 2010, City of Tualatin webpage updated with videos
- December 1, 2010, Portland Tribune Newspaper coverage
- Public campaign brochure distributed and on display at several public venues and businesses such as the Public Library, City Hall, Chamber of Commerce, and other businesses

III. Process and Outcome Evaluation

A. The Effect of the Use of the Cameras on Traffic Safety

The City of Tualatin began utilizing intersection safety cameras, also known as Photo Red Light Camera Enforcement, on November 1, 2010. A warning period was in effect from November 1st through December 10th. Citations were issued to violators from December 11th through December 31, 2010.



Although the system was only operational for 61 days in 2010, the Tualatin Police Department saw a slight decrease in violations from the warning period (15.5 detections and 10.2 warnings per day) to the citation period (12.6 detections and 6.1 citations per day).

A more comprehensive evaluation will be conducted in the next biennium as we will have more data available.

B. The Degree of Public Acceptance of the Use of Cameras

Due to the short amount of time the system has been operational, no formal survey has been conducted. Informal results obtained throughout the public information campaign and during the time our system has been operational indicate public acceptance of the intersection safety camera.

During a recent State-of-the-City address given by Mayor Ogden, he told our chamber of commerce members, “I hope the city makes zero dollars off of this system, because that means everyone is obeying the traffic laws and keeping our streets safer.”

C. The Process of Administration of the Use of Cameras

The use of intersection safety cameras in Tualatin follows a specific process, to include checks and balances and falling in compliance with all legislative requirements dictated in ORS 810.434 and 810.436, consisting of:

- Violation Detection—A vehicle must travel across the white intersection stop line (crosswalk) after the light has turned red to activate the intersection safety camera.
- Quality Control Checks—Redflex, Tualatin’s intersection safety camera vendor, performs a series of checks and balances to ensure the camera was in proper working order when the violation occurred and that the digital photographs, violation data and owner information are accurate. If any of these checkpoints do not pass Redflex’s quality control standards, then citations are not issued.
- Police Officer Review—A Tualatin police officer reviews the video and image of the violation and determines if a citation is to be issued. If the decision is made to issue a citation, the officer enters their electronic signature on the citation and Redflex mails it to the registered owner of the vehicle.
- Certificate of Innocence—If the registered owner receives a citation and they were not the driver at the time of the violation, they can complete a Certificate of Innocence or Certificate of Non-Liability form in response.
- Defendant Response—If a citation is issued for a violation that has occurred, the defendant is given the opportunity to respond by mail or appear in court. They have the option of pleading guilty, not guilty, or no contest.
- Municipal Court Process—Each citation is entered into the jurisdiction of the City of Tualatin’s Municipal Court. These citations follow the same process as all other citations entered into the court, which affords the violator all of the same rights and options as anyone with a traffic citation issued by an actual officer.

Did You Know...

- The most frequent traffic complaint received by the Tualatin Police Department involve "Red Light Violators."
- Violators cause crashes, which lead to further congestion.
- Violators, when stopped in traffic, block intersections, causing more congestion.
- Studies in nearby cities have shown a 67% decrease in injury crashes as a result of photo red light enforcement.



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www.ci.tualatin.or.us/police

TUALATIN POLICE
DEPARTMENT



Heads Up! If the light is red, use your head...STOP!

Photo Red Light Enforcement



(503) 691-4800

Intersection Safety Camera Tri-fold Brochure

What is Photo Red Light?

Photo red light consists of cameras installed at a specific intersection, in order to enforce traffic laws by photographing drivers when they run the red lights. The red light cameras are connected to the traffic signals as well as sensors that monitor the traffic flow at the intersection's crosswalks. The traffic signal is continuously monitored by the system and the cameras are triggered when a vehicle enters the intersection at a pre-established minimum speed and following a specific amount of time after the signal has turned red. Cameras record the date, time of day, time elapsed since the beginning of the red signal, and vehicle speed.

Typically, there are four photographs mailed to each offender, which include the vehicle as it is entering the intersection after the light turns red, a close-up of the driver's face, a close-up of the vehicle's license plate, and the vehicle exiting the intersection.



Why Photo Red Light?

Photo red light enforcement has shown to be a more cost effective, safer method of decreasing red light violations. The conviction rate has also proven to be higher. Statistics not only show a decrease in red light violations, but also a significant decrease in injury crashes resulting from drivers running red lights.



In order for police to have a substantial impact on red light violations at an intersection, they would have to constantly be present at that intersection. This would take several officers being assigned strictly to one location, which is not feasible, nor does it provide a benefit to the rest of the city. The benefit of the red light system is that it can be present at the designated intersection all of the time.

Another benefit is safety. When an officer stops a violator in traffic, the risk to the officer's safety as well as the driver greatly increases. In addition, surrounding traffic becomes more congested. The photo red light system enables traffic to continue to move smoothly and allows officers to safely provide their services to other citizens in need.

For more information on Photo Red Light in Tualatin, please refer to our website www.ci.tualatin.or.us/police

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What if the light is yellow or green when I first enter the intersection?**

Drivers will only be photographed and ticketed if they enter the intersection after the light turns red.

- **Are photo red light tickets more expensive than a regular ticket?**

No. Photo red light tickets are the same cost as a ticket personally issued by an officer for failing to obey a traffic control device.

- **What do I do if I receive a ticket?**

Drivers are given the same rights with photo red light tickets as they are with any traffic violation. Drivers may respond by mail or appear in court. They may plead guilty, not guilty, or no contest.

For more information on how to respond to photo red light tickets, please contact the City of Tualatin Municipal Court (503) 691-3025.

- **What if I receive a ticket in my name, but I wasn't driving my vehicle?**

Included with every ticket is a Certificate of Innocence Form, which allows the registered owner to have the ticket dismissed if they are not the driver of the vehicle.

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CITY OF TUALATIN

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Click on "Intersection Safety Cameras"