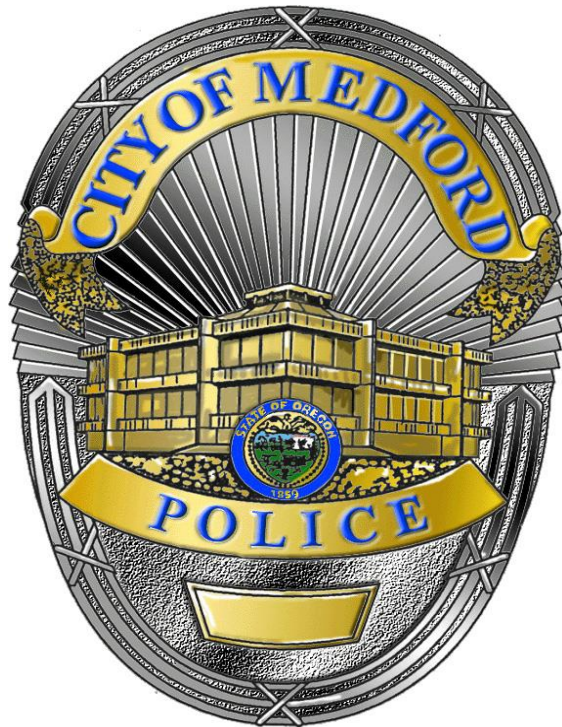


CITY OF MEDFORD POLICE



Your Police, Our Community

Photo Red Light
Report to the Legislature
Process and Outcome Evaluation

February 2021

Background – Legislative Report Requirements

Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 810.434 requires cities using photo red light equipment to provide a public information campaign to inform local drivers about the use of cameras before citations are issued and to produce a report to the legislature once each biennium. The law reads as follows:

(3) A city that chooses to operate a camera shall:

- (a) Provide a public information campaign to inform local drivers about the use of cameras before citations are actually issued; and
- (b) Once each biennium, conduct a process and outcome evaluation for the purposes of subsection (4) of this section that includes:
 - (A) The effect of the use of cameras on traffic safety;
 - (B) The degree of public acceptance of the use of cameras; and
 - (C) The process of administration of the use of cameras.

(4) By March 1 of each odd-numbered year, each city that operates a camera under this section shall present to the Legislative Assembly the process and outcome evaluation conducted by the city under subsection (3) of this section. [1999 c.851 §1; 1999 c.1051 §327; 2001 c.474 §1; subsection (5) of 2001 Edition enacted as 2001 c.474 §3; 2003 c.14 §491; 2003 c.339 §1; 2005 c.686 §1; 2007 c.640 §1; 2011 c.545 §65; 2017 c.288 §3]

Public Information Campaign

ORS 810.434 (3)(a)

Public acceptance of photo red light enforcement is exceptionally high in Medford. The City Council is strongly committed to this program. Prior to implementation of the red light program, a public opinion survey was conducted by the Southern Oregon University business department. Results from the statistics gathered demonstrate the strength of public support for the use of photo red light enforcement.

As part of ORS 810.434, the statute requires cities implementing photo enforcement to provide a public information campaign to inform local drivers about the use of cameras before citations were issued. The City of Medford began the photo enforcement information campaign in July of 2002. With the assistance of the local media, this information is an ongoing process. The primary goal of the campaign was to change driving behavior by increasing awareness and educating the public to the dangers of running red lights and exceeding posted speed limits. This continuing educational program has been successful due to the extreme interest of both the local print and television media. Numerous print articles and television news segments were aired prior to implementation, during construction of the intersections infrastructure, and after the cameras went live.

On an annual basis the Medford Police Department continues its public education efforts on the photo red light program with updates and program explanation through various sources and mediums. The Medford Police Department disseminates information on the photo red light program through annual citizen's academies, Medford Police Department annual reports, and neighborhood watch newsletters.

Over the last several years the City of Medford has seen a dramatic reduction in motor vehicle crashes at one of the two intersections monitored by the photo red light enforcement program. From 2005 to 2013 the intersection of Barnett Rd. and E. Stewart Av. frequently experienced crash numbers in the double digits. However, as the photo red light enforcement program continues to receive increased public attention and additional media coverage the City has seen a reduction in crashes at that intersection.

The successful deployment of the photo red light enforcement program to improve traffic safety led the City to consider an expansion of the program in 2017. After presenting the option to the City Council it was decided to expand the program and implement photo enforcement at two additional intersections. The decision was also made to add fixed speed enforcement to all four photo enforced intersections, in stages.

In April of 2017 photo red light enforcement went live at the two new intersections. This expansion of the program was preceded with several press releases, expanded media coverage and several live interviews on local television news outlets. The fixed speed monitoring did not take effect until April of 2018 when it went live at the two newest

intersections. The original two intersections that were monitoring red light violations did not become active for fixed speed enforcement until October of 2018. A highly published media campaign occurred prior to any fixed speed enforcement took place.

Effect of the Use of Cameras on Traffic Safety

ORS 810.434 (3)(b)(A)

Red Light Violations

The Medford Police Department has been conducting red light photo enforcement since the fall of 2002. In 2004, the department switched photo enforcement vendors from Poltech to Redflex and during that time the photo enforced intersections changed as well. In 2005 the two primary photo enforced intersections, Biddle/McAndrews & Barnett/Stewart, were established and are still operational today. As mentioned above, in 2017, the City added two additional photo enforced intersections. Those two intersections, Central/4th & Riverside/8th, became operational in April, with a 30 day warning period before citations were issued for violations.

Red Light Violation Citations Issued by Intersection

	Biddle/McAndrews	Barnett/Stewart	Central/4th	Riverside/8th
2019	394	1547	1424	966
2020	336	1467	972	985

Speed Limit Violations

As mentioned above, the program expanded in 2018 and all four photo enforced intersections became operational for fixed speed enforcement and citations were issued to violators traveling more than 11 miles per hour over the posted speed limit.

Fixed Speed Violation Citations Issued by Intersection

	Biddle/McAndrews	Barnett/Stewart	Central/4th	Riverside/8th
2019	1511	1835	295	1109
2020	1468	2318	3926	980

The dramatic increase in the number of speed limit violations captured at the intersection of Central/4th from 2019 to 2020 was caused by a reduction in the posted speed limit entering the downtown corridor. In July of 2020 the City of Medford reduced the speed limit at this intersection from 30 MPH to 20 MPH. Several media interviews and press releases were disseminated prior to the speed limit change taking effect. In addition, warning letters in lieu of citations were mailed out to the registered owner of any vehicle committing a speed violation captured by the system during the first 30 days after the speed limit change.

Traffic Crashes at Photo Enforced Intersections

The City of Medford has achieved positive results from the photo red light program. Crashes at photo enforced intersections have been mostly in a downward trend over the last several years and decreased dramatically in 2020.

Crashes at Photo Enforced Intersections – 2005 through 2020

	Biddle/ McAndrews	Barnett/ Stewart	Central/ 4th	Riverside/ 8th	Total
2005	35	19	1	3	58
2006	28	12	14	11	65
2007	23	5	14	10	52
2008	17	11	9	5	42
2009	32	6	12	12	62
2010	15	9	5	10	39
2011	20	12	4	9	45
2012	17	8	14	9	48
2013	15	11	3	15	44
2014	16	5	10	4	35
2015	25	3	9	5	42
2016	22	8	5	11	46
2017	26	4	5	8	43
2018	28	3	7	15	53
2019	21	6	4	10	41
2020	12	4	3	6	25

Residence of Red Light & Speed Violators

Half of the red light and speed violators detected at the four listed photo enforced intersections do not live in the Southern Oregon area. In analyzing the data from 2020 we found over 21% of the violators were Oregon residents from outside of the Rogue Valley while 29% of the violators were non-Oregon residents.

Traffic Citation Statistics

The Redflex cameras at these four photo enforced intersections also measure traffic volume. Using this data we can determine the number of vehicles that travel through the listed intersections versus the number of citations issued. This data shows that in 2020 an average of 1,292,972 vehicles passed through these four intersections each month. Speed and red light violations captured at each intersection resulted in an average of 1037 citations issued each month. This means, on average, .08% of the vehicles that traveled through these four photo enforced intersections in 2020 were issued a citation.

Degree of Public Acceptance of the Use of Cameras

ORS 810.434 (3)(b)(B)

The City of Medford contracted with Southern Oregon University to conduct a photo enforcement survey. The survey was conducted in December of 2001. The target market for the survey was comprised of homeowners and renters. 4,000 surveys were divided proportionally between East and West Medford, and sent through seven random mail routes. The overwhelming majority of those surveyed favored the implementation of photo traffic enforcement. It was found that 68% of the respondents either strongly or somewhat favored the program. Only 27% were either somewhat opposed or strongly opposed to photo traffic enforcement. When asked what traffic related items are of most concern to the citizens of Medford, 59% responded that drivers were not stopping for red lights.

In 2014 the City of Medford Police Department began measuring the public opinion of the photo red light program through a public safety survey conducted annually. Due to the outbreak of COVID-19 the door to door public safety survey was not conducted in 2020. During the survey conducted in 2019 the following information was documented.

- 92% advised they were aware of the City's photo red light program
- 68% rated the photo red light program as very good to good
- 78% rated the photo red light program as improving traffic safety

The City of Medford also measures the public opinion of the program based on citizen complaints. This agency has an open and exhaustive complaint process. With the exception of receiving occasional inquires about the program no official complaints were filed this reporting year. In part this can be attributed to the way in which the program is administered, in that only undeniable violations are prosecuted. The number of violations that are rejected demonstrates this fact.

2019 – 2020 Rejected Incident/Approved Violations Summary

Violations Captured	Rejected Incidents	Approved Violations
33034	11501	21533

Process of Administration of the Use of Cameras

(ORS) 810.434 (3) (C)

The administrative process for photo red light enforcement includes citation issuance, delivery, payment, and adjudication. It also includes the impact of the program on police and court operations as well as fiscal accounting. Photo red light citations have been issued in the City of Medford since 2002. Red light cameras are currently installed at the intersections of McAndrews/Biddle, Stewart/Barnett, Central/4th and Riverside/8th.

Citation Processing

Red light and speed violators are issued citations following a multi-step process that ensures that the digital photographs, video of violation, violations data, and owner information are as accurate as possible. If any of this information does not meet stringent quality control standards, citations are not issued.

Common reasons for citations not being issued are as follows:

- Driver gender does not match registered owner
- Driver is unidentifiable
- License plate cannot be read or identified
- Wrong or no DMV information available
- Driver or plate obstruction
- Sun glare
- Photo red light equipment issue
- Photo alignment

A Medford Police Officer reviews each violation after it has been through the quality control process and determines whether or not a citation should be issued. After the police officer affirms the citations, their electronic signature is printed on the citation. The City's photo enforcement vendor then prints and mails the citation to the registered owner. The defendant receives a copy of the citation in the mail, along with the four photographs of the violation incident, a website address to view the video of the violation, an explanation letter, the advice of rights information normally found on the back of a traffic citation, and a Certificate of Innocence form/Certificate of Non-Liability form (to complete if they were not the driver of the vehicle at the time of the violation).

An important component of Oregon's photo red light statute is that the citation is issued to the registered owner of the vehicle. The registration information is determined through DMV records. Oregon law requires drivers to maintain their updated address information with the DMV. The presumption in Oregon on photo red light citations, as with parking tickets is that the registered owner of the vehicle is the driver at the time of the violation. It is the responsibility of the registered owner to provide evidence if they were not the driver at the time of the violation, through the process of completing a Certificate of Innocence/Certificate of Non-Liability form. If the registered owner of the violating vehicle completes the form, along with providing the court with a copy of their driver's license, the citation issued to the registered owner is dismissed.