CITY OF MEDFORD

POLICE

<u>Your Police, Our Community</u>

Photo Red Light
Report to the Legislature
Process and Outcome Evaluation

February 2015

Background – Legislative Report Requirements

Oregon Revised Statue (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) of2001 Edition enacted as 2001 c.474 §3; 2003 c.14 §491; 2003 c.339 §1; 2005 c.686 §1; 2007 c.640 §1]

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 a 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 on RVTV, which is an educational television program directed to the community. The Medford Police Department also disseminates information on the photo red light program through annual citizen's academies, Medford Police Department annual reports, neighborhood watch newsletters, and the City of Medford website.

Effect of the Use of Cameras on Traffic Safety

ORS 810.434 (3)(b)(A)

A. Reductions in Red Light Running Violations

The Medford Police Department has analyzed the red light violation data from each of the photo enforced intersections. The analysis shows that the City's photo red light intersections have realized a 12% reduction in red light running violations, comparing the first year of the program through to 2014. The overall effect of the program has been a notable reduction in the number of red light signal violations.

Overall Reductions in Red Light Running Violations at Photo Red Light Intersections

	First Twelve Months of Enforcement	Average of 2013-2014	Average Change in Violations
Red Light Violations	2,262	1983	**-12%**

B. Reductions in Red Light Running Crashes

The city of Medford has achieved positive results from the photo red light program. Crashes at photo red light intersections have decreased 46%, comparing the first year of the program to the following years.

Crashes at Photo Red Light Intersections – 2002 through 2014

Red Light Intersection	Biddle / McAndrews	Barnett / Stewart
2002	35	26
2003	32	15
2004	31	14
2005	35	19
2006	28	12
2007	23	5
2008	17	11
2009	32	6
2010	15	9
2011	20	12
2012	17	8
2013	15	11
2014	16	5

Overall Reductions in Crashes at Photo Red Light Intersections

	2002	Average of 2003-2014	Average Change
Crashes	61	33	**-46%**

Degree of Public Acceptance of the Use of Cameras

ORS 810.434 (3)(b)(B)

The City of Medford contracted with the 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 ask 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 which is conducted twice a year. When asked "What is your opinion of the City's photo red light enforcement program?" more than half of Medford residents surveyed reported it as being "very good" to "good."

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.

2013 – 2014 Rejected Incident Summary

Processed Incidents	Rejected Incidents	Approved Violations
6876	3262	3614

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 and Stewart/Barnett. This report examines the impact on administrative processes for violations occurring in 2013 - 2014.

CITATION PROCESSING

Red light violators are issued citations following a multi-step process that ensures that the digital photographs, 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
-Funeral procession
-Emergency vehicle with flashing lights

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, 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 there 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.