



Staff Report

UPDATE ON AUTOMATED RED LIGHT PHOTO ENFORCEMENT PROJECT

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Summary

This report is the third update on the Automated Red Light Photo Enforcement Project, which was initially brought before Council at the February 14, 2006 City Council Meeting. It specifically provides an update on action taken in response to Council direction given in response to the prior update at the July 25, 2006 City Council Meeting.

Background

At the February 14th, 2006 City Council Meeting, Staff presented an informational report on Automated Red Light Photo Enforcement. That report outlined how such systems work, their benefits to the City and potential locations where such a program could be implemented. Direction was given by Council at that meeting to continue to pursue the matter and to bring back additional information for potential implementation.

Based on the direction received at the February 14, 2006 Council meeting, three vendors were contacted to give initial presentations to staff. Those presentations were as follows:

- April 5, 2006 – Redflex Traffic Systems
- April 25, 2006 – American Traffic Solutions (ATS)
- May 4, 2006 – Nestor Traffic Systems

Staff reported back to Council at the June 27, 2006 Council meeting and at the conclusion of that report, Staff recommended that the Council approve continued discussions with Nestor Traffic Systems as a potential vendor for Automated Red Light Photo Enforcement system(s). Direction was given by Council at that meeting to continue to pursue the matter and to bring back additional information for potential implementation, including a presentation to Council by Nestor Traffic Systems.

Staff provided an update to Council at the July 25, 2006 Council meeting, which included a presentation from representatives of Nestor Traffic Systems. At the conclusion of that

presentation, Staff recommended that the Council approve continued discussions with Nestor Traffic Systems as a potential vendor for Automated Red Light Photo Enforcement system(s). Council directed staff to proceed with Nestor Traffic Systems regarding data collection for the potential implementation of an automated red light citation program.

Discussion

Since the July 25, 2006 meeting, Staff has worked with Nestor Traffic Systems regarding data collection at two intersections, Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue and Old County Road. Nestor Traffic Systems has experienced difficulties obtaining the necessary encroachment permits from the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) for the study at Ralston Avenue and El Camino.

Staff was preparing to proceed with the data collection at Ralston Avenue and Old County Road when it came to the attention of staff that Nestor Traffic Systems may have previously undiscovered financial issues which could impact the selection of Nestor Traffic Systems as the vendor for this project.

Staff conducted research into the financial status of Nestor Traffic Systems and the Finance Director concluded that because of on-going financial challenges faced by Nestor Traffic Systems, a continued business relationship with the company is not in the best interest of the City. On October 10, 2006, after reviewing all of the available data, staff notified Nestor Traffic Systems that further work with their company would be suspended until questions surrounding their financial status could be resolved to staff's satisfaction.

During this period, staff was re-contacted by Redflex Traffic Systems, one of the two original vendors who were considered for this project. Redflex Traffic Systems indicated that they had developed new equipment and asked if they could make a follow-up presentation to staff. The third vendor originally considered, American Traffic Solutions (ATS) has not re-contacted staff since notification of their original removal from consideration.

On November 21, 2006 staff viewed a presentation by Redflex Traffic Systems on their new camera Slimline & Magnum Series camera systems. During this meeting, Redflex Traffic System's current and pending operations in San Mateo County, as well as their financial status were discussed. Redflex Traffic Systems indicated that due to their existing and pending installations in San Mateo County, they have a good working relationship with CalTrans District 4 and would not encounter the difficulties met by Nestor Traffic Systems, in regards to red light violation data collection. Issues relating to the visual impact of their systems were discussed and they indicated a willingness to work with staff to mitigate visual impact whenever possible. Redflex Traffic Systems also indicated that they could make presentations to Council, as needed.

General Plan/Vision Statement

Establishment of an Automated Red Light Photo Enforcement Program furthers the Belmont Vision Statement, adopted October 2003 as outlined below:

Key Value - Easy Mobility

- We put a priority on getting out of, into and through town efficiently.
- Bicyclists, walkers, and other nondrivers get where they're going easily and safely.
- We require safe residential streets and smooth-flowing thoroughfares.

Fiscal Impact

As a result of staff research, the Finance Director concluded that because of on-going financial challenges faced by Nestor Traffic Systems, a continued business relationship with the company is not in the best interest of the City. Staff foresees a potential for an undetermined negative fiscal impact relating to the selection of Nestor Traffic Systems as the vendor for this project. Initial discussions with the alternative vendor, Redflex Traffic Systems, show no such potential.

Public Contact

Posting of City Council agenda. This project was presented at the February 14, 2006, June 27, 2006 and July 25, 2006 City Council Meetings, where it was posted on the City Council agendas. Those meetings were also televised on Ch 27. Since January, 2006, references to Belmont's efforts in this area have been noted in numerous articles on the subject in area newspapers.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Council approve discontinuation of discussions with Nestor Traffic Systems as a potential vendor for Automated Red Light Photo Enforcement system(s) and continue discussions and data collection with Redflex Traffic Systems.

Alternatives

1. Take No Action.
2. Provide Additional Direction

Attachments

A. None.

Respectfully submitted,

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