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## **STAFF REPORT**

### **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH REDFLEX TRAFFIC SYSTEMS FOR AUTOMATED RED LIGHT PHOTO ENFORCEMENT SYSTEMS.**

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

#### **Summary**

This report is the seventh staff report and the sixth 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 at the conclusion of a public hearing held on September 25, 2007.

#### **Background**

Since it has been 24 months since that initial report and this current report is being presented as a public hearing, the following is a brief outline on how Automated Red Light Photo Enforcement Systems work:

#### **How Automated Red Light Photo Enforcement Systems Work**

*The violation is captured by digital still and video cameras at the intersection. The violation is sent electronically to the vendor who assembles the information. An employee at the police department logs onto the vendor's web site and checks for violations. Each violation is reviewed and then either accepted for citation, accepted for nomination (i.e. unable to confirm driver identification) or rejected. If accepted for citation, the vendor notifies the Traffic Division of the San Mateo Superior Court and the driver of the vehicle. Drivers have an opportunity to view the video of their violation at the police department or go on-line to the vendor's website. Drivers wishing to contest their citation can dispute it through the normal traffic court system, as with any other citation.*

The following is a timeline for the previous staff reports and actions taken:

**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:

1. April 5, 2006 – Redflex Traffic Systems
2. April 25, 2006 – American Traffic Solutions (ATS)
3. May 4, 2006 – Nestor Traffic Systems

**June 27, 2006 City Council Meeting:** Staff reported back to Council 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.

**July 25, 2006 City Council Meeting:** Staff provided an update to Council, 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.

**December 12, 2006 City Council Meeting:** Staff reported that as a result of 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 reported 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. Council approved discontinuation of discussions with Nestor Traffic Systems as a potential vendor for Automated Red Light Photo Enforcement system(s) and directed Staff to continue discussions and data collection with Redflex Traffic Systems.

**April 10, 2007 City Council Meeting:** Staff reported that since the December 12, 2006 meeting, Staff has worked with Redflex Traffic Systems regarding data collection at two intersections, Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real and Ralston Avenue and Old County Road.

**February 1, 2007:** Redflex Traffic Systems conducted video intersection analysis at the following intersections/approaches for a 12 hour period (6:00AM to 6:00 PM). A summary of the results are as follows:

1. S/B Old County Rd at Ralston Ave
  - 89 Right turn violations

2. W/B Old County Rd at Ralston Ave
  - 11 Straight Through Violations
  - 67 Right Turn Violations
  
3. E/B Ralston Ave at El Camino Real (SR -82)
  - 2 Left Turn Violations
  - 10 Straight Through Violations
  - 16 Right Turn Violations
  
4. W/B Ralston Ave at El Camino Real (SR-82)
  - 13 Straight Through Violations
  - 26 Right Turn Violations

**March 20, 2007:** Staff met with representatives of Redflex Traffic Systems to discuss the study report and their proposal for Automated Red Light Photo Enforcement in the City of Belmont. In addition Redflex provided the following revenue projection based on two systems using data which is typical for California Redflex systems. A more detailed presentation and explanation of the study report and the Redflex proposal was provided by a representative of Redflex Traffic Systems during the meeting.

Redflex currently operates or has contracts pending in several San Mateo County cities.

1. San Mateo
2. Burlingame
3. Daly City
4. San Carlos
5. Redwood City
6. Menlo Park

**April 10, 2007 City Council Meeting:** Staff was directed continue discussions with Redflex, as the proposed vendor for this project. Since that meeting, additional research has been conducted into various areas of concern expressed by the Council.

**September 25, 2007 City Council Meeting,** a public hearing was held in compliance with section 21455.6(a) of the California Vehicle Code, which states *a city council or county board of supervisors shall conduct a public hearing on the proposed use of an automated enforcement system authorized under Section 21455.5 prior to authorizing the city or county to enter into a contract for the use of the system.* At the conclusion of that public hearing, the City Council directed staff to enter into contract negotiations with Redflex Traffic Systems as vendor for automated red light photo enforcement systems.

### **Discussion**

As a result of direction received at the September 25, 2007 City Council Meeting, staff entered into contract negotiations with Redflex Traffic Systems. After four (4) months and reviews by

the Police Chief, Finance Director, Public Works Director and City Attorney, a contract was developed. This contract meets the provisions of section 21455.5 & 21455.6 of the California Vehicle Code, which regulates automated red light photo enforcement systems. Furthermore, the contract developed does not contain the cost-neutral provision, mentioned in prior staff reports. Staff found that, while within the requirements of the California Vehicle Code, this provision was unnecessary.

**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**

The City of San Mateo was the first city in the county to adopt automated red light photo enforcement and their system has been in operation since 2004. Because of this, data from San Mateo as well as from the San Mateo County Municipal/Superior Court was used to calculate the fiscal impact of the program.

The average reject rate is of 39.26% (based on the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of FY 07). The reasons for rejection broke down as follows:

- Driver obstruction 12%
- Plate obstruction 4%
- Vehicle obstruction 7%
- Safe turn on red 4%
- Sun glare 11%
- Paper plates 3%

The fine associated with 21453a CVC is: \$424.50

Portion of that fine which goes to the City of Belmont: \$143.18 (37.8%)

Using this data and the violation data from the February 1, 2007 Redflex Video Intersection Analysis, Staff chose two intersection approaches as the most viable. This was based on their having the highest number of mixed type violations, as opposed to a single type (e.g. right turn on red only):

<b>Westbound Ralston Ave at Old County Rd</b>	
Straight through violations	11
Right turn violations	67

Total violations	78
60% Issuance	47
60% Collection	28
Citations collected per month (collect x 30)	840
Gross revenue per month @ \$140 per citation	\$117,600
Gross yearly revenue (month x 12)	\$1,411,200
Monthly Fee for the approach	\$6000
Yearly Fee for the approach	\$72,000
<b>Yearly net to City</b> (gross yearly revenue – yearly fee)	<b>\$1,339,200</b>
<i>Yearly net with 12% adjustment for possible driver behavior change</i>	<i>\$1,178,496</i>
<i>Yearly net with 24% adjustment for possible driver behavior change</i>	<i>\$1,017,792</i>

<b>Westbound Ralston Ave at El Camino Real (SR-82)</b>	
Straight through violations	13
Right turn violations	26
Total violations	39
60% Issuance	23
60% Collection	14
Citations collected per month (collect x 30)	420
Gross revenue per month @ \$140 per citation	\$58,800
Gross yearly revenue (month x 12)	\$705,600
Monthly Fee for the approach	\$6000
Yearly Fee for the approach	\$72,000
<b>Net to City</b> (gross yearly revenue – yearly fee)	<b>\$633,600</b>
<i>Yearly net with 12% adjustment for possible driver behavior change</i>	<i>\$557,568</i>
<i>Yearly net with 24% adjustment for possible driver behavior change</i>	<i>\$481,536</i>

There are indirect personnel costs relating to the review of violations, response to citizen inquires and appearance in court on contested citations. These costs are difficult to predict, however after discussions with the San Mateo Police Department, Staff noted that agency spends approximately sixty (60) hours in personnel administer their program, consisting of three (3) systems. An analysis conducted by San Mateo PD, as part of their proposal to provide contract system administration services, estimates that our two (2) systems would require approx. hours in personnel time per week. This estimate may change depending on volume of citations & citizen inquired and method chosen by the City for review by citizens of their violation video (in-house, on-line or combination).

The person(s) administering the program are not required to be sworn peace officers. The cities of San Mateo and Daly City use a retired police officer for system administration. Fremont’s program is entirely run by civilian, non-sworn staff. Two possible scenarios are shown below, using the lower violation count approach of the recommended locations.

**Scenario 1** (non-sworn full time Community Service Officer)

- Revenue from W/B Ralston at El Camino approach (using -24% correction): \$481,536
- cost of non-sworn Community Service Officer (including benefits) \$ 74,973
- Revenue Balance \$406,563

**Scenario 2** (retired Police Officer 20 hrs per week)

- Revenue from W/B Ralston at El Camino approach (using 24% correction): \$481,536
- Cost of retired Police Officer, per diem 20hrs per week (non-benefited) \$ 38,100
- Revenue Balance \$443,436

**Scenario 3** (system administered by the San Mateo Police Department Redlight Photo Enforcement Unit, under contract to the City of Belmont).

- Revenue from W/B Ralston at El Camino approach (using 24% correction): \$481,536
- Cost of contract system administration services \$ 36,400
- Revenue Balance \$445,136

Scenarios 1 & 2 were presented at the Public Hearing on September 25, 2007 and Scenario 3 was developed since that time. In all scenarios, there are funds remaining after covering the personnel costs relating to system operation. As Scenario 3 (SMPD administration contract), is a new option and Staff would like to analyze it with the other options and return to council at a later date with a recommendation regarding system administration.

As noted in the September 25, 2007 Public Hearing, Staff proposes that regardless of the system administration scenario chosen, once the program has a proven record of revenue generation, consideration be given to having the revenue collected through the program dedicated specifically to traffic safety. As an example, 80% could be dedicated to personnel and the remaining 20% to traffic safety projects (traffic calming, enforcement overtime, public education). The base cost for a police officer is approx. \$107,000 (including benefits) and using either of the two program management scenarios above, there appears to be sufficient funds for at least one officer position in additions to funds for traffic safety projects.

**Public Contact**

Posting of City Council agenda. This project was presented at the February 14, 2006, June 27, 2006, July 25, 2006, December 12, 2006, April 10, 2007 and September 25, 2007 City Council Meetings, where it was also 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**

It is recommended that the City Council authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract with Redflex Traffic Systems for automated red light photo enforcement systems. Initial installations

are recommended to cover westbound Ralston Ave at Old County Rd and westbound Ralston

Ave at El Camino. Other installations in the future would be considered, based on the results of these systems. An update on the program would be presented to Council six (6) months after the system(s) become operational.

**Alternatives**

1. Take No Action.
2. Provide Additional Direction.

**Attachments**

- A. Contract with Redflex Traffic Systems.
- B. Resolution.

Respectfully submitted,

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Patrick Halleran  
Acting Lieutenant

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Donald J. Mattei  
Chief of Police

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Jack R. Crist  
City Manager

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**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH REDFLEX TRAFFIC SYSTEMS FOR AUTOMATED RED LIGHT PHOTO ENFORCEMENT SYSTEMS**

**WHEREAS**, traffic related calls make up the number one complaint received by the Police Department; and,

**WHEREAS**, traffic volume continues to increase while Police Department resources to monitor and regulate traffic have been reduced. Currently, there are two officers assigned to the Traffic Unit as motor officers and due to continuing staffing issues, frequently one or both of these officers are required to cover a patrol beat, which takes them away from dedicated traffic enforcement; and,

**WHEREAS**, automated red light photo enforcement systems have proven to be an effective enforcement and education tool, allowing for the redeployment of limited police personal resources to other locations, while maintaining an enforcement presence at signal controlled intersections; and,

**WHEREAS**, six publicly presented staff reports and a public hearing were held on the matter, the City Council approved the implementation of an automated red light photo enforcement program and selected Redflex Traffic Systems as the vendor.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City Council of the City of Belmont hereby authorizes and directs the City Manager to enter into a contract with Redflex Traffic Systems for automated red light photo enforcement systems.

\* \* \* \* \*

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Belmont at a regular meeting thereof held February 12, 2008 by the following vote:

AYES, COUNCILMEMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_

NOES, COUNCILMEMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_

ABSTAIN, COUNCILMEMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_

ABSENT, COUNCILMEMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
CLERK of the City of Belmont

APPROVED:

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MAYOR of the City of Belmont