

City of Bellevue
Police Department



MEMORANDUM

Date: October 4, 2010
To: Traffic Commission
From: Captain Denny Bronson
Subject: Photo Enforcement Camera Program

In September 2007, Council first considered the impacts of installing red light and school zone speed photo enforcement cameras within Bellevue City limits. After carefully considering all of the issues and holding a Public Hearing, the Council authorized the Police Department to move ahead with a Pilot Program. In 2008, American Traffic Solutions (ATS) was selected to provide the equipment and services regarding photo enforcement.

The initial Pilot Program proposal approved by Council in 2008 included the following cameras:

School Zone Speed Cameras

Stevenson Elementary, 143rd Avenue NE and NE 8th Street
Lake Hills Elementary, 143rd Avenue SE and SE 8th Street
Sunset Elementary, 4229 West Lake Sammamish Parkway SE

Red Light Cameras

Southbound 148th Avenue NE at Bel-Red Road
Northbound 148th Avenue NE at Bel-Red Road
Southbound 148th Avenue NE at Main Street
NE 8th Street at 116th Avenue NE
NE 8th Street at 112th Avenue NE

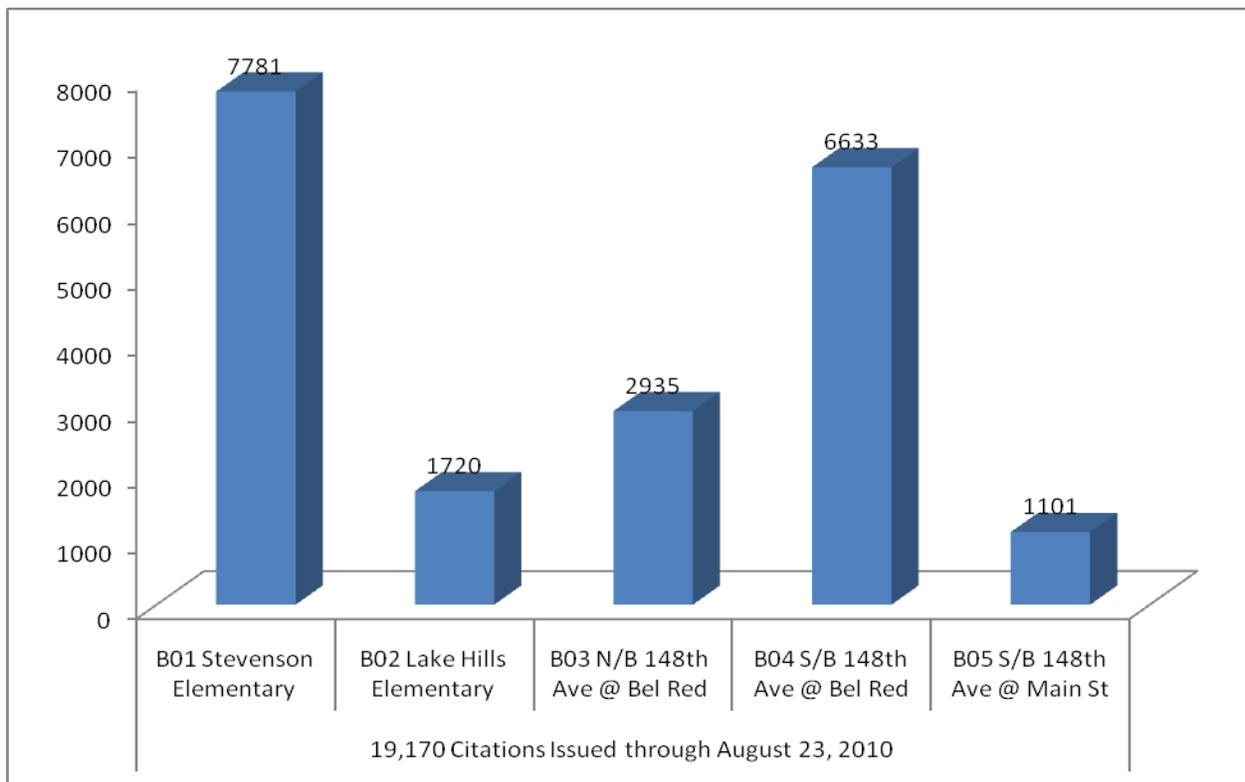
In September 2009, the cameras at Stevenson and Lake Hills Elementary schools were operational. In January 2010, the three red-light cameras on 148th Avenue were activated. There were some right of way issues involving the remaining three cameras sites that needed to be addressed before putting in the cameras. All of those issues have since been resolved and these three additional cameras can now be installed.

When the installed cameras were initially activated, there was a 30-day warning period where no actual tickets were issued and no fines collected. After the warning periods ended, and through

August 23, 2010, the cameras have been responsible for the issuance of 19,170 citations. Of those, 7,781 have come from the Stevenson Elementary camera and 6,633 from the southbound lanes of 148th Avenue at Bel-Red Road. Most of the red light violations are from drivers making right turns without stopping.

Department staff has requested that City Traffic Engineers and American Traffic Solutions review these two specific locations to see if there are things that can be done differently to better educate drivers and reduce the number of violations that are being committed.

The following chart reflects the number of citations from the Photo Enforcement locations:



Research indicates that it takes up to 2 years for Photo Enforcement programs to have a significant impact on modifying driver behavior; however, a 34% reduction in overall speeds at the Lake Hills Elementary school has already been realized.

At the start of the program, the following Performance Measures were established for our Photo Enforcement program:

<u>PERFORMANCE MEASURES</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u> (Thru May)
Total Collisions (City wide):	1,891	1,932	643

Total Injury Collisions (City wide):	267	295	120
Total Pedestrian/ Bike Collisions (City wide):	72	59	24
Collisions at Monitored Locations:	29	38	10
Injury Collisions at Monitored Locations:	4	6	1
Pedestrian / Bike Collisions at Monitored Locations:	1	1	0
Right Angle Collisions at Monitored Locations:	2	2	0
Rear – end Collisions at Monitored Locations:	4	1	0
Injury and Fatal Collisions as % of Total Collisions: (City wide)	14%	15%	18%

The Police Department continues efforts to communicate with the public and make sure citizens are aware of the cameras. Several press releases have been issued, interviews provided, and flyers sent home with the schoolchildren. In August, a press release went out to remind citizens that school was starting up and that the School Zone cameras would be re-activated. Most of the papers and news stations did stories to get the word out.

A recent survey sponsored by King-TV conducted by Survey USA involved calling 500 adults (chosen at random throughout Washington State). The following questions were asked of each person who participated in the survey:

1. In the past year, have you run a red light? 18% said they had.
2. In the past year, have you seen another driver run a red light? 84% said they had.
3. Do you support or oppose placing cameras at intersections to catch drivers who run red lights? 55% said they support the cameras.
4. Do you support or oppose placing cameras in school zones to catch drivers who don't obey the speed limit? 73% said they support the school zone cameras.
5. If you were approaching an intersection you knew had a red light camera, would you be more likely to stop if the light turned yellow? 74% said yes.
6. Do you think red light cameras make intersections more safe? 51% Less safe? 15% Or do they have no effect? 30%
7. Do you think cities install red light cameras to promote safety? 34% Or mostly to raise money? 60%

Undoubtedly, there is a vocal opposition to Photo Enforcement cameras. Most of these opposition arguments focus on the invasion of privacy issue and the increased revenues created through the Camera Enforcement programs. Staff research reveals no group or individual taking the stance that we should do away with the speed limits in school zones or with the requirement that drivers stop for red lights at intersections.

In reviewing those who challenge their tickets in Court, two prevalent arguments are used:

1. For the red light violations, the driver did not view the video of their violation prior to their Court appearance. Once they see their video, they all concede they committed the violation. We have recently changed the wording on their violation notice highlighting the importance of viewing the video before challenging the violation.
2. For the speeding violations in the school zones, the flashing lights indicating the cameras are active do not show in the violation video. Because the flashing lights are not visible in the video, the drivers will argue that the lights were not operational. There are safeguards in place and Judges are aware that the camera will not operate if the flashing lights are not on, so this argument has no effect on the conviction rate. To lessen the number of challenges on this point, we are exploring the option of adding additional flashing lights that will be visible in the violation video.

Speeding and failure to stop at controlled intersections are the leading causes of traffic accidents. Because of the Photo Enforcement cameras, we now realize there are a great number of drivers who are not stopping for red traffic lights and are speeding in school zones. If our true desire is to influence the habits of our drivers to make our streets safer, it is important to embrace this technology and utilize it to its fullest potential. It is very likely photo enforcement cameras will become more commonplace throughout the country and an integral part of the future of Law Enforcement.

Through Photo Enforcement cameras, we have a means to enforce the laws regarding speeding in school zones and stopping for red lights efficiently and fairly. The Police Department is hopeful that over time, there will be a positive change in drivers' behavior, not just where our cameras are located, but throughout the City.

Informational Links:

King 5 aired a News Upfront piece on Red Light cameras by Robert Mak on July 25, 2010. It is a 20-minute video, but touches on all the issues and details how the system works:

<http://www.king5.com/news/up-front/Red-light-cameras-good-ide-or-bad-99193534.html>

News coverage by King 5 and Kiro TV on our schools starting back up on August 30th and reminder of the School Zone cameras:

<http://www.king5.com/home/red-light-cameras-bellevue-back-to-school-101796613.html>

<http://www.kirotv.com/livestreamvideo/24829188/index.html> (1530 mark)

American Traffic Solutions is the company we use for our Photo Enforcement Cameras. On their website, there is detailed information regarding Photo Enforcement Programs:

<http://www.atsol.com>

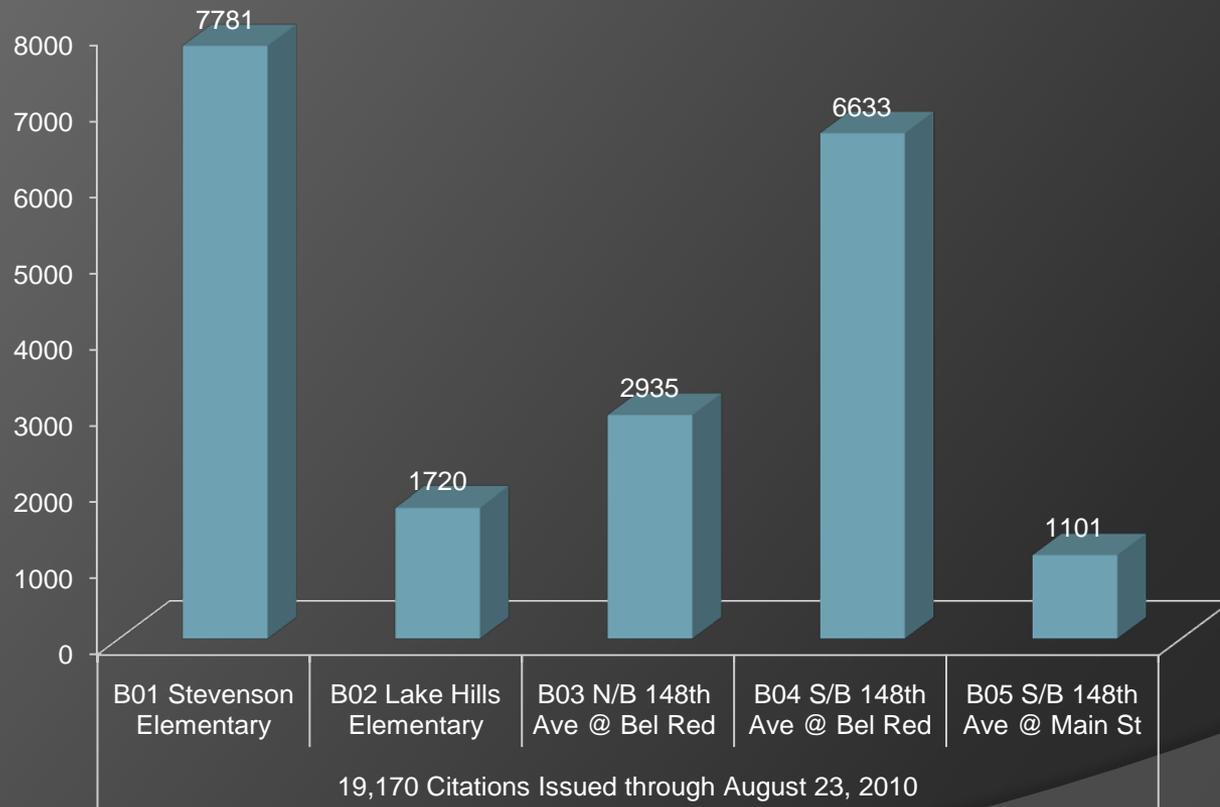
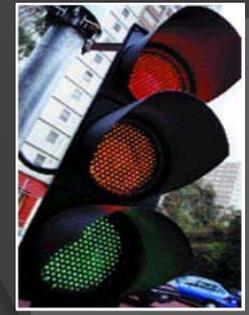
The National Campaign to stop red light running has this website with all kinds of information regarding Photo Enforcement Camera programs:

<http://stopredlightrunning.com>

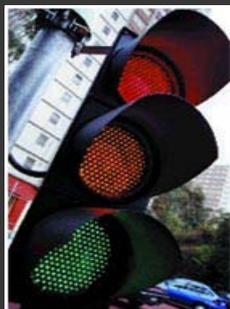
Compilation of car crashes on You Tube from people running red lights:

http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=-qvXblenivk

TRAFFIC SAFETY CAMERAS



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49 MPH



50 MPH



RED LIGHT



CRASH
MONTAGE

'10	SB TALBOT RD @ TALBOT HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ZONE	2,384	1,471	809	97	7
		<u>21,930</u>	<u>17,055</u>	<u>4,271</u>	<u>562</u>	<u>42</u>

RENTON POLICE DEPARTMENT
 PHOTO ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM
 PO BOX 22091

Speed Violations

Violation Date:	Begin Date: 9/1/2009	End Date: 6/30/2010
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Loc. Code	Location	# of Violations				
		Issued	6-10	11-15	16-20	> 21
RW05	N/B EDMONDS AVE N/E @ MCKNIGHT MIDDLE SCHOOL ZONE	545	426	100	17	2
RW06	S/B EDMONDS AVE N/E @ MCKNIGHT MIDDLE SCHOOL ZONE	1,089	885	177	25	2
RW07	WB S. 2ND ST @ RENTON HIGH SCHOOL ZONE	4,931	4,030	811	71	19
RW08	WB S. 2ND ST (SOUTH SIDE) @ RENTON HIGH SCHOOL ZONE	4,595	4,033	497	33	2
RW09	NB TALBOT RD @ TALBOT HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ZONE	1,822	1,175	525	115	7
RW10	SB TALBOT RD @ TALBOT HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ZONE	1,309	880	384	44	1
		<u>14,291</u>	<u>11,459</u>	<u>2,494</u>	<u>305</u>	<u>33</u>

Total reduction in violations issued 2008 / 2009: -35% -33% -42% -46% -22%

The registered owner of the offending car will receive a ticket for \$124 if the 20 mph school zone speed limit is exceeded by 6 to 15 mph and \$250 if the speed is exceeded by 16 mph or more.

PICTURING SAFER STREETS

Fewer crashes — in some cases, far fewer — are occurring at most KC intersections that have red-light cameras.



AT THE FIRST 13 INTERSECTIONS WHERE KANSAS CITY INSTALLED RED-LIGHT CAMERAS...

... total wrecks are

**DOWN
26%**

... rear-end wrecks are

**DOWN
20%**

... red-light wrecks are

**DOWN
67%**

... injury wrecks are

**DOWN
42%**