



**City of Marysville
City Council
Staff Report**

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Reviewed By:	
CM	_____
ASM	_____
Other	_____

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: David L. Baker, Acting Chief of Police

MEETING DATE: May 21, 2013

REPORT PREPARATION DATE: May 5, 2013

SUBJECT: Completion of the Photo Red-light Enforcement Program contract and declaration of commitment to traffic safety

I. RECOMMENDATION:

By motion, Council approves the construction of two PRLE camera systems at the intersections of southbound "J" Street and Fifth Street and southbound Ramirez Street and East Tenth Street.

By motion, Council adopt a finding of fact, that the construction of two PRLE camera systems at the intersections of southbound "J" Street and Fifth Street and southbound Ramirez and East Tenth Street are for the purpose of enforcing traffic related violations to improve public safety as outlined by CVC 21455.5.

II. BACKGROUND:

On December 21, 2004, the City of Marysville entered into an Agreement for the provision of an automated red light photo enforcement camera system, including certain equipment, processes, and back office services, so that the Marysville Police Department would be able to monitor, identify, and enforce red light running violations. Traffic collisions were at an all-time high and the need for increased traffic safety at our City intersections was paramount. The original Agreement in 2005 and the Agreement extension in 2010 were in response to real and present traffic safety hazards facing our community. Our contractual agreement with Redflex Traffic Systems, Inc. was approved by the City Council, and allowed for the construction of ten approaches. Currently, we have eight approaches contracted with Redflex Traffic Systems, Inc., but with the addition of the proposed two approaches, we would reach the contractual limit. Due to the dramatic reduction in the City's police workforce, the Police Department was unable to systemically reduce the number of collisions without the assistance of automated safety measures.

The Photo Red-light Enforcement Program (PRLE) was embraced by the City and effectively reduced the number of collisions at intersections that are monitored by the PRLE Program. During the first year of implementation, we experienced an immediate reduction of 78.7% in traffic collisions at those initial four intersections. These numbers

caused us to immediately realize the full effects and the dramatic positive impacts PRLE has on public safety. During the next full year of PRLE enforcement of those same intersections, the City experienced an additional reduction in collisions of 16.67%. Essentially, we found that the implementation of PRLE automation is the equivalent to posting an officer at each intersection and enforcing traffic laws 24/7.

III. DISCUSSION:

Currently, Police Department staff is equipped for monitoring only 22.7% of the intersections within the City controlled by signals, leaving 77.3% of the signal controlled intersections within the City unmonitored. After the elimination of the Traffic Enforcement Bureau in 2007, we experienced an increase of collisions at unmonitored intersections within the City. However, due to the implementation of PRLE we are experiencing a decrease in traffic collisions City-wide. We refer to this trend as a “halo effect.” Essentially, motorists within our Yuba/Sutter region have become aware that our community utilizes the PRLE system and therefore, drivers have an increased awareness of their driving conduct while navigating our City streets.

Although we are seeing a reduction in collisions City-wide, there is still great room for improving the safety of our City streets. Since the implementation of PRLE, we have continued to see our Police Department work-force diminish and we simply do not have the proper resources to commit to addressing these continued traffic safety concerns. It is imperative for the safety of our community that we expand our number of monitored intersection approaches through the addition of these two proposed locations.

Through data collection and our eight-year experience with PRLE, we have identified that the most cost effective measure to mitigate the rise in traffic collisions is through the continued deployment of the PRLE Program. Recent video surveys performed on fourteen unmonitored approaches, spanning six intersections, identified these two approaches as high risk for collisions. The surveys were performed for up to a nine hour time frame and resulted in over sixty red light violations each.

The intersection located at East Tenth Street and Ramirez Street is a four-way traffic signal controlled intersection that is currently monitored by PRLE technology at the eastbound East Tenth Street approach. Due to the high amount of vehicle and pedestrian traffic in the area, and the sheer frequency of assessed red light violations, this approach was previously designated as a candidate for Photo Enforcement and a camera system was erected in 2012. This intersection is surrounded immediately by the following:

- Yuba Park
 - Located at the southwest corner of the intersection drawing heavy foot traffic, bicycle and youth to the area.
- Apartment complex
 - Located southeast of the intersection in the 900 block of Blue Street.
- Dependent adult day care facility
 - Located at the southeast corner of the intersection drawing foot traffic of dependent adults from the Yuba/Sutter Transit Authority bus stop at 1101 Ramirez Street.
- Sunrise Garden Elder Care Facility
 - Located on the northwest corner of East Tenth and Swezy Street.
- Yuba/Sutter Transit Authority bus stop

- Located at 1101 Ramirez Street, drawing pedestrian traffic directly into the area.
- Yuba County One Stop
 - Located at 1114 Yuba Street offering employment placement services to the greater Yuba/Sutter area bringing in high numbers of foot traffic, as well as bicycle traffic, through the intersection of East Tenth Street and Ramirez Street.

The intersection located at “J” Street and Fifth Street is a four-way traffic signal controlled intersection that is not currently monitored by PRLE technology. Due to the high amount of vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle traffic in this immediate area, as well as the sheer frequency of assessed red light violations, it has been determined to be a location in critical need of the benefits of PRLE. Some of the more vital contributing factors associated with the need for improved safety controls at this location are highlighted below.

- Salvation Army Depot
 - Located at 410 “J” Street, drawing high amounts of homeless and underprivileged citizens. This makes for a high amount of foot and bicycle traffic in the immediate area.
- Fifth Street Bridge
 - Serving as a major pedestrian and bicycle route mixed with high numbers of autos traversing this major connecting artery between Marysville and Yuba City.

IV. FISCAL IMPACT:

Undetermined, however, likely to show increased traffic revenue based upon data examined through studies of total daily violations at proposed intersections.

V. ALTERNATIVES:

The Council may choose not to authorize the proposed completion of the existing contract by not erecting the two final approaches, or by reducing to just one additional approach.

VI. LEGAL REVIEW:

N/A

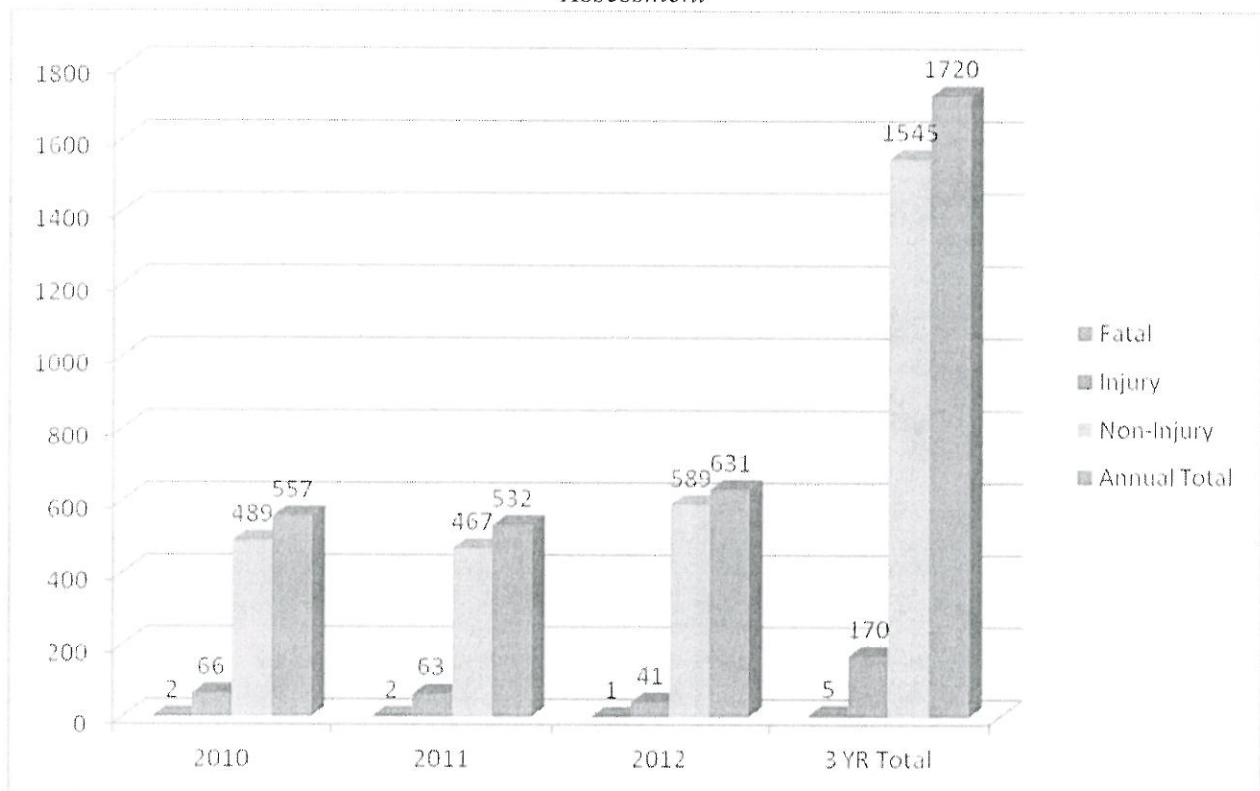
VII. ATTACHMENTS:

SB 1303
Marysville PRLE Data Sheet

Marysville PRLE & Collision Data

We have seen that the overall reduction of injury and fatal collisions is a direct reflection of the use and implementation of PRLE technology. PRLE has increased public awareness and through its existence within the City the motoring public has been educated regarding traffic light violation accountability. As a result of this awareness, we have seen reduced speeds in and around these monitored intersections. One glaringly obvious result is identified when looking at the number of total annual collisions. The fact that the number of annual collisions has increased but the number of injury collisions has reduced, is extremely telling. Traffic collisions at higher speeds will result in greater propensities for injury or death. While annual collision totals have increased, those collisions are occurring at much lower speeds where the propensity for injury is greatly reduced. It is through this type of enforcement that we will continue to improve safety and realize the rewards of our enforcement efforts.

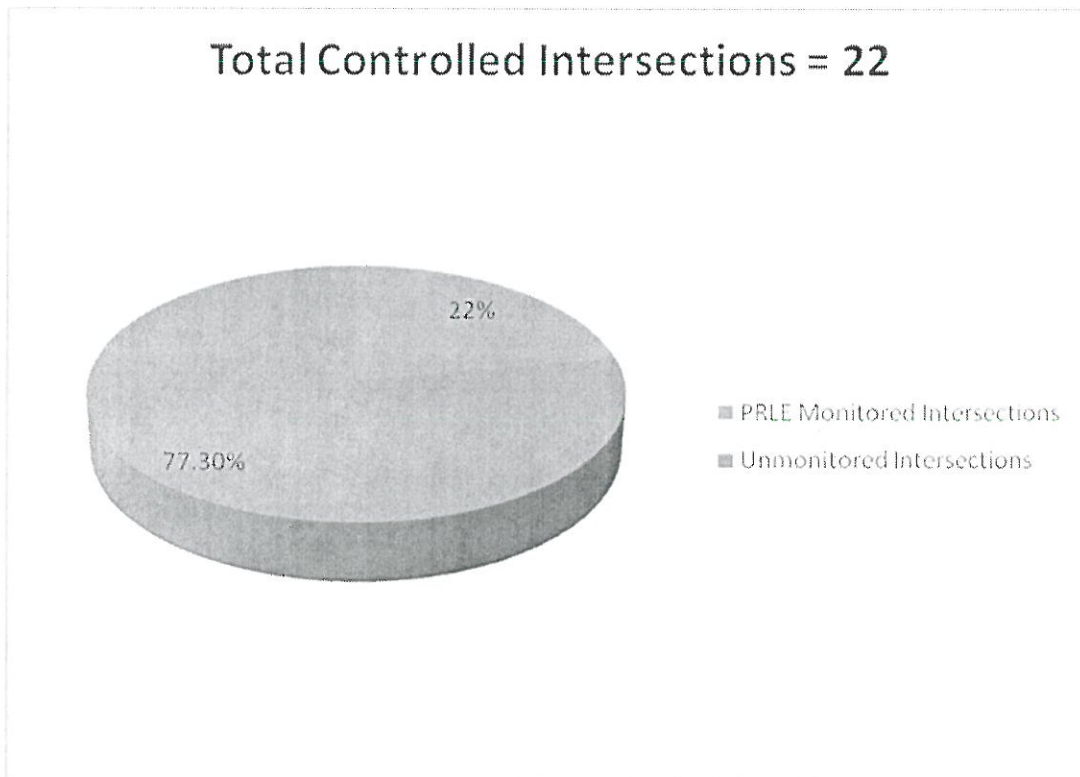
Three Year Traffic Collision Assessment



Room for Growth

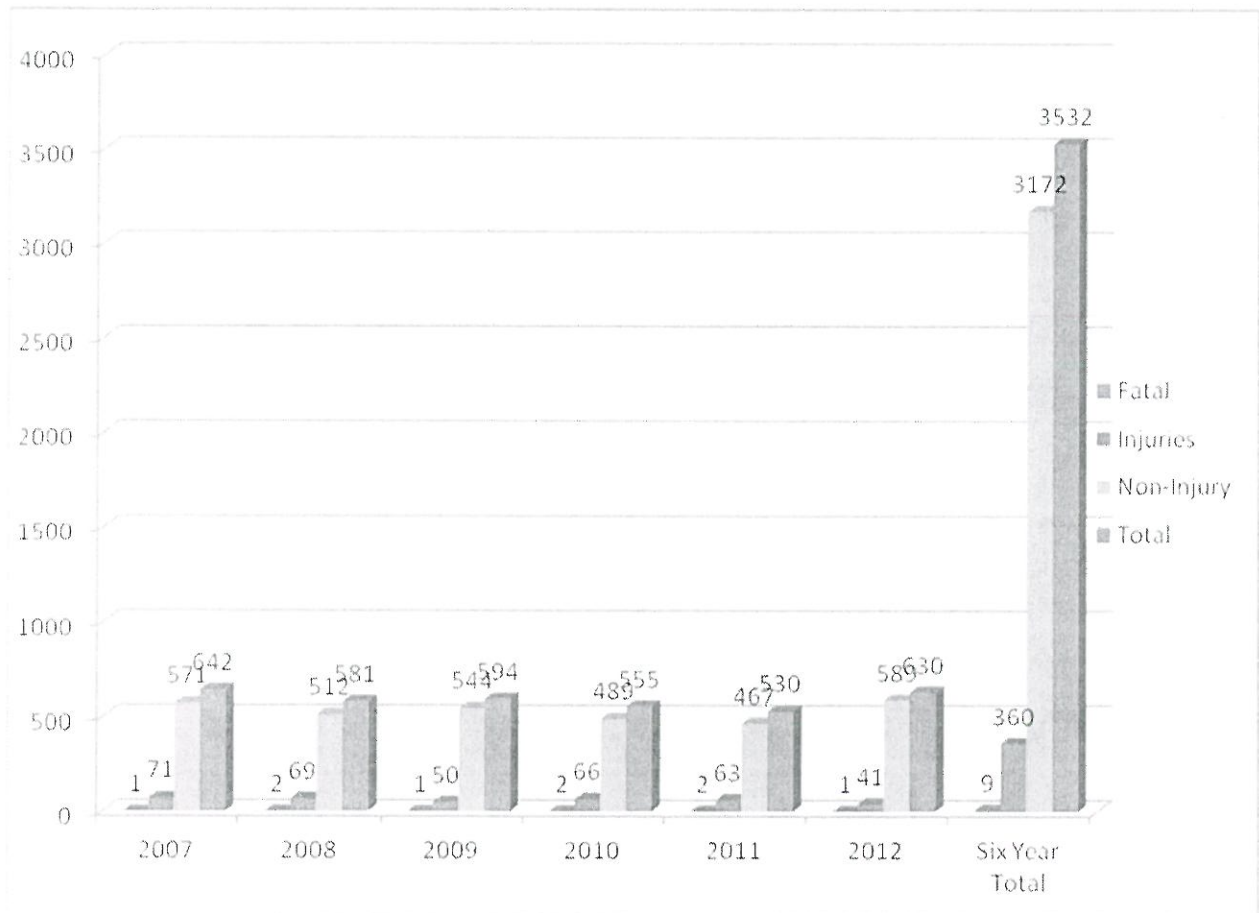
The pie chart depicted below identifies that we have a great deal of unmonitored intersections within the City and room to grow the PRLE program. The positive impact that PRLE has made on public safety thus far ensures that with any expansion we will see safer streets.

Of the twenty two traffic light controlled intersections within the City, PRLE is currently present at only eight. Knowing what we know about the benefits of PRLE on traffic safety this is a ripe opportunity for increasing the safety of our community.



The graph below labeled Six Year Trend identifies the collision trends over the past six years. With the exception of 2012 we have experienced a steady downward trend in overall collisions. It is our experience that through the continued expansion of PRLE we will be able to effectively push these numbers even lower. That being said however, it is important to remember that the primary goal is to improve safety. It is true that we have only averaged 1 or 2 fatal collisions each year over the past six years but our goal should always be zero.

Six Year Trend



Fatal collisions are primarily caused by the same factors or common denominators; intoxication, speed, failure to wear seatbelts and distracted driving. Largely in part to the implementation of PRLE and the expansion of that project we are seeing that collisions are resulting less in fatalities as a result of speeding through our city intersections. Although I would love to attribute this solely to PRLE and our enforcement activities through grant funded activities, I simply can't. There are too many variables involved in fatal accidents and you can never prove a negative. Meaning, that although we have probably saved many lives by having PRLE cameras and enforcement programs, it is impossible to tell how many and we will never know. What is known however is that PRLE lowers traffic speeds and lower speeds means exponentially fewer injury accidents.