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NEWS

GRAND TERRACE: Red-light cameras to shut down

The Grand Terrace City Council has decided to send an early message to motorists that red-light cameras will be switched off next summer

BY DARRELL R. SANTACHI / STAFF WRITER
Published: July 15, 2011 Updated: 1:09 a.m.

The Grand Terrace City Council has decided to send an early message to motorists that red-light cameras will be switched off next summer.

Heavy downtown traffic that had been expected when the city contracted with Redflex Traffic Systems to install the cameras four years ago never materialized, City Manager Betsy Adams told the council Tuesday evening.

Last September, the council agreed to borrow \$72,203.75 from the city's facilities fund, which receives fees collected from developers, to make its \$12,513-a-month payments to Redflex. The money was to be repaid from other traffic fines imposed on motorists in Grand Terrace.

The company had threatened to impose \$27,500 in late fees on payments owed by the city.

At present, Adams said the cameras "are pretty much cost neutral," which means that they are generating enough revenue that the city does not have to kick in money to pay Redflex. But she also acknowledged that time and paperwork needed to process the tickets are weighing heavily on the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department and the city's Finance Department.

Councilman Bernardo Sandoval said the fines, which can top \$400, "are outrageous."

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The cameras monitor traffic at two intersections on Barton Road: at Mount Vernon Avenue and Michigan Street.

The city's contract with Redflex requires a hefty payment if the contract is cancelled before its Aug. 14, 2012 expiration, Adams said.

Mayor Walt Stanckiewicz noted that Loma Linda backed away from plans to switch its Redflex cameras off early for the same reason. Since its cameras were shut down last year, he said, motorists have told him that traffic flow through Loma Linda has improved.

He also was concerned that people would avoid shopping in Grand Terrace if the cameras remain in place, he said.



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