



MEMORANDUM

Date: October 11, 2013

To: The Honorable Chairman and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CHH", is written over the printed name "C.H. Huckelberry".

Re: **Speed Photo Enforcement Program Contract**

Background

In May 2009, Pima County implemented a speed photo enforcement program at 10 locations, with an 11th location added in 2012. The Board of Supervisors awarded the contract for speed photo enforcement to American Traffic Solutions (ATS) on January 6, 2009, for an initial term of one year, and included four possible one-year contract renewals. The fourth and final renewal expires on January 5, 2014.

Program Effectiveness

I previously provided the Board two reports regarding the effectiveness of our speed photo enforcement program; one from Transportation Director Priscilla Cornelio and one from Sheriff's Captain Karl Woolridge. The reports indicated that speed photo enforcement has had mixed results in terms of safety. While the crash rate for the entire Pima County road system declined by 19 percent since the inception of speed photo enforcement, the three-year crash rate for the 11 photo enforcement locations declined only 13 percent. Severity of crashes at photo enforcement locations declined less than one percent, while the severity rate for the entire road system declined by 11 percent.

The use of fixed, stand-alone cameras generally has not been as effective as hoped in reducing speeds and crashes because drivers tend to rapidly decrease their speed before reaching the camera and then speed up quickly after passing the camera. Our Department of Transportation (DOT) noted more positive results from a section of roadway on La Cholla Boulevard where two cameras were placed within about six blocks of each other. In this area, observed speeds decreased more consistently, and the crash rate decreased by much more than the countywide average.

As a result of their review, Ms. Cornelio and Captain Woolridge have recommended that the speed photo enforcement program continue with modifications. They recommend a move toward portable photo enforcement stations that can be moved among many locations for limited periods of time to reinforce positive driver habits in locations that have

high crash rates and high crash severity numbers. They also recommend more use of “networked” groups of stations to address specific road segment safety problems. All photo enforcement “networks” would include advance notice to drivers that they are entering a speed enforcement zone and prominent electronic feedback signs indicating the driver’s actual speed. The details of such a system would need to be finalized by DOT, the Sheriff’s Department, and the County Administrator’s office.

Financial Considerations

A major consideration regarding continuation of speed photo enforcement is its financial impact. Table 1 below summarizes revenues and expenses attributed to the photo enforcement program for Fiscal Years (FYs) 2011/12 through 2013/14 (as of September 23, 2013).

Table 1: Speed Photo Enforcement Financial Impact.

Fiscal Year	Program Expenditures	Program Revenues	Net Revenue to General Fund
2013/14 ¹	\$ 98,151	\$ 183,323	\$ 85,172
2012/13	1,059,237	1,430,125	370,888
2011/12	1,243,692	1,779,062	535,370

¹as of September 23, 2013

Expenditures include: for FY 2011/12, \$1,001,484 paid to the vendor ATS and \$168,860 to support three full-time Justice Court clerk positions (two in Tucson and one in Green Valley); for FY 2012/13, \$828,699 paid to the vendor and \$178,303 for the three Justice Court staff positions. Net revenues are deposited into the County’s General Fund.

The number of citations and the resulting revenues have generally declined as drivers have become aware of the fixed photo enforcement locations. Figures supplied by ATS indicate total citations of 39,997 in 2009, 37,360 in 2010, 28,473 in 2011, 25,434 in 2012, and 15,498 in the first nine months of 2013 (for an estimated annualized number of 20,664).

The most common speed photo enforcement fine is \$239.25, which is imposed for exceeding the speed limit by 11 to 15 miles per hour (mph). Eighty-seven percent of speed photo enforcement citations are in this category according to figures supplied by ATS. Another 10 percent of citations are for driving 16 to 20 mph over the speed limit (for which the fine is \$258.25). The remaining 3 percent of citations are for driving 21 or more mph over the speed limit, with fines of \$278.25 (21 through 25 mph over), \$291.25 (26 through 30 mph over), and \$412.25 (31 mph over). Speed photo enforcement citations are not issued for speeds that are less than 11 mph over the speed limit.

As is true for other types of traffic fines, more than 50 percent of each fine is paid to the State of Arizona due to surcharges imposed by statute for various purposes. For example, a \$239.25 photo enforcement fine includes \$126.73 in State surcharges, and the remainder of \$112.52 is received by Pima County. The breakdown of a \$239.25 fine is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Photo Enforcement Citation Revenue Allocation.

Fine Component	Amount	Recipient
Base Fine	94.52	County
State Surcharges	78.48	State
Probation Fee	20.00	State
SB 1398 fee	13.00	State
Automation Fee	18.50	\$10 to County; \$8.50 to State
Photo Enforcement Fee	14.75	\$8 to County; \$6.75 to State
Total	\$239.25	\$112.52 to County; \$126.73 to State

Of the \$112.52 received by Pima County, about 58 percent, or \$65, is paid to ATS.

Recommendation

The speed photo enforcement program as currently operated has not demonstrated significant safety benefits, and it appears to have declining financial benefits as drivers become accustomed to the camera locations. For that reason, I do not recommend renewal of the contract with ATS on terms similar to those set forth in the current contract.

While the use of portable photo enforcement cameras that could be relocated periodically as part of a redesigned system might be more effective in reducing speeds and accidents, such would require a complete redesign of the photo enforcement system and a substantially different contract arrangement. Given the decline in revenues and the uncertainties about the costs and effectiveness of a redesigned speed photo enforcement system, I recommend the contract with ATS be allowed to expire on January 5, 2014.

CHH/mjk

- c: The Honorable Clarence Dupnik, Pima County Sheriff
Captain Karl Woolridge, Sheriff's Department
John Bernal, Deputy County Administrator for Public Works
Priscilla Cornelio, Transportation Director
Ellen Wheeler, Program Manager, Special Projects