

# **GARDENA POLICE DEPARTMENT**

## **INTER-DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Mitchell Lansdell  
City Manager

**DATE:** February 3, 2010

**FROM:** Edward Medrano  
Chief of Police

**REF:** 10-022

**SUBJ:** Redflex Public Opinion

**CC:**

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You have asked me to comment on the public perception of the Redflex traffic system in our community. The system was sold as an enhancement to the traffic safety within our community that reduces traffic collisions and also generates revenue from traffic violations. The general consensus within the community is that these red light cameras were installed to prevent motorists from running red lights and thus, reduce red light intersection related collisions. I believe that this perception is still somewhat valid.

The media reports regarding red light traffic cameras have been contradictory. Some reports indicate the cameras have a positive impact on traffic safety. Other reports indicate these systems do not improve safety and/or cause additional rear-end collision increases. Yet still other reports have alleged Cities have installed them only for revenue purposes, and have little to no impact on traffic safety. These reports confuse the general public and cause skepticism about the true rationale for installation. Based on our observations, our citizens are not convinced that traffic safety is significantly impacted by the use of red light cameras. In addition, we have received consistent feedback from our citizens suspicious of our rationale (safety vs. revenue) for installing them.

Our research in Gardena has revealed there is no significant traffic safety impact as a result of the use of the red light cameras. At almost every intersection where we have cameras, collisions have remained the same, decreased very slightly, or increased depending on the intersection you examine. When combining the statistics of all the intersections, the overall consensus is that there is not a noticeable safety enhancement to the public.

In general, the consensus among our community regarding red light cameras is not favorable. During many of the presentations about our public safety camera system, I answered many questions about the red light camera system, almost all of which were negative towards expanding that system. I spent a great deal of time explaining the differences between the two systems and informing the community that we are not expanding our red light system.

In short, our community believes the red light cameras were installed for a noble purpose. They are not totally convinced of its effectiveness and not supportive of any expansion. In addition, there is a cynicism regarding whether the City installed them to improve safety, or really to enhance revenue.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

EM/eh