

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 19, 2004

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO # 55 : RED LIGHT CAMERA PROGRAM INCOME

This memo is in response to Councilman Krupicka's question regarding red light camera revenue and why more revenue is not budgeted given that a fourth intersection is being equipped with camera equipment.

The Red Light Camera program began in FY 1998. The basic fine for a red light camera violation is \$50. Revenue from the program since its first full year of implementation is as follows:

Year*	Revenue Collected (FY)	# of Citations Mailed (CY)
1999	\$583,000	7,761
2000	\$249,000	4,338
2001	\$105,000	4,726
2002	\$230,000	8,663
2003	\$266,000	6,259

* Revenue is reported on a fiscal year basis; the number of citations are on a calendar year basis.

For the first few years of the program, one camera was rotated among three intersections (Duke and Walker Streets, Seminary Road and Nottingham Drive, and Patrick and Gibbon Streets). Signage informing motorists of the presence of the cameras and camera-like devices was an effective deterrent and the program succeeded in reducing red light violations. As a result of the reduction in red light camera violations, revenue declined. In FY 2000, we added signage warning motorists that the City utilizes red light camera equipment at a fourth intersection (Duke Street and Taylor Run Parkway), but did not actually install a camera, only a camera-like device.

In FY 2002, two additional cameras were loaned to us from the vendor from which the City obtained its original camera, enabling the City to have a camera at the three original intersections on a full-time basis. The two additional cameras helped to offset the decline in revenue resulting from the success of the program as a deterrent to red light infractions. The fourth intersection was still "enforced" with only signage and camera-like devices.

For FY 2004 the City budgeted \$243,000 in red light camera revenue; however, currently \$180,000 is projected to be collected based on revenues collected to date. \$243,000 is also budgeted for FY 2005. (Revenue projections for both FY 2004 and FY 2005 will be re- reviewed this month and a subsequent budget memo will address changes in projections based on actual receipts through March 2004.)

The fourth intersection at Duke Street and Taylor Run Parkway was recently equipped with a camera for actual photo enforcement beginning on March 31, 2004. The intersections will have cameras on a full-time basis and two intersections will share the third camera.

It is unlikely that revenue will increase significantly from the additional intersection for two reasons. The red light camera violations were already being deterred by signage announcing the presence of a red light camera and the presence of camera-like devices, and this intersection will be sharing a camera with another intersection, so increases in violations at the Duke Street and Taylor Run Parkway intersection will be offset by a reduction in violations that are currently being captured at another intersection. Also, a substantial number of drivers ignore citations knowing that they will not be prosecuted. If they are prosecuted they claim that they were not the driver (State law only allows the camera to take a picture of the back of the car) and they do not have to pay the ticket. Estimated revenues from this program are less than the program costs of approximately \$333,000 for annual contract costs. In addition, in FY 2004 there was a one-time cost of \$25,000 to set up the new enforcement location at Duke Street and Taylor Run Parkway. The net cost to the City in FY 2004 for its entire Red Light program is estimated at \$178,000.