PHOTO RADAR 2015 ODOT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ORS 810.438 specifies the use and reporting requirements for municipal photo radar programs in operation. The law allows the cities of Albany, Beaverton, Bend, Eugene, Gladstone, Medford, Milwaukie, Oregon City, Portland and Tigard to operate photo radar. In addition to individual cities reporting directly, it requires the Oregon Department of Transportation to review all submitted reports and provide an executive summary by March 1 of each odd-numbered year to the Legislative Assembly, focusing on the process and outcome evaluations for cities using photo radar programs in Oregon.

Photo radar has been in use in Oregon for many years. A photo radar program uses a camera to capture the license plate of speeding vehicles. The camera and radar (or laser) devices are mounted to a marked police vehicle that measures the speed of vehicles. A ticket is mailed to the registered owner of the vehicle. The owner has the opportunity to respond to the ticket claiming innocence through a "certificate of innocence" or "certificate of non-liability."

This executive summary of the cities' reports was prepared by ODOT as required under ORS 810.438. It summarizes the cities' evaluation summaries of their photo radar programs. Copies of the cities' reports will be submitted to the Legislative Assembly directly from each city as required under statute.

PROCESS AND OUTCOME EVALUATION – Photo Radar Programs

The Effects of Using Cameras on Traffic Safety

Beaverton reports that it has been operating a successful photo radar program for the last 20 years. This well-established program, which utilizes two radar vans, has been very successful in reducing speeds in Beaverton neighborhoods. 79% of the speeders detected by the city's photo radar vans did not live in Beaverton. The number of violations captured in 2014 was 10,198 a 5% reduction from the 2003-2013 average of 10,837.

Medford reports that since implementation of the photo radar program they have seen a 16% reduction in traffic crashes from 2005 – 2014. They have observed a visible difference in driver behavior (slowing down) in the areas the vans are deployed and see this as a significant benefit towards increased traffic safety.

Traffic Crash Summary

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Fatal	4	2	3	4	0	4	3	2	1	4
Injury	250	253	183	224	389	371	349	340	347	390
Property	1522	1407	1259	1211	1150	1126	1079	1136	1072	1100
Total:	**1776**	**1662**	**1445**	**1439**	**1539**	**1501**	**1431**	**1478**	**1420**	**1494**

Milwaukie reports that they are currently using one van within the city. The van is deployed in school zones, highway work zones, residential streets, and other streets. This includes the two highways that intersect in the city which the local jurisdiction has determined have an unusually high number of crashes or speeding complaints which negatively impact overall traffic safety.

The city of Milwaukie's photo radar program has been very successful in helping to reduce traffic crashes within the city boundaries going from 115 crashes in 2013 to 88 in 2014. Additionally, they saw a nearly 50% reduction of citations issued in 2014 compared to those issued in 2013.

Portland has been operating a photo radar van since it was allowed by the legislature in 1995. Studies have shown that photo-enforcement has been effective in reducing speeding within the boundaries of the city of Portland. Under a city ordinance, the Police Bureau deploys photo radar in school zones, highway work zones, residential streets and other streets determined to have an unusually high number of crashes or speeding complaints. Use of photo radar has been successful in work zones as well. 7100 violations were captured when workers were present over a two-year period of the Sellwood Bridge project. The average speed was 14 MPH over the posted 25 MPH limit.

Degree of Public Acceptance

Beaverton reports that 50% of Beaverton citizens believed photo radar worked very well (November 2014). The opportunity for public comment continues via the city website, city council meetings, police traffic hotline phone number and directly to the photo enforcement program coordinator. Feedback remains mostly positive.

Medford reports that citizen acceptance of photo radar programs has grown since its inception in 2004. They believe this is a result of how the program is administered, in a fair and open manner. In 2014 the City of Medford Police Department began measuring the public opinion of the photo radar program through a public safety survey which is conducted twice a year. More than 50% of the residents surveyed reported the program as "good" or "very good." Additionally, they received no official complaints in 2014 about the program.

Milwaukie: The Milwaukie Police Department enjoys a strong public acceptance of photo radar as reported through seven different city neighborhood associations. In January 2011, the city of Milwaukie conducted a review of the photo radar program with their Public Safety Advisory Committee. The committee voted unanimously to continue its support of the photo radar program.

Portland has been monitoring public opinion of photo radar over the years of deployment and enjoys a strong public acceptance of photo radar as a valuable tool against speeding. Many of the polls show the strongest support for the use of photo radar was in school zones. Portland has also recognized the importance and value of educating the public on driver safety in areas that photo enforcement is operated and is in the process of developing a photo enforcement safety class.

Administration Process for the use of Photo Radar

Each city follows their own administration process to operate their photo radar units however all are very similar. Processes for each city are detailed in the individual city reports submitted.

Beaverton: The administrative process begins on page 6 of their report.
Medford: The administrative process begins on page 6 of their report.
Milwaukie: The administrative process begins on page 5 of their report.
Portland: The administrative process is contained on pages 14 of their report.

Summary

It appears from these reports and various conversations with the cities that they are following the spirit and letter of Oregon law as it relates to the operation of photo radar programs.

The photo radar program has been in operation in Oregon for 20 years. It appears to have a positive impact on reducing average speeds within the communities in which it is used. With high public acceptance and safety benefits of reduced speeds in school zones, residential and other roadways, photo radar appears to be making a positive impact to safety in the communities in which it is used.

Because of the limited number of photo radar vans in operation, it is impossible to make a direct correlation between crash reduction and the use of the systems. Unlike photo red light cameras which are 24/7 monitoring operations, photo radar vans are moved to different locations within a jurisdiction and are not allowed to be in any location more than four hours. Moving the photo radar vans is necessary so that drivers don't get used to the locations of the vans and adjust their speeds as they approach them. However, moving the vans frequently makes it difficult to identify speed and crash reductions over a long-term time-frame.