

## Electronic Traffic Enforcement

**The City and the Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts have worked out the last details in implementing the City's Electronic Traffic Control (ETC) systems, and the City began issuing tickets as of August 19. The systems are installed at the intersections of Burden & Road 68 and Court & 20th Avenue.**

By way of background, with the increase in population in Pasco, traffic has also increased, along with vehicle accidents. Of particular concern are so-called "red light runners" in high-volume intersections, such as these two. Such accidents can be deadly yet easily preventable. Stationing police officers at these intersections is not recommended due to staffing levels, best use of officers' time, and the safety considerations for officers and drivers alike during enforcement activity in these areas.

With these concerns in mind, the Police Department started evaluating alternative methods of better enforcing red-light standards, including so-called "red light cameras" or ETC. After several months of evaluation, including a survey that showed 195 violations in one 12-hour period at the two intersections, multiple presentations to City Council and the public, the Department selected Redflex for a contract for ETC. The selected system records only the rear part of the vehicle, taking several photos from the time the vehicle enters the intersection for about 12 seconds. If a vehicle is already in the intersection when the light turns red, the camera will not pick up on that vehicle.

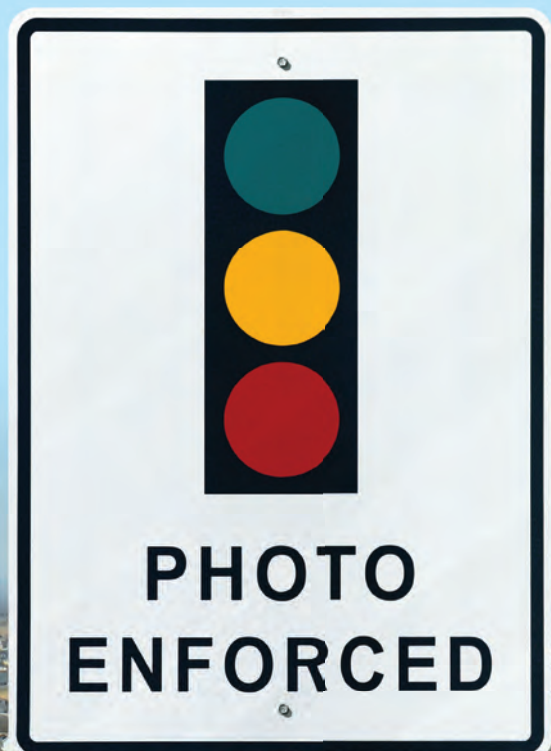
Once a photo is taken, it is sent to the vendor's system and the Department is notified that there is a possible violation. A Pasco Police Officer then reviews the photo to determine if a violation has occurred. Just like any traffic stop, the officer will have full discretion to determine if the possible violation is valid and authorize a citation. Like in the field, the officer will take several factors into account including time of day, weather, number of vehicles observed in the area, pedestrians, and any other factor that the officer feels is pertinent in making the decision.

If the officer determines there is no violation, the information is deleted. If the officer determines a violation has occurred, the vendor is notified and an infraction notice is issued on City of Pasco letterhead to the owner of the vehicle. The offender receives the

violation in the mail and can either pay it or contest it through the Pasco Municipal Court. If the potential violator has any questions, they can come to the Police Department and discuss it with an officer. The alleged violator can also view the photo of the incident online. In the event the vehicle owner was not the operator of the vehicle at the time, an appeal may be filed with the court requesting a waiver of the citation.

In essence, this process is no different than if an officer stops a violator on the road and issues a citation. The only thing the vendor is doing is providing a photo with time stamp of the potential violation. The determination on whether a violation occurred is up to the officer viewing the photo.

This process is not a way to generate easy revenue, but rather is a cost effective and safe way to try to improve safety at busy and dangerous intersections. Further, by ordinance, all revenue generated from ETC can only be used to cover program expenses and traffic safety improvements. The contract with Redflex is for a three-year period but it does allow for early termination, if the City Council desires.





CITY WINS MUNICIPAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

The City has won a 2019 Association of Washington Cities (AWC) Municipal Excellence Award for the Hot Spotters program. Hot Spotters is a collaboration between several groups in the community, including the City of Pasco Fire Department, Pasco Police, Lourdes Health, other first responders, legal providers, city and county judges, mental health treatment providers, healthcare providers, community housing organizations, and State health and human services agencies.

For first responders, arriving on a scene involving potential mental health and substance abuse issues has become an increasingly common occurrence. Two officer-involved shootings within a year (2014-15) spurred a review of procedures in relation to mental illness and officer interaction involving use of force options. The City was dedicated to conducting an open dialog with local community groups, organizations, residents, and the ACLU



to address concerns regarding how the Police Department dealt with persons with mental illness.

The gaps in communication and services available identified the need for a collaborative team to communicate needs and determine community partners. The result was the formation of the Pasco Hot Spotters Program.

In total, Hot Spotters participants have been contacted by law enforcement over 125 separate times since fall 2016. All encounters have been without incident requiring no officer involved use of force and resulting in an arrest rate of only 18.8%.

The Hot Spotters program is also one of three community health programs highlighted in the 2019 All-America City Awards application that helped garner Pasco’s inclusion as an All-America City Award finalist.

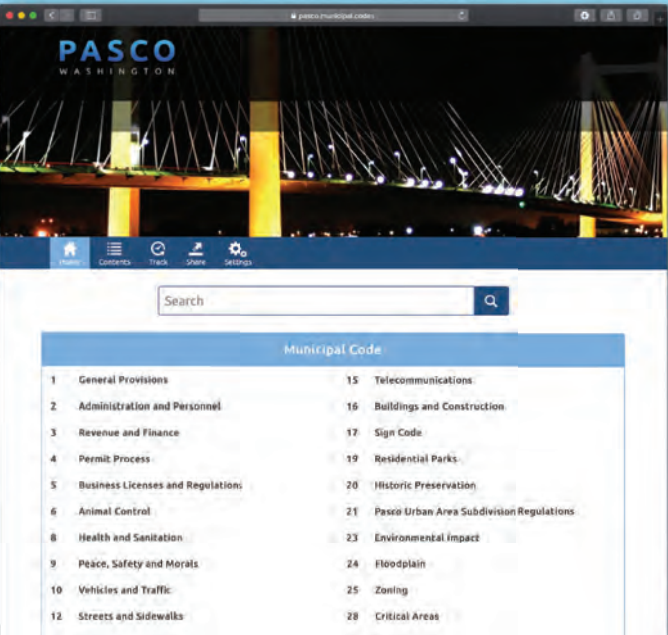
CITY AWARDED U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE GRANT

The U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded a \$3 million grant to the City to make water infrastructure improvements needed to serve food processing and other businesses in the region. The grant, which will be matched with \$3.9 million in local funds, will serve a designated “Opportunity Zone” and is expected to help create or retain 700 jobs and generate nearly \$36 million in private investment.

“This grant will help the City of Pasco support businesses in the Tri-Cities region for years to come,” said Senator Maria Cantwell. “The investment will create jobs and economic opportunities for hundreds of people in Southeastern Washington.”

“This grant will not only provide much-needed infrastructure improvement, but it further incentivizes private investment in one of the food processing powerhouses of the country,” said Representative Dan Newhouse. “Opportunity zones create exactly that for communities in rural areas like Central Washington: opportunity. By increasing the capacity of Pasco’s water use facility, we are not only creating nearly 700 jobs, but we are encouraging economic prosperity, which was the intent of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.”

The project will construct dual force mains a pump station at Pasco’s Process Water Reuse Facility (PWRF) to increase capacity to serve the expansion and location plans of food processing and other businesses.



BETTER ACCESS TO THE  
Municipal Code

The City has switched the online hosting for the Pasco Municipal Code to Code Publishing for a better and easier way to access the City’s laws. Access the Code via the City’s website at [www.pasco-wa.gov/code](http://www.pasco-wa.gov/code), where you can easily search, share, print, and track the Code. Please note that the online Code is updated every few months, so for the most recent changes, please contact the City Clerk’s office in City Hall at (509) 544-3096.

CITY COUNCIL:

- Mayor Matt Watkins (At Large)**  
416-6696, [watkinscouncil@pasco-wa.gov](mailto:watkinscouncil@pasco-wa.gov)
- Mayor Pro-Tem Craig Maloney (Dist. 6)**  
545-3404, [maloneycouncil@pasco-wa.gov](mailto:maloneycouncil@pasco-wa.gov)
- Councilmember Blanche Barajas (Dist. 1)**  
545-3404, [barajascouncil@pasco-wa.gov](mailto:barajascouncil@pasco-wa.gov)
- Councilmember Ruben Alvarado (Dist. 2)**  
545-3404, [alvaradocouncil@pasco-wa.gov](mailto:alvaradocouncil@pasco-wa.gov)
- Councilmember Saul Martinez (Dist. 3)**  
545-3404, [martinezcouncil@pasco-wa.gov](mailto:martinezcouncil@pasco-wa.gov)
- Councilmember Pete Serrano (Dist. 4)**  
545-3404, [serranocouncil@pasco-wa.gov](mailto:serranocouncil@pasco-wa.gov)
- Councilmember David Milne (Dist. 5)**  
545-3404, [milnecouncil@pasco-wa.gov](mailto:milnecouncil@pasco-wa.gov)

MANAGER & OFFICIALS:

- City Manager Dave Zabell**  
545-3404, [zabell@pasco-wa.gov](mailto:zabell@pasco-wa.gov)
- Administrative & Community Services Director**  
Zach Ratkai, 543-5757, [ratkaiz@pasco-wa.gov](mailto:ratkaiz@pasco-wa.gov)
- Public Works Director Steve Worley**  
543-5738, [worleys@pasco-wa.gov](mailto:worleys@pasco-wa.gov)
- Community Development Director Rick White**  
545-3441, [whiter@pasco-wa.gov](mailto:whiter@pasco-wa.gov)
- Finance Director Richa Sigdel**  
544-3065, [sigdel@pasco-wa.gov](mailto:sigdel@pasco-wa.gov)
- Fire Chief Bob Gear**  
545-3426, [gearb@pasco-wa.gov](mailto:gearb@pasco-wa.gov)
- Interim Police Chief Larry Dickerson**  
545-3481, [dickersonl@pasco-wa.gov](mailto:dickersonl@pasco-wa.gov)

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