

Seems to me that this took an awful lot of work. Good statistics, bad conclusion.

All of this could have been avoided if people just followed the speed limit - which was reduced in the 108 core at the request of GOCA, the TCAC and the Chamber back in 2009 due to incidents with pedestrians and bike riders.

Why do drivers need more encouragement to speed through Olney? More speed cameras happen when there are high incidents of speeders.

I realize that I am out of sync with the thinking here - but what part of obeying the law do they not understand?

Concerns with GOCA Traffic Camera Task Force Recommendation to Increase Speed Limits

I am concerned that the speed camera study is overlooking the safety of drivers, cyclists and pedestrians. While the study concludes that drivers pay a disproportionate amount in speeding fines, the study turns a blind eye to the real safety problem. More drivers speed through Olney than in any other part of the County.

It's important to remember that speed camera tickets are not issued unless the driver exceeds the speed limit by 12 mph. This means that while the posted speed limit by schools and businesses is 30 mph for safety, the majority of drivers will be driving at 40 mph.

Any increase of the speed limit at the camera locations will result in increased speeds in the subsequent lower speed sections as drivers only slow down because of the speed cameras. For example, if the speed limit is increased as proposed, to 35mph between King William and Sandy Spring Bank (and Olney Elementary School!!), many drivers will slow to 45 for the camera and will continue at this speed into the 30 mph area. This will not only be dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists but the increased speeds will also reduce stopping time for lights and traffic making it more dangerous for drivers as well.

The 2011 AAA Pedestrian Risk vs Speed study* shows that as speeds increase, the risk to pedestrians greatly increases. At 23 mph there is a 10% chance of a pedestrian being killed. There is a 25% chance of being killed at 32mph. The risk of death is 50% at 42 mph. The threshold at which speed cameras currently issue speeding tickets in Olney is 42 mph. Any increase in speeds will also increase the likelihood that a pedestrian will be killed when hit by a motor vehicle in Olney.

Another thing to keep in mind is even if an intersection does not have a painted crosswalk, by law, drivers must treat intersections the same as an intersection with one. For example pedestrians are legally allowed to cross Rt. 108 at Headwaters Dr. and Heritage Drive. The lack of a cross walk at an intersection should not be used as a reason to increase the speed limit. Expecting people to walk all the way to Georgia Ave, or Queen Elizabeth Dr. is unacceptable.

The question is, do we want Olney to be just a crossroads of two highways with strip malls or do we want Olney to be a vibrant, walkable small town community. Raising the speed limits will only make things more dangerous and reward drivers for not giving their full attention to the rules and laws of the road.

The Speed Camera Report is self-explanatory and beautifully done.

The issue raised about public information becoming proprietary is central to many problems in government now. The new Transportation Task Force Legislation presents the same problem . . . again. Seems a central policy issue for GOCA?

Congratulations to the GOCA Traffic Cam Task Force - this is a very comprehensive, impressive, and thoughtful review of the data, process and procedures, and impact on Olney citizens.

Our sincere thanks from the SEROCA community.

Great to see the speed cameras staying in place now over the weekends too. (24/7), on the west side of Ga. ave. and Rt. 108. It's been two weeks now, and hopefully permanent. The speeds are down and so is the noise on the weekends. My screened in porch is along side Rt. 108. Sitting out there in the evenings on weekend nights are now enjoyable. More Quality of Life, for Olney to enjoy.

Message Body:

Just sent:

county.council county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov, oicemail
ocemail@montgomerycountymd.gov, MCPDChief
MCPDChief@montgomerycountymd.gov, Thomas.Didone
Thomas.Didone@montgomerycountymd.gov, mcgatty
mcgatty@montgomerycountymd.gov

To the Montgomery County Officials,
Montgomery County has long been guilty of using speed and red light cameras primarily for revenue, by improperly engineering the traffic lights and speed limits to make the actions of a large percentage of the normal and safe drivers subject to punishment by the cameras for the only practical result of raising revenue. Whether these improper engineering actions are done specifically to raise revenue or for other reasons, the

result is the same with a high percentage of the camera tickets going to safe drivers who endangered absolutely no one.

Speed limits are set improperly low, well below the safest 85th percentile speed levels. In discussions last year with Captain Didone, he made it clear this was the deliberate policy in many places, due to issues with the courts of enforcement tolerances. This enforcement tolerance issue with the courts is NOT a valid reason to deliberately mis-engineer the posted speed limits at artificially low levels. The only practical result is to improve ticket camera and speed trap revenue - something that the Captain and the County apparently finds to be acceptable.

Many Maryland jurisdictions, including Montgomery County, mis-engineer the traffic lights with yellow intervals set too short for the ACTUAL perception/reaction times and approach speeds of at least 85% of the drivers (safest method). This causes a high percentage of the tickets to go to safe drivers for split second violations of the red lights that would not occur at all if the yellow intervals were set properly for maximum safety.

Regardless of the supposed motivations, enforcement that has the practical result of being primarily for revenue with a high percentage of the tickets going to safe drivers is 100% wrong, 100% of the time.

It is clear that the Greater Olney Civic Association has uncovered some of the most egregious examples, and has decided to publicly object - with the research to back up the objections.

Note that it is not unusual for red light and speed camera contracts between the for-profit camera companies and their for-profit governmental business partners to have clauses limiting the amount of specific information that can be obtained by the public - supposedly on the basis of proprietary information. This is often used as a smokescreen to make it difficult for the public to see just how unfairly and punitively the systems can be operated. But the GOCA has found enough of the information to make some of the points very clear, and they want some of the most predatory practices to stop.

Respectfully submitted, James C. Walker Life Member, National Motorists Association Board Member and Executive Director, National Motorists Association Foundation

www.motorists.org 2050 Camelot Road Ann Arbor, MI 48104 734-668-7842

jcwconsult@aol.com

CC: Greater Olney Civic Association

I do want to take this opportunity though to convey my surprise and delight upon reading the Speed Camera Report the GOCA committee produced, and which I received at the GOCA Board meeting last eve. It is stellar professional work that is going to be very hard for the County to ignore. Unfortunately, I could not stay to participate in the discussion on that.

A quick note to voice my agreement with the recommendations of Mr Manion and his committee. They are logical and resonable.

I recently got a ticket in Olney at 4am on a Saturday for going 42 mph while I am ok with the cameras and the safety implications I believe when school is out and traffic non existent warnings not tickets should be issued

I recently had the opportunity to read the May 22, 2015 GOCA Traffic Cameras Task Force Report and would like to provide brief comments.

As background for my comments, my wife & I have been Olney residents for the past 16 years. Before recently retiring I spent 25 in a law enforcement career and later owned my own consulting firm. I am an advocate of the use of speed cameras and feel they provide a safety benefit - assuming the program is fairly and effectively administered.

First, I would like to acknowledge the excellent work of the task force. Their report was comprehensive, balanced, and educational.

I strongly agree with the task force resolution for the report to be forwarded the identified parties, to include a request for a county response to the nine detailed recommendations within 60 days of receipt. While I still acknowledge the benefit of a "Safe Speed" program, the task force findings regarding transparency, vendor ownership of program data, and the fact that the concentration of cameras in the Olney-Sandy Spring area is not supported by accident data is troublesome. It is also difficult to understand how a program of this nature can be effectively and fairly managed without timely access to all relevant data and without ongoing monitoring of that data against the assessment of related program objectives. Further explanation from the county (i.e., a response to the task force report) is needed. Absent that, it would be difficult to conclude anything other than the fact that the Safe Speed program, as currently administered, is primarily for revenue generation.

Specific to recommendation #9, and the need for a plebiscite, my current opinion is that a formal referendum is appropriate. That need may be mitigated, however, if the county is willing and able to implement program changes consistent with the other task force recommendations.

I have lived in Olney for 25 years. The increasing number of speed cameras are an intrusion at the very least. I have read the study and agree with # 9. Olney residents should decide if Olney should have speed cameras.

Below are my comments offered in a constructive manner for consideration as we move forward with the document.

It's obvious a lot of time and energy went into this. I support the recommendations and have a couple additional thoughts I'd like your feedback upon should you wish a friendly amendment to revise the draft resolution to incorporate any or all of these.

If I am reading the data correctly, I'm most concerned about the lack of inclusion of the Gold Mine road cameras. The data on p27 - 30 appears to show the 2 Gold Mine locations to be the highest in terms of percentage of vehicles receiving citations as #1 and #3 of top 3, with St Peters being #2, in the COUNTY, not just Olney. This leads me back to appropriate speed limits for travel - and I've been asking the limit on Gold Mine (Old Balt to Chandlee Mill) be set to 30mph for years now.

Here are the comments - happy to clarify or expand upon these.

Speed Camera Comments

1. Page 19 recommendation on 108 camera placement needs to be reworded as the camera can't be placed in a commercial zone and the revised recommendation carried forward to the summary of recommendations and resolution
2. The recommendation should recommend to raise the speed limit in a step down zone approaching the center core of Olney for w/b 108 Prince Phillip to Spartan to 35mph
3. Include a recommendation raising the speed limit on Gold Mine from Old Baltimore to Chandlee Mill Rd (see next comments on % of vehicles cited) to 30 mph
4. I see on p27 the 2 Gold Mine cameras and one for Olney Mill/108 were included in the broader Olney subtotals - so why were these 3 excluded in the Olney statistical summaries and study?
 - a. The Gold Mine e/b would have been camera #6 in citations issued in the area with both St John's cameras below both Gold Mine cameras.
 - b. Both Gold Mine cameras rank at the upper end of % of vehicles cited in fact they are #1 and #3 on the Olney list - reinforcing my concern that the speed limit on this road is arbitrarily set 5mph too low for normal and reasonable travel.
 - c. Those 3 Olney (Gold Mine plus St Peters) cameras rank 1-3 in the entire COUNTY for % of vehicles cited - again pointing toward that the limit on these roads is too low.
5. Why didn't the report include other surrounding Olney camera information - such as the Hines and Cashell speed corridors - why just the '8' and not all of the Olney areas ones?
6. Broadly redefine what a residential area is for this law specifically as Montgomery County is the only one in Maryland allowed to use speed cameras in residential areas - was this even considered by the Task Force?
7. If we're look at County wide we need to include some high level data from the municipality operated cameras -Rockville, Gaithersburg (looks like p27-30 list includes Chevy Chase) for a fair apples/apples balance - Rockville HS cameras have always been cited as two of the most ticketed locations

8. In response to comments raised during the June GOCA meeting
 - a. Concern about turning westbound on 108 from St Peters –
 - i. Recommendation may want to include restricting turning to right turns only since they already describe the center lane as the suicide lane and describe turning left as challenging – for their and others safety even if the speed limit is not raised.
 - b. Proximity of playground equipment - have there ever been vehicles that have gone 150 feet off the roadway into the play area when the limit was posted at 40mph prior to the 30mph limit or ever afterward? A few barrier bollard posts like what are at trailheads to prevent motor vehicles might just suffice if St Peters parents are already concerned.
 9. How much of the revenue raised has been used for ped/bike/traffic safety in the Olney area (since that's its restricted use purpose – shouldn't we see correspondingly more trails, sidewalks, traffic light /signal improvements, etc?)
 10. Where drivers are from who are ticketed is important to target education campaigns – that data should be captured/used/accessible
 11. Suggest our state delegation consider removing the 'montgomery only' except to the law and conform Montgomery to the rest of the state – school zones and construction zones only (was there less consensus about offering that as a recommendation?)
 12. III. A para 4 would seem to indicate the 2 'St Peter' cameras are NOT in a designated school zone – perhaps be more explicit.
 13. Following on above – did we see any citation evidence for the St Johns or Sherwood ES cameras that were issued on weekends or after 8p on weekdays – outside of allowable hours for a school zone camera?
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I couldn't help notice the disproportionate cameras in our town compared to the rest of the county... I started googling and I found the report listed in the subject.

I was wondering what the current progress is in address this issue with county, and how to get involved?

I agree with the nine recommendations made by the task force especially the ability for Olney residents to vote for or against this program.

Hats off to the Speed Camera team! What an amazing effort and excellent teamwork product. Just so impressive!

I urge GOCA to pass the Resolution. If you like cameras, you should vote Yes for the Resolution. If you don't like cameras, you should vote Yes for the Resolution. The Resolution suggests five "good government" and transparency improvements to the program that everyone should insist upon regardless of their camera views. It suggests

three very modest 5mph speed limit adjustments, none in the middle of Olney. And it suggests that County residents vote on the program.

I respectfully disagree there is anything unique about Olney's road configuration that justifies the fact Olney has 5.7 times the ticketing rate as the County average, or 30% more tickets than Silver Spring despite 7.7 million fewer vehicle passes, etc. You can find analogous road configurations to Olney over and over again in the County. What is most remarkable about Olney is not that our roads are different, it is that our speed limits on multi-lane divided highways are lower than elsewhere in the County for similar road situations.

The comments that Silver Spring can't be compared to Olney because "you can't speed in Silver Spring due to the traffic" are unsupported by data. Silver Spring has two cameras roughly 100 yards apart on 16th Street in order to catch people speeding up on the open stretch of road after Georgia merges into upper 16th Street. 64,000+ tickets a year in Silver Spring, the majority from those two cameras, indicates the comments about Silver Spring are incorrect.

The comment that the declining accident rates prove the Speed Camera program is a success ignore two important pieces of data: one, federal accident statistics cited in the report showed that areas without cameras also showed accident rate declines in the same time periods, thus cameras alone are not the sole cause of the accident decline. Two, as the report notes, accident declines continued during the time the Olney intersection safety improvements were made and after the State passed the no-cell phone and anti-texting laws. To suggest the cameras are the sole reason for the lower accident rates is incorrect and unsupported by data.

Speed cameras have been in Olney for almost eight years now and they are still ticketing Olney residents and visitors at the highest rate anywhere in the County. It is therefore appropriate for Olney to consider modest changes.

To the people who say "just slow down," the objective is for traffic to move safely at the appropriate speed for the road (per SHA guidelines). In Olney, it appears drivers are driving similar speeds as they do on similar roads elsewhere, but in Olney you get a ticket.

Speed cameras take \$3.4 million a year from the household budgets of Olney residents, visitors, and commuter families. With only minor adjustments to the speed limits, it appears fines could be cut by \$1+ million dollars a year or much more without impacting safety. I suspect the Olney business community would love \$1+ million dollars spent at their businesses instead of going to camera fines. I think Olney families and visitors

should use \$1+ million of their incomes for tuition and groceries and vacations, not speed camera fines.

GOCA needs to act to address the overwhelming Olney speed camera ticketing disparity. Vote Yes on the Task Force Resolution.

I would like to know if there is any type of petition that we can sign as a profound protest against the speed cameras in Olney. Myself and my daughter each received a ticket this month on separate occasions while visiting a physician in Olney. We do not live in Olney but this has occurred in the past. These tickets as you are correctly arguing with the county and state DO NOT provide protection to citizens. I feel as if I am being taxed, fined or penalized for having a doctor located in Olney and honestly will now work to avoid visiting Olney. Thank you for your efforts