RESEARCH PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PROJECT NUMBER:
00470

PROJECT TITLE:
Feasibility Study of Automated Traffic Enforcement in Alabama

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:
Daniel S. Turner
Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
The University of Alabama
Box 870205
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0205
(205) 348-9925
dturner@coe.eng.ua.edu

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:
This project will investigate the feasibility of using automated devices for traffic regulation enforcement in Alabama. It will demonstrate the types of equipment that might be capable of automatically registering violations to traffic regulations, and the degree to which such automated enforcement might improve safety by diminishing the degree of violation of regulations.

PROJECT ABSTRACT:
Red-light running is a significant problem in Alabama. Recent statistics released by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety indicate that Birmingham has the sixth worst red-light running safety record among cities in the U.S. The same study showed that Alabama has the fifth worst record of any state. At the same time, speed related deaths and injuries are climbing in Alabama. More vigorous enforcement can diminish the problem, but law enforcement officials at all levels in Alabama are hard pressed to perform all of their duties. New technologies are becoming available to improve efficiency of enforcement. In particular, cameras are being used in some states to record violations and to issue citations. These states have experienced dramatic improvements in safety as a result of camera enforcement. This project will investigate whether Alabama might see the same improvement if camera enforcement systems are implemented.

PROJECT TASK DESCRIPTIONS:
1) Assemble background information.
2) Investigate Alabama Code to determine whether automated enforcement is adaptable to Alabama under the current legal provisions.
3) Identify appropriate characteristics of sites.
4) Assemble and brief a project team.
5) Select sites for testing.
6) Purchase and install equipment.
7) Collect data.
8) Analyze data.
9) Issue final report.

MILESTONES AND DATES:
Startup – February 1, 2001
Start task 1: Feb 1
Start task 2: Feb 15
Start Task 3: Mar 1
Start Task 4: Apr 15
Start Task 5: May 1
Start Task 6: May 15
Start Task 7: Sept 1
Start Task 8: Nov 15
Start Task 9: Feb 15, 2002
Complete Task 9 and Close Project: June 30, 2002

TOTAL BUDGET:
Alabama Department of Transportation, $110,339

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT:
A graduate student will work half-time on this project, and will probably use it as the basis for his or her thesis.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER RESEARCH PROJECTS:
No relationship is known to any other UTCA project.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES:
A final report will be generated, and papers will be submitted to professional organizations.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT:
This project will demonstrate whether automated enforcement can be applied in Alabama, and if so, will establish the probable reductions in crashes, injuries and fatalities. The Alabama Legislature has been reluctant to pass enabling legislation, and the products of this project can help reverse this by providing the key facts that demonstrate safety benefits.

TRB KEYWORDS:
Traffic crash, red-light running, speeding, traffic regulation enforcement, automated enforcement