SFMTA

# Automated Speed and Red Light Enforcement in San Francisco

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SFMTA Citizens' Advisory Council

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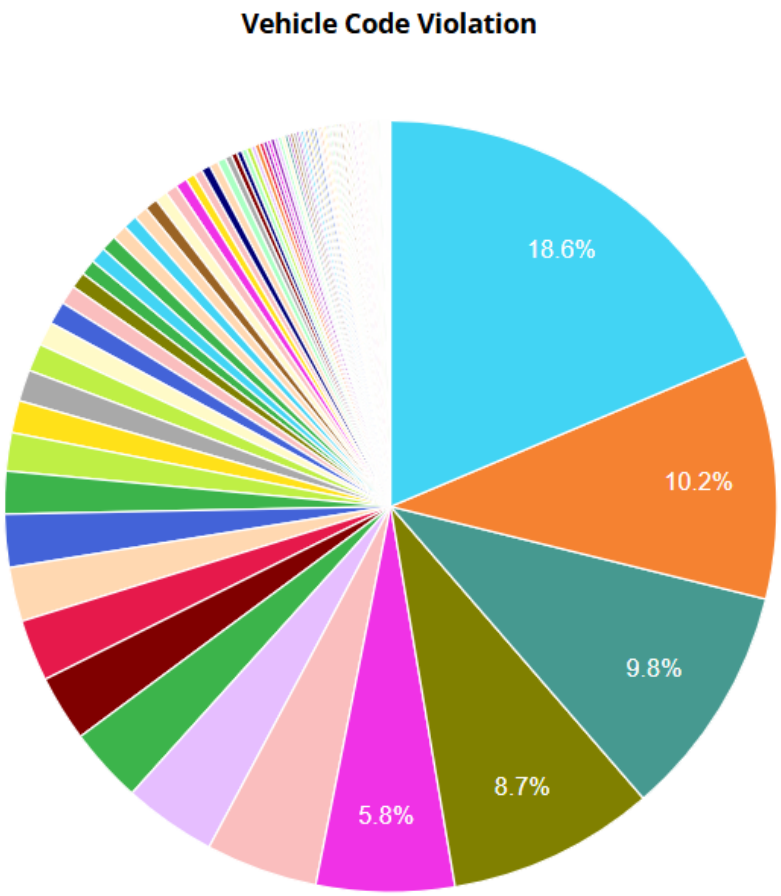
# Why Photo Enforcement?

Speeding is the most common cause of injury crashes. Red light violations are third most common.

By CVC violation:

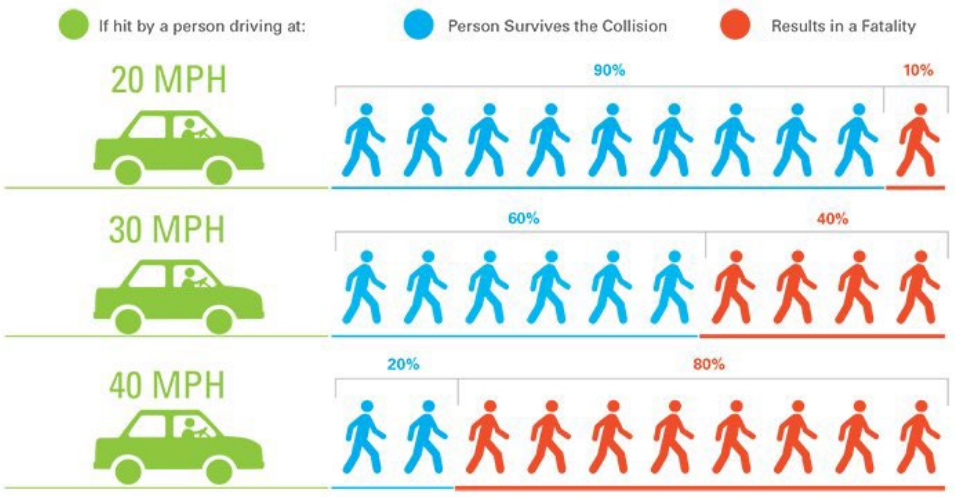
- 22350 Basic speed law (18.6%)
- 22107 Unsafe turning (10.2%)
- 21453(a)  Red Light (9.8%)
- 21950(a) Failure to yield to pedestrians (8.7%)
- 21801(a) Failure to yield while turning (5.8%)



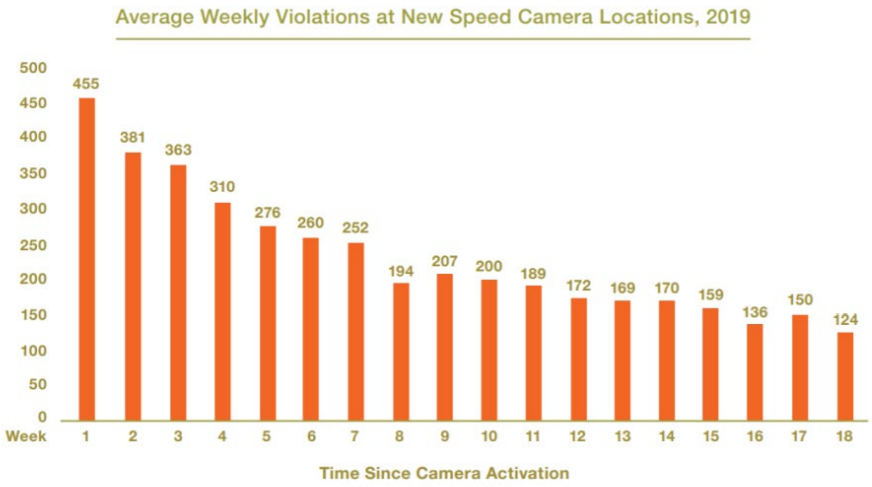
# Automated Speed Enforcement

# Why Speed Enforcement?

Slowing down vehicles saves lives.

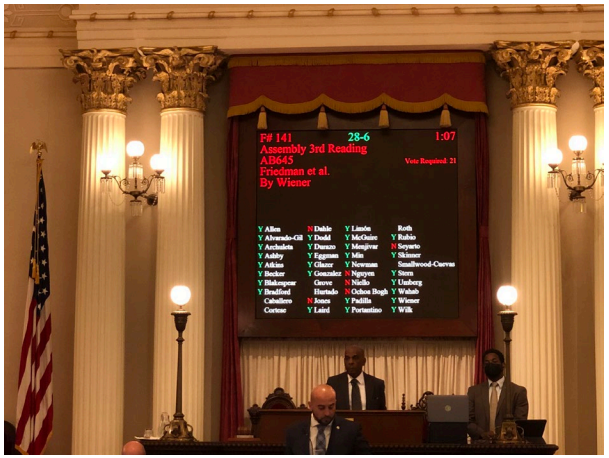



Introducing monetary fines is an effective tool to change behavior.




*Source: New York City Department of Transportation*

# Assembly Bill 645





- Authorized local departments of transportation of **six California cities** to establish Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE)
- Established a **5-year pilot** through January 1, 2032
- Vehicle must be **traveling at least 11 MPH over the speed limit** to receive a citation
- The number of cameras is limited based on the city's population: **San Francisco has 33 cameras**

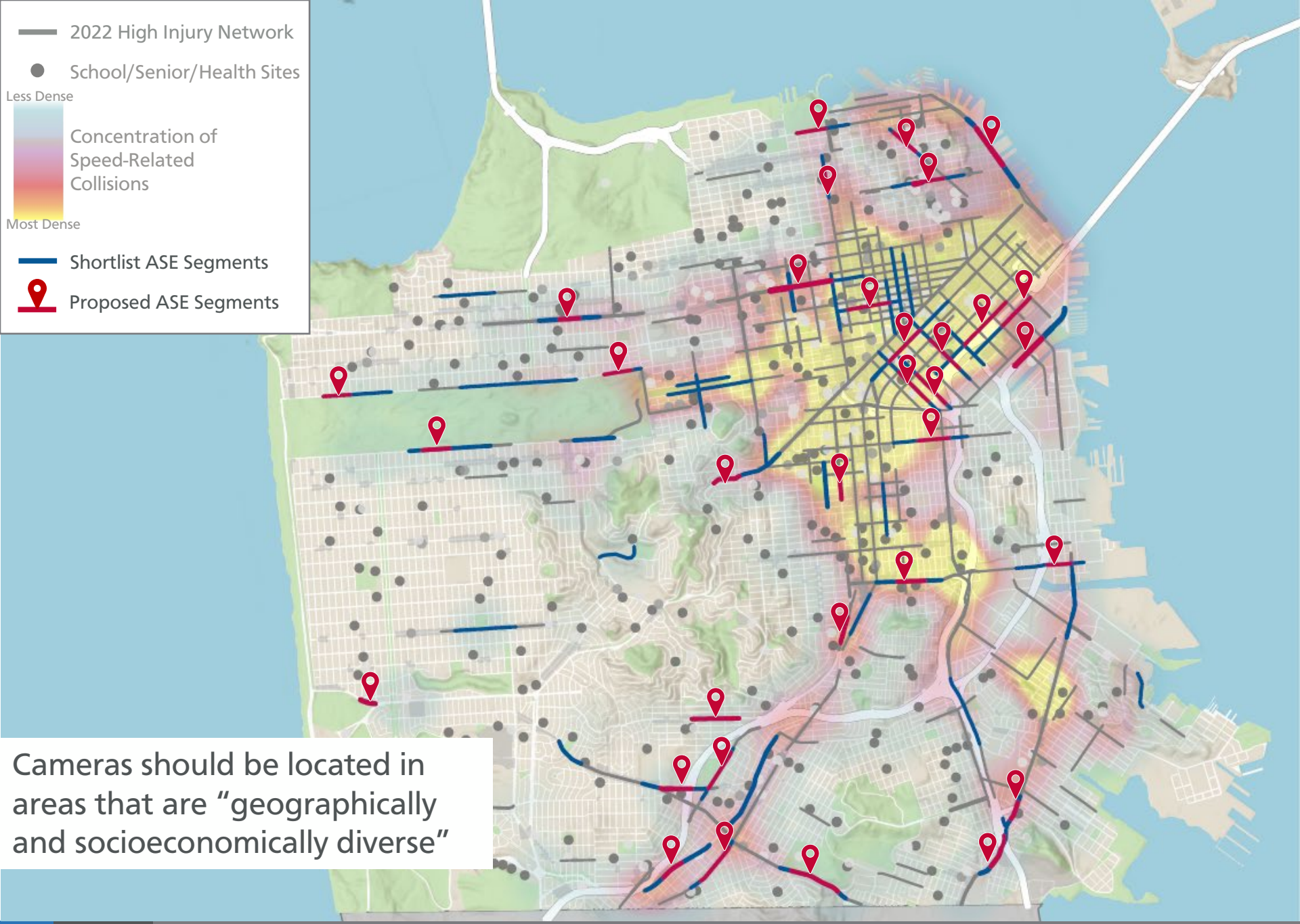
# AB 645 Specifics

| Consistent Standards | |
|---|---|
| **Speed penalties** | - 11-15 MPH over: $50<br>- 16-25 MPH over: $100<br>- 26+ MPH over: $200<br>- Over 100 MPH: $500 |
| **Type of penalty** | - **Civil penalty** (not moving violation) |
| **Penalty issued to** | - Owner of vehicle (not driver) |
| **Warning period** | - First 60 days: no-fee warnings |
| **Eligible Locations** | - high-injury street, a school zone street, or a street with documented speed racing |

AB 645: Cities of Los Angeles, San Jose, Oakland, Glendale, and Long Beach, and the City and County of San Francisco
AB 1297 allowed the City of Malibu to start its own program on the Pacific Coast Highway

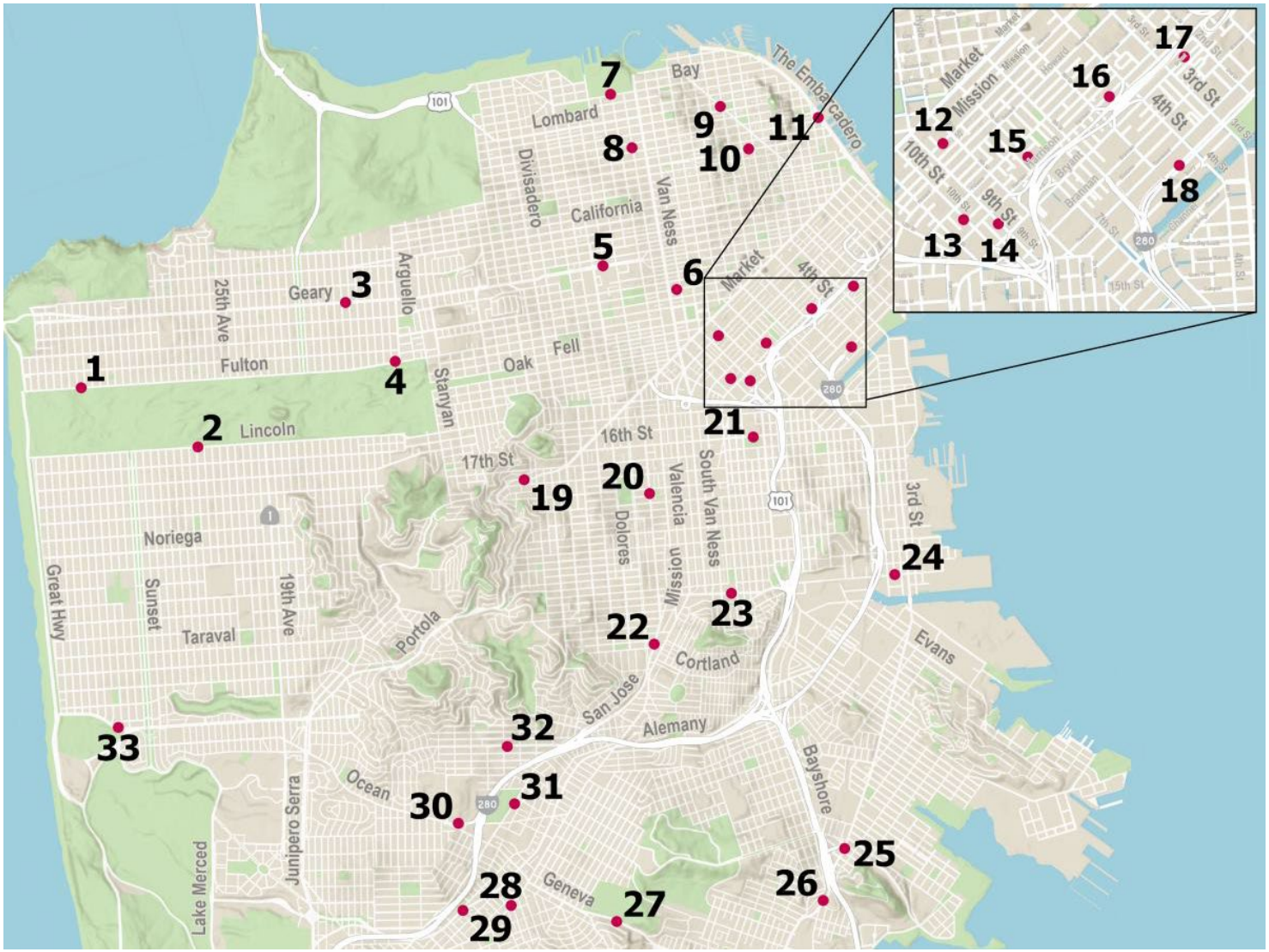
# Where Are The 33 Cameras?

| State Law Specification | San Francisco's Response |
|---|---|
| Cameras to be located on a high-injury street, a school zone, or a street with documented speeding | All cameras were located on the high-injury network, where vehicle speeding is a known issue |
| Cameras cannot be located on state highways, freeways, or expressways | All cameras were located on city streets |
| Cameras should be located in areas that are "geographically and socioeconomically diverse" | At least 2 cameras in each supervisory district, with locations to reflect the full diversity of socioeconomic backgrounds in the city |
| All locations of speed cameras must be identified on "the municipality's internet website" | The SFMTA website at www.sfmta.com/speedcameras is kept consistently updated with the locations of the 33 cameras and their status |




Cameras should be located in areas that are “geographically and socioeconomically diverse”

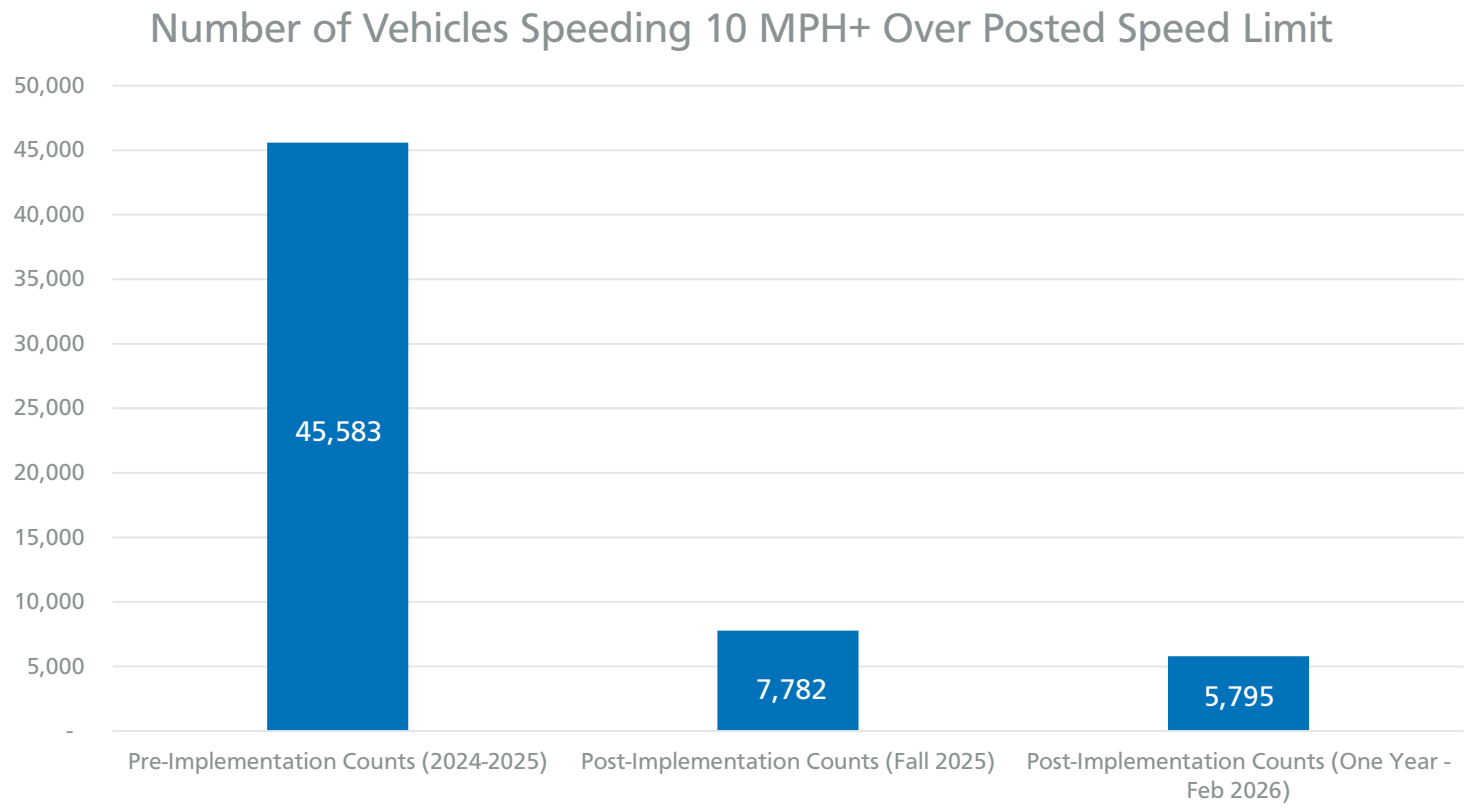
# Speed Camera Locations



# Behavior Trends – Speed Study

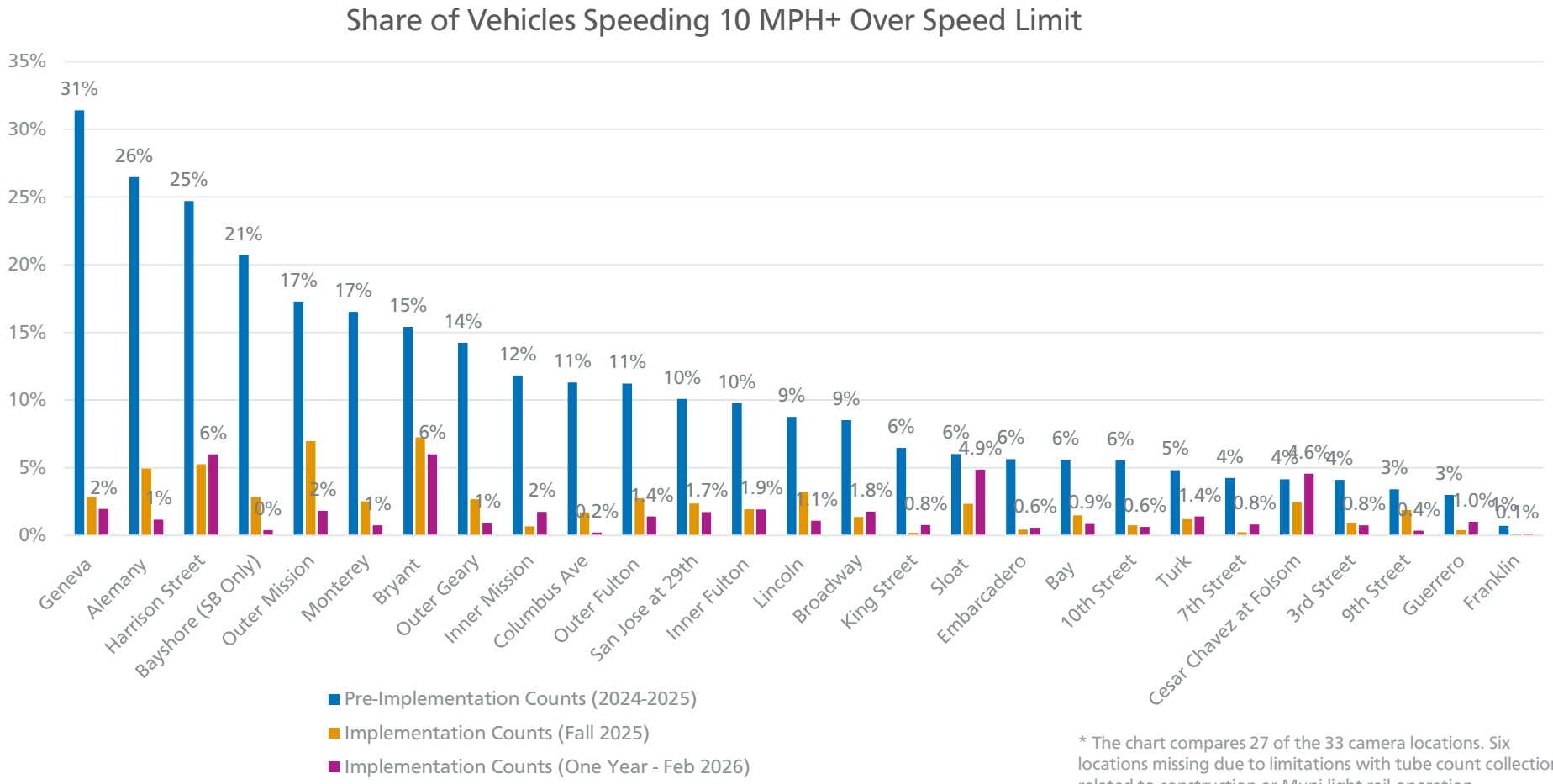
**One year after launching speed cameras in San Francisco, the share of drivers speeding 10 mph or more is down nearly 80 percent across camera locations compared to pre-implementation.**

That's around 40,000 fewer instances of speeding on our city's streets every day.



# Behavior Trends – Speed Study

By fall 2025 and winter 2026, **just 2 percent of drivers** were traveling 10 miles per hour or more over the speed limit.

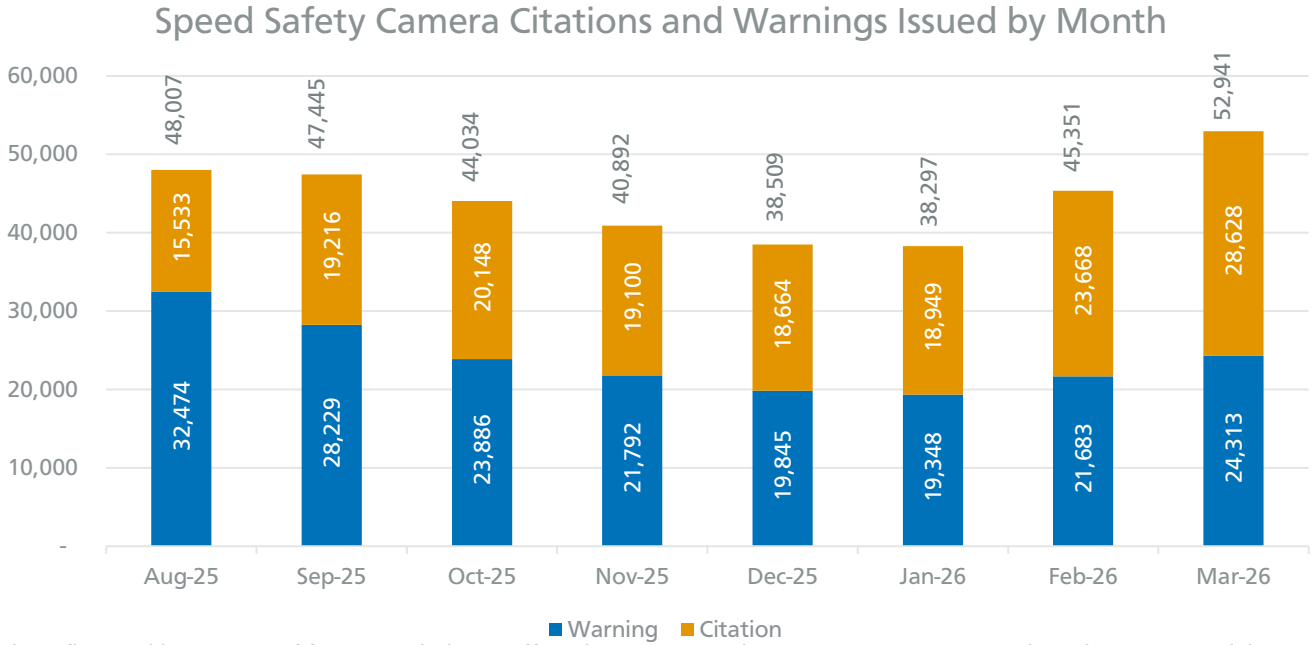



* The chart compares 27 of the 33 camera locations. Six locations missing due to limitations with tube count collection related to construction or Muni light rail operation

# Issued Violation Trends

**As the technology is fine-tuned, it does a better job identifying the remaining speeders, even though fewer people are speeding overall.** The absolute number of tickets issued increased by 10 percent last quarter, largely due to higher vehicle volumes associated with major city events and ongoing technology improvements.

- **Warnings issued** during startup warning period– 362,047
- **Warnings issued** after start of citation issuance – 191,570
- Notice of **violations issued** – 163,906

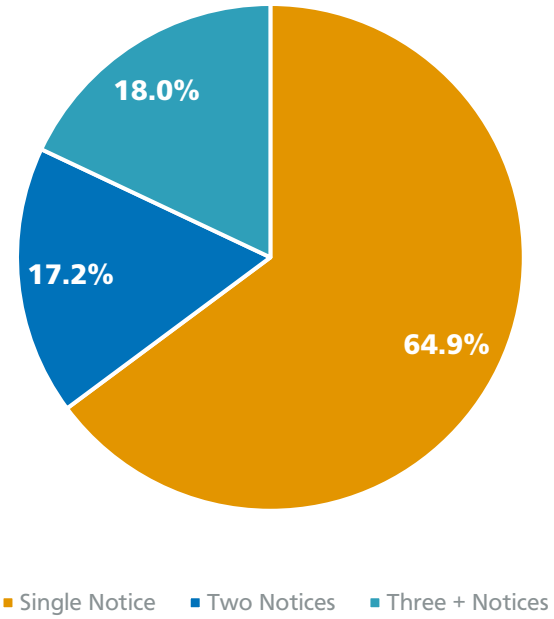



Note: Citation levels can be influenced by a range of factors, including traffic volumes, seasonal patterns, major events such as the Super Bowl, large-scale disruptions like power outages, construction activity, and ongoing refinements to the technology, and should not be relied upon as a metric of changing driver behavior.

# Issued Violation Trends

Early data shows strong compliance and shifting driver behavior.

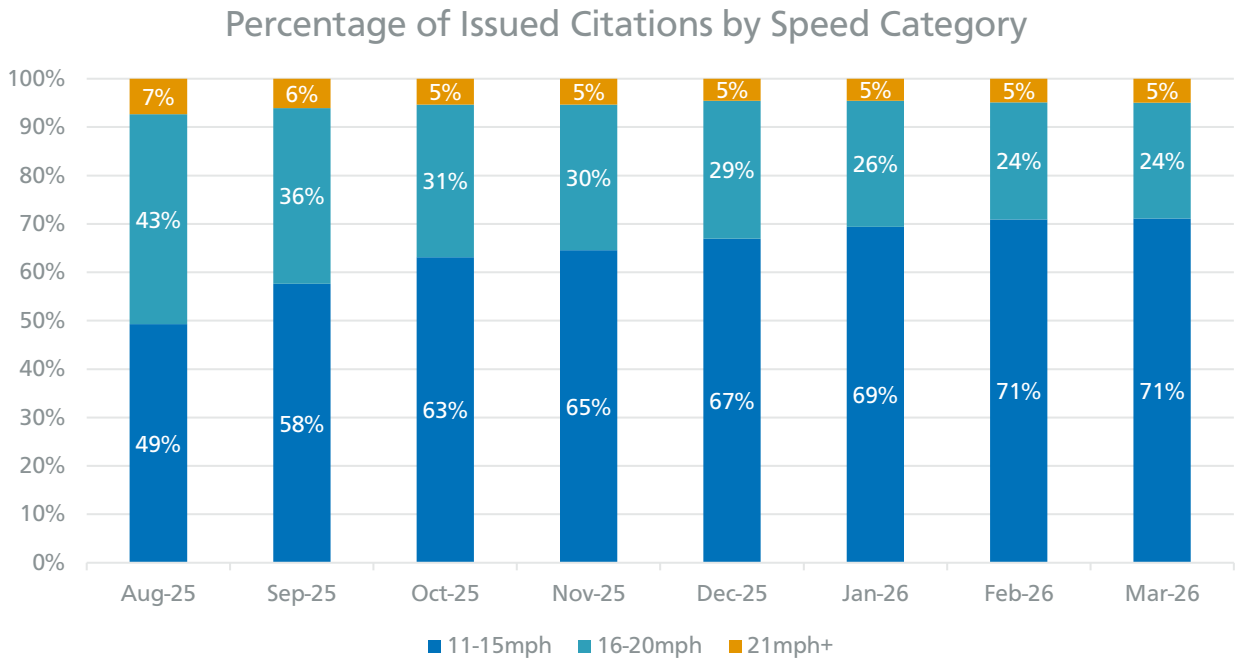
- **65%** of owners who receive a warning or citation **do not receive a second**
- **82%** of recipients **receive two or fewer** notices



# Issued Violation Trends

Since the program began issuing citations in August 2025, **the percentage of drivers receiving citations for the most egregious speeds has continued to decrease.**

- The percentage of citations issued to drivers 16+ mph over the posted speed limit has decreased from over 50% at program launch to less than 30% today.



# Program Funding

**Program net revenue is being reinvested back into San Francisco's streets.** That means funding for rectangular rapid flashing beacons and other traffic calming efforts to support pedestrian safety citywide.

First Program Year Start-up Costs
- Vendor Contract: ~$1.5M/year
- MTA Labor Costs: ~$2.5M (Nov 2023 – June 2026)
- Miscellaneous Costs: ~$0.2M/year

First Year Total Expenditure: ~$4.2M
First Year Projected Revenue: ~$7.2M

Estimated Allocation to Traffic Calming: ~3M/year
- $2M programmed for RRFB Program (all excess revenue will be used on traffic calming as required by AB645)

**Speed safety cameras are designed to deter speeding and save lives, not generate fines.**

# Looking Ahead – Next Steps

- Jan-March 2026 program data available on DataSF published later this week at www.data.sfgov.org

- **Evaluation of system effectiveness** at 18-months (September 2026 for San Francisco). Each site must meet one or more effectiveness criteria:
  - Reduction in 85$^{th}$ percentile speed
  - 20% reduction in speeding vehicles
  - 20% reduction in number of repeat offenders

- **Policy change** – advocate to expand number of locations, extend duration, and for improved long term financial feasibility

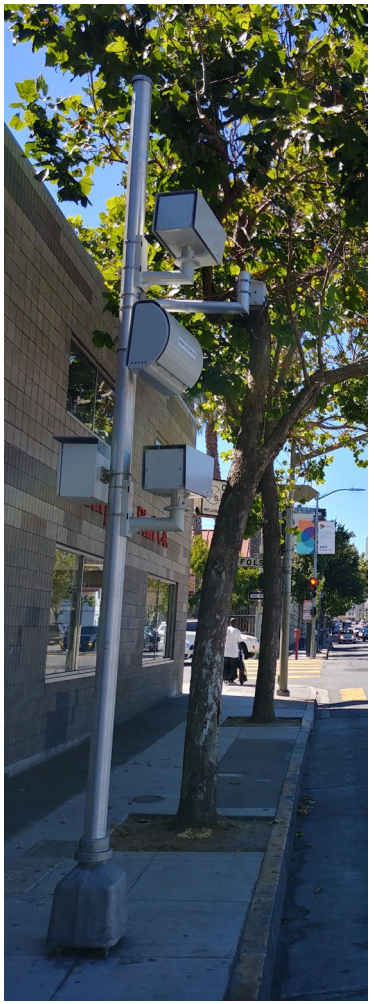
- Continued coordination with other pilot cities to share lessons learned and ensure consistency between California programs

- Regional education campaign to launch once all Bay Area programs are up and running

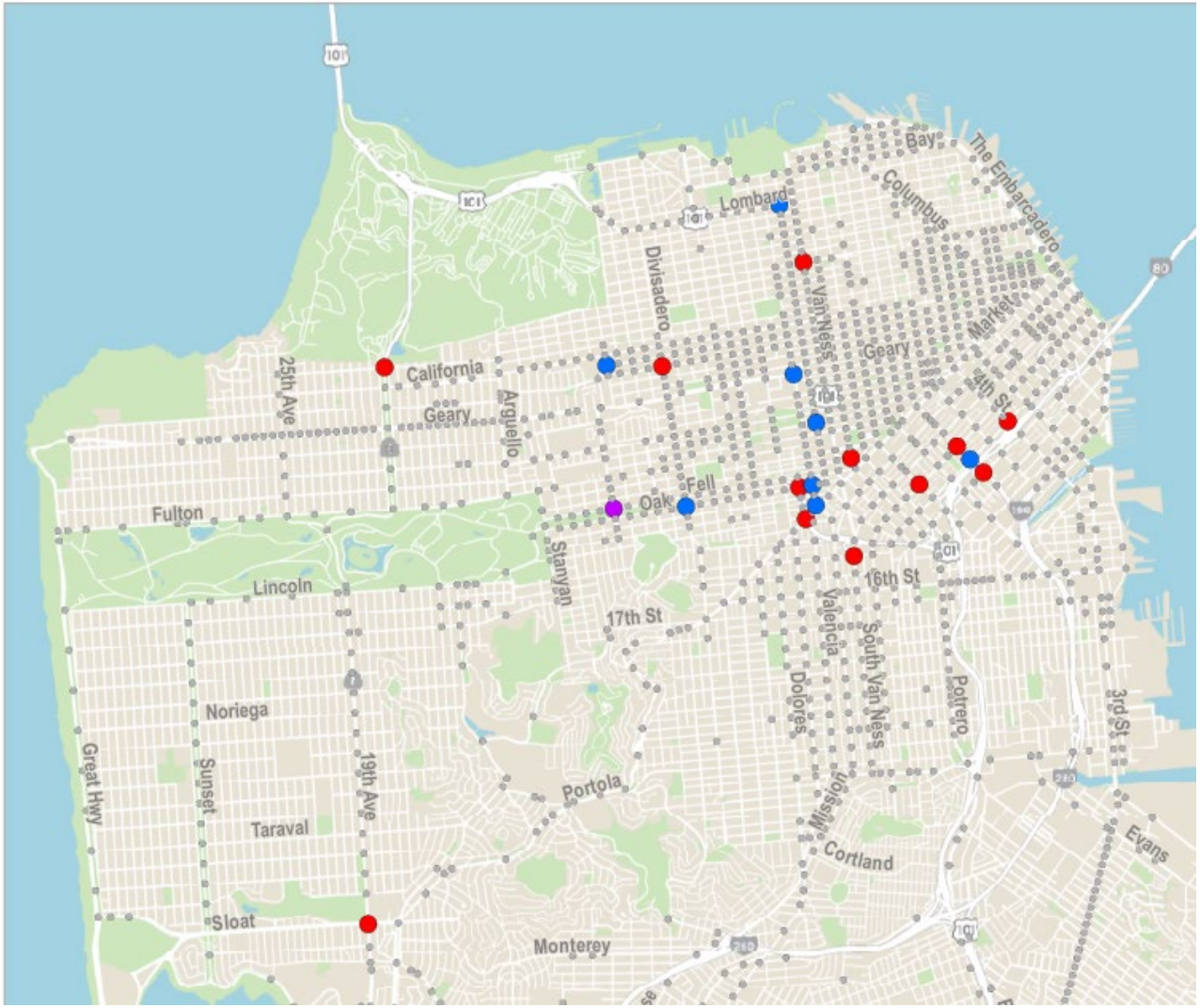
# Red Light Camera Enforcement

# Red Light Enforcement Background

- Red Light Camera (RLC) program started as a pilot in 1996
- Currently operate 19 intersection approaches, at 13 intersections (one approach enforces posted right turn prohibition)
- Expansion underway to add 6 new approaches with completion anticipated summer 2026
- Locations selected based on incidence of red-light violation crashes and meeting current engineering design standards
- Partnership with SFPD who reviews all photo evidence before citation is issued
- Issues $485 moving violation to driver



# Red Light Camera Locations



# Tools to Reduce Red Light Running

## Signal Timing

- SFMTA uses yellow lights longer that state minimums

| Posted Speed Limit | State Yellow Light | San Francisco Yellow Light |
|---|---|---|
| 25 MPH | 3.6 seconds | 4.0 seconds |

- All-red pause to help vehicles clear intersection after yellow light
- Coordination of adjacent signals to minimize stopping
- Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPI) create additional separation reducing broadsides

# Tools to Reduce Red Light Running

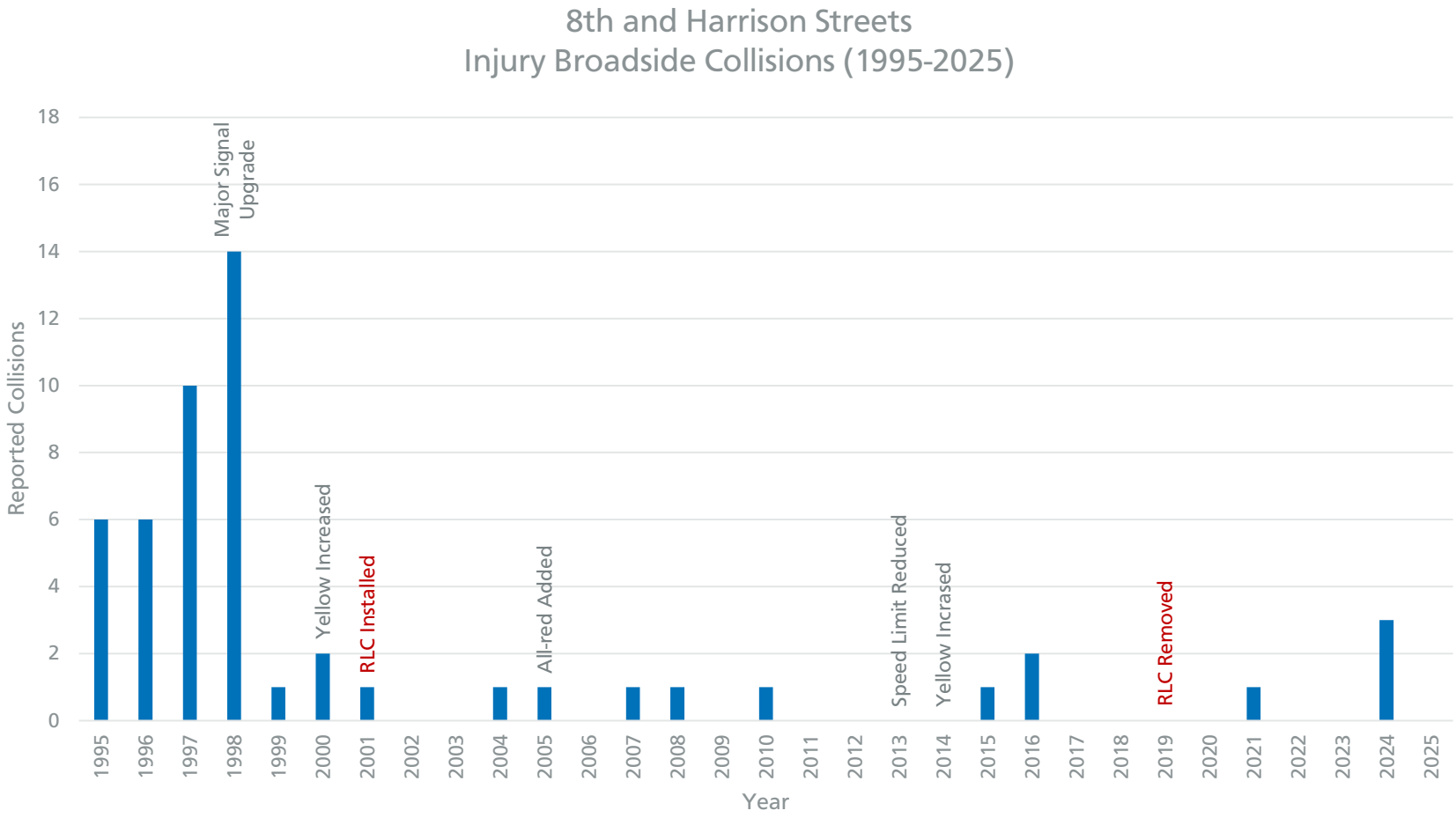
## Signal Visibility Upgrades

- SFMTA has long-standing capital program to upgrade older traffic signals

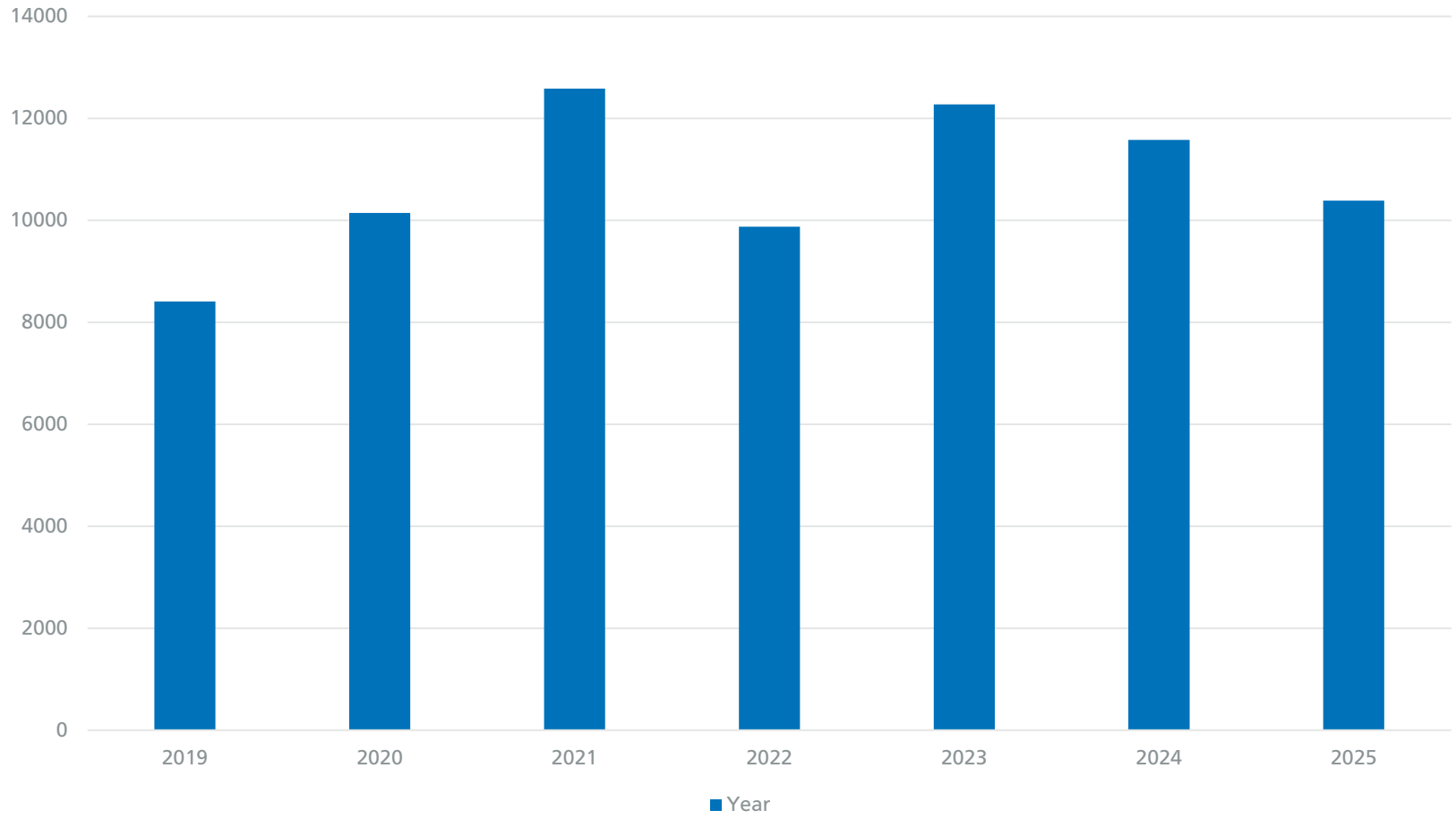
- Signal visibility improvements:
    - Increasing signal head sizes
    - Installing signals over the street (mast arms)
    - Improving location of signal indications

# Tools to Reduce Red Light Running

## Red Light Camera



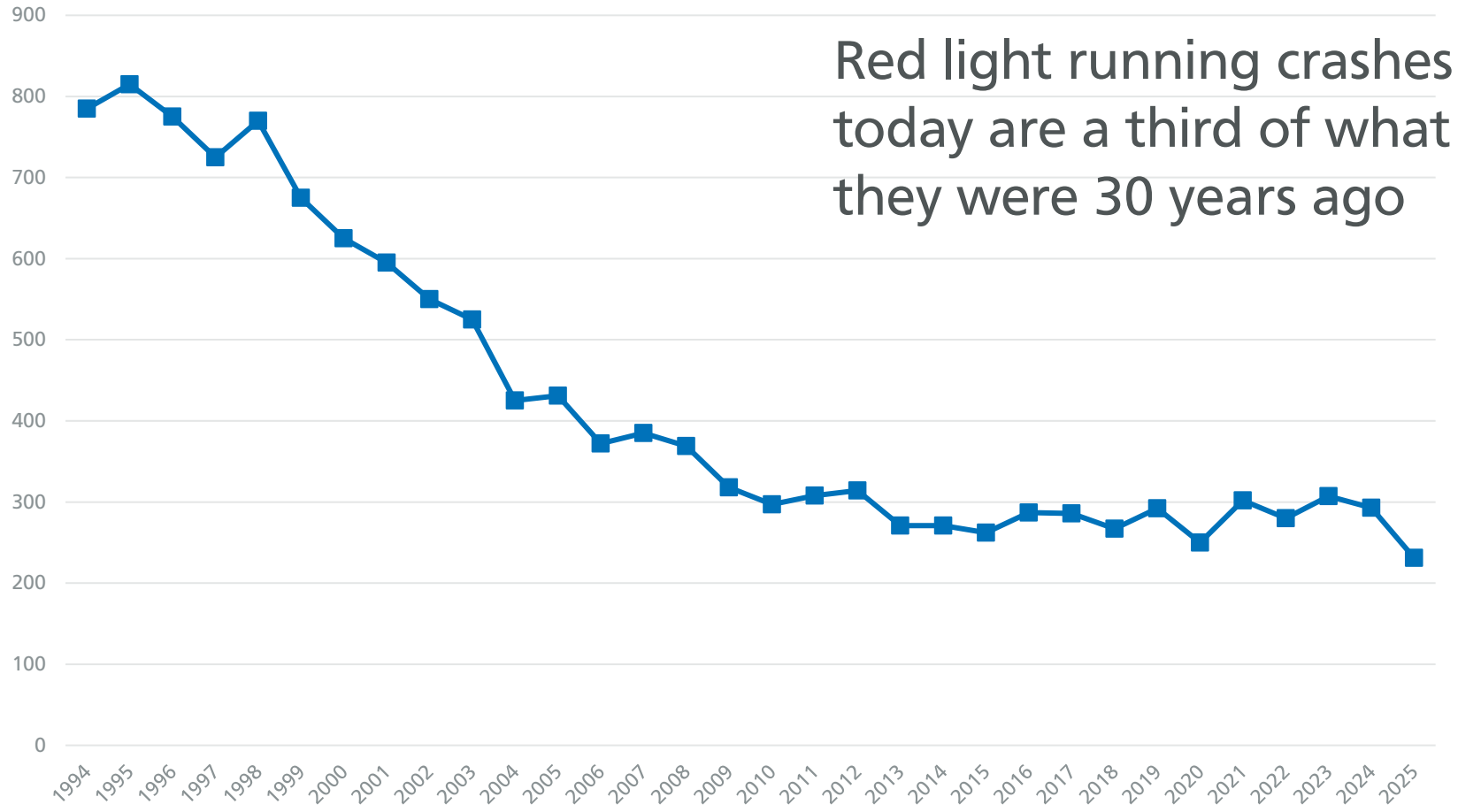
# RLC Citations Issued Annually




* System upgrade still in construction in 2019
** 2019 and 2020 data include warnings issued in the first 30 days of operation at each location

# Crashes due to Red Light Violations

## CVC 21453A violations 1994-2025




Red light running crashes today are a third of what they were 30 years ago

# Program Financials

The SFMTA does not expect significant net operating revenue from RLC program:

**Programs costs:**

- Vendor contract: $798,000/year
  (~$42k per approach )
- Labor cost for SFMTA program management:~$200,000/year

**Program budget:**

- Traffic School Fees ~$1.2m/ year *(In San Francisco, traffic school fees are collected in lieu of violation revenues)*

**Capital cost** to construct new RLC: ~$350,000 per approach


sfmta.com/speedcameras
sfmta.com/redlight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