

SUPPLEMENTAL REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS
Office of the City Clerk

City Council of the City of Napa

Regular Meeting

May 3, 2022

FOR THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NAPA

EVENING SESSION:

SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING

13. PUBLIC COMMENT:

- 1) Voicemail from Susan regarding the General Plan received on May 3, 2022. (on file in City Clerk's office)

14. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

14.A. Red Light Camera Program

- 1) Email from Charles Shinnamon received on April 28, 2022.
- 2) Email from Roderick Macdonald received on May 1, 2022.
- 3) Email from John V. Pinto received on May 1, 2022.
- 4) Email from Kara Vernor on behalf of Napa County Bicycle Coalition received on May 2, 2022.
- 5) Email from Maureen Trippe received on May 2, 2022.
- 6) Email from Robbyn Gibbs received on May 3, 2022.
- 7) Email from Steve Silva received on May 3, 2022.
- 8) Email from Brad Gates received on May 3, 2022.
- 9) Email with letter from Joelle Gallagher, on behalf of First 5 Napa County received on May 3, 2022.



**City Council Meeting
5/3/2022**

**Supplemental - Item 14.A.
From: City Staff**



Red Light Camera Enforcement

NPD Traffic Unit

May 3, 2022

Background

- Report is in response to request from Council.
- Nationwide in 2019 143,000 people were injured in running red light crashes
- In Napa there were 1,207 injury collisions between 2016 and 2020
- 11% were due to signal/sign violation
- Napa is the 2nd most dangerous city out of 105 similar sized cities for traffic safety



Napa Traffic Facts

- Population 79,000
- Monthly Traffic Estimates
 - 680,000 on Soscol Avenue
 - 520,000 on First Street
- Police Traffic unit disbanded in 2020
- Currently 2 motor officers and one motor sergeant
- 255 citations of all types issued in March
- Chance of getting a citation is .04%



Demand for enforcement

- Traffic enforcement is among the most common community driven complaints at the police department
- Consistently ranks high in surveys
- Slow Down Napa, a grass roots network of residents, supports enforcement
- Department is applying for a traffic grant, but department does not have the resources to meet the demand.



Red Light Cameras

- Cameras at high injury intersections
- Cameras capture red light violations
- Citation is issued by NPD employee
- Driver and judge has access to video
- Due process follows current procedure
 - No cost to contest
 - Can be via mail (written declaration)
 - Or court trial
- Issuer must appear in court



Red Light Cameras

- Studies show use of red light cameras reduce both red light running fatal crashes and all other types of fatal crashes
- Napa had red light program 2009-2017
- Crashes reduced considerably at all locations (25%-57% reduction)
- Halo effect reduced crashes citywide
- Moved to 15 out of 102 in State Ranking



Recommended Action

- Staff find red light cameras to be an effective and efficient tool to lower injury, fatal accidents and increase traffic safety citywide.
- Recommend Council direct staff to conduct a formal request for proposals and return with contract for approval.



Questions?



From: Charles Shinnamon [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, April 28, 2022 2:53 PM
To: Council Members <CouncilMembers@cityofnapa.org>; Clerk <clerk@cityofnapa.org>
Subject: Red Light Cameras

[EXTERNAL]

Mayor Sedgely and Council Members,

A brief note to encourage you to approve the use of red light cameras. We believe that they are effective and we were disappointed when they were discontinued in the past. Yes, some visitors wrote angry letters about the high fees they were charged for the infraction. Perhaps, if they had obeyed the law, they wouldn't have gotten that penalty.

Let's continue to work toward safe and quiet streets in our community!

Thank you,

Chuck and Felicia Shinnamon

Charles W. Shinnamon, P.E.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Clerk](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Item 14A of the Agenda, Red Light Camera Program, of the City Council Meeting of 5/3/22
Date: Sunday, May 01, 2022 1:02:06 PM

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

[EXTERNAL]

There is no doubt that red light running is a serious problem. Red light cameras are only part of a comprehensive traffic safety strategy which must include engineering and education.

There have been many studies carried out on red light running. One of the most comprehensive is, "Engineering Countermeasures to Reduce Red-Light Running," by Bonneson, Zimmerman and Brewer Texas Transportation Institute, Texas A&M University System August 2002 which can be found here:

<https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.604.7471&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

This study demonstrates there are many constructive passive engineering measures that can be taken to reduce red light running. One small example, the yellow interval duration is generally recognized as a key factor that affects the frequency of red light running. The paper indicates that a yellow interval of 4.2 seconds is sufficient for 85% of drivers. Napa should consider checking the yellow duration on all traffic lights on roadways with demonstrated patterns of violations or crashes.

Red light running by cars or trucks is even more deadly for motorcyclists or cyclists. The American Motorcycle Association has studied this problem separately and recommends that all traffic lights should be checked and adjusted for sensor actuation with motorcycles. Buttons should be installed for cyclists to press to activate traffic lights.

Thank you.

Roderick Macdonald

[REDACTED]
Napa CA 94558

Mobile: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [Liz Alessio](#)
To: [Clerk](#)
Subject: Fwd: Red Light Camera Council vote
Date: Sunday, May 01, 2022 11:20:51 PM

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From: John V. Pinto [REDACTED] >
Sent: Sunday, May 1, 2022 12:13:23 PM
To: Liz Alessio <lalessio@cityofnapa.org>
Subject: Red Light Camera Council vote

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[EXTERNAL]

Councilperson Liz,

I suggest we vote this down and look at other solutions.

Red Light Camera Fact Sheet

With properly posted speed limits and properly installed and timed traffic-control devices, there is no need for ticket cameras. They can actually make our roads less safe.

1) Ticket cameras do not improve safety Despite the claims of companies that sell ticket cameras and provide related services, there is no independent verification that photo enforcement devices improve highway safety, reduce overall accidents, or improve traffic flow. Believing the claims of companies that sell photo enforcement equipment or municipalities that use this equipment is like believing any commercial produced by a company that is trying to sell you something.

2) There is no certifiable witness to the alleged offense A picture may be worth a thousand words, but it may also take a thousand words to explain what the picture really means. Even in those rare instances where a law enforcement officer is overseeing a ticket camera, it is highly unlikely that the officer would recall the supposed violation. For all practical purposes, there is no "accuser" for motorists to confront, which is a constitutional right. There is no one who can personally testify to the circumstances of the alleged violation, and just because a camera unit was operating when it was set up does not mean it was operating properly when the picture was taken of any given vehicle.

3) Ticketed recipients are not adequately notified Most governments using ticket cameras send out tickets via first class mail. There is no guarantee that the accused motorist will even receive the ticket, let alone understand it and know how to respond. However, the government makes the assumption that the ticket was received. If motorists fail to pay, it is assumed that they did so on purpose, and a warrant may be issued for their arrest.

4) The driver of the vehicle is not positively identified Typically, the photos taken by these cameras do not identify the driver of the offending vehicle. The owner of the vehicle is mailed the ticket, even

if the owner was not driving the vehicle and may not know who was driving at the time. The owner of the vehicle is then forced to prove his or her innocence, often by identifying the actual driver who may be a family member, friend, or employee.

5) Ticket recipients are not notified quickly People may not receive citations until days or sometimes weeks after the alleged violation. This makes it very difficult to defend oneself because it would be hard to remember the circumstances surrounding the supposed violation. There may have been a reason that someone would be speeding or in an intersection after the light turned red. Even if the photo was taken in error, it may be very hard to recall the day in question.

6) These devices discourage the synchronization of traffic lights When red-light cameras are used to make money for local governments, those governments are unlikely to jeopardize this income source. This includes traffic light synchronization, which is the elimination of unneeded lights and partial deactivation of other traffic lights during periods of low traffic. When properly done, traffic light synchronization decreases congestion, pollution, and fuel consumption.

7) Cameras do not prevent most intersection accidents Intersection accidents are just that, accidents. Motorists do not casually drive through red lights. More likely, they do not see a given traffic light because they are distracted, impaired, or unfamiliar with their surroundings. Even the most flagrant of red-light violators will not drive blithely into a crowded intersection, against the light. Putting cameras on poles and taking pictures will not stop these kinds of accidents.

8) There are better alternatives to cameras If intersection controls are properly engineered, installed and operated, there will be very few red-light violations. From the motorist's perspective, government funds should be used on improving intersections, not on ticket cameras. Even in instances where cameras were shown to decrease certain types of accidents, they increased other accidents. Simple intersection and signal improvements can have lasting positive effects, without negative consequences. Cities can choose to make intersections safer with sound traffic engineering or make money with ticket cameras. Unfortunately, many pick money over safety.

9) Ticket camera systems are designed to inconvenience motorists Under the guise of protecting motorist privacy, the court or private contractor that sends out the tickets often refuses to include a copy of the photo to the accused vehicle owner. This is really because many of the photos do not clearly depict the driver or the driver is obviously not the vehicle owner. Typically, the vehicle owner is forced to travel to a courthouse or municipal building to even see the photograph, an obvious and deliberate inconvenience meant to discourage ticket challenges.

10) Taking dangerous drivers' pictures doesn't stop them Ticket cameras do not apprehend seriously impaired, reckless, or otherwise dangerous drivers, or get them off of the road.

Prepared by the National Motorists Association (www.motorists.org)

John V. Pinto, Napa resident

From: [Kara Vernor](#)
To: [Clerk](#)
Subject: Comments for City Council Meeting May 3, 2022 - Agenda item 14A Red Light Camera Program
Date: Monday, May 02, 2022 5:24:30 PM

[EXTERNAL]

Dear Councilmembers,

The Napa County Bicycle Coalition supports a return of the Red Light Camera Program and asks that you authorize the Napa Police Department to move forward in finding a vendor to provide the program.

With the rise in collisions during the pandemic and Napa's comparatively very high rate of collisions (as is noted in Napa Police Department's presentation), we believe this program will increase safety and reduce collisions at key intersections. Nationally the Safe Routes to Schools program is reconsidering "enforcement" as one of the "e's" of traffic safety, mostly due to the issues around enforcement and racial equity, but the automated aspects of redlight cameras greatly reduces the potential of human bias. Therefore, we believe the Red Light Camera Program can improve safety and reduce collisions while avoiding some of the potential downsides of enforcement.

Thank you for your consideration. As ever we are available to speak with you should you wish to discuss these comments.

Best regards,

Kara Vernor

--

Kara Vernor (she/her)
Executive Director

[Napa County Bicycle Coalition](#)

(707) 258-6318

[Celebrate Bike Month during the month of May!](#)

From: [Beth Painter](#)
To: [Clerk](#)
Subject: Fwd: How to Stop Speeding Drivers? Scare Them
Date: Monday, May 02, 2022 5:05:50 PM

Begin forwarded message:

From: Maureen Trippe <[REDACTED]>
Subject: How to Stop Speeding Drivers? Scare Them
Date: May 2, 2022 at 3:26:45 PM PDT
To: Bernie Narvaez <bnarvaez@cityofnapa.org>, Beth Painter <bp@bethpainter.com>, Jennifer Gonzales <jgonzales@cityofnapa.org>, Julie Lucido <jlucido@cityofnapa.org>, Liz Alessio <lalessio@cityofnapa.org>, Mary Luros <mary@maryluros.com>, Scott Sedgley <ssedgley1@yahoo.com>, Steve Potter <spotter@cityofnapa.org>
Cc: Joyce Stavert <[REDACTED]>

Hi, everyone,
Just a quick note to share this article from the New York Times :)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/02/nyregion/nyc-speeding-traffic-deaths.html>

It could be good timing for a public education campaign for traffic safety to support red light camera enforcement and the recent action to lower speed limits on certain streets. Perhaps this is something that NVTa or the City's PR team can take on.

At another time, we'd like to talk with you about the distinction between traffic calming to curb speeding in residential neighborhoods and these traffic safety efforts. They are similar, but not the same.

All the best,
Maureen
--

Maureen C. Trippe
[REDACTED]

From: [Beth Painter](#)
To: [Clerk](#)
Subject: Fwd: Red light cameras
Date: Tuesday, May 03, 2022 8:36:06 AM

Begin forwarded message:

From: robbyn gibbs <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Red light cameras
Date: May 3, 2022 at 7:19:34 AM PDT
To: bpainter@cityofnapa.org

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[EXTERNAL]

NO RED LIGHT CAMERAS.

The problem is whoever is programming the lights on Trancas and Lincoln as well as other main streets.

I drive for a living and routinely use these routes. The lights should be timed so we can get every green light. Currently we get every red light.

Robbyn Gibbs

From: [Beth Painter](#)
To: [Clerk](#)
Subject: Fwd: Red Light Cameras
Date: Tuesday, May 03, 2022 9:52:39 AM

Begin forwarded message:

From: Steve Silva <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Red Light Cameras
Date: May 3, 2022 at 9:44:27 AM PDT
To: Scott Sedgley <SSedgley@cityofnapa.org>, "lalessio@cityofnapa.org" <lalessio@cityofnapa.org>, "mluros@cityofnapa.org" <mluros@cityofnapa.org>, "bpainter@cityofnapa.org" <bpainter@cityofnapa.org>, "bnevaez@cityofnapa.org" <bnevaez@cityofnapa.org>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

[EXTERNAL]

Good Morning Members of the City Council,

I am imploring you to reinstate the red light cameras in our City! I realize that they were somewhat controversial and tickets were expensive, but in a previous email to Mayor Scott and Julie Lacido, I expressed my continued outrage of the way people are driving in our City. The lack of traffic cops has only exacerbated what was started during the pandemic when it was announced that basically there was no enforcement due to either the virus itself or budgetary issues.

I am pleased that at least there are apparently 2-1/2 positions now, which is a good start, along with the new traffic enforcement signage. However, that, along with slower speed limits will not alone curb all the red light runners I see on a daily basis. It's a miracle that no one has been seriously injured or killed yet.

Previously, when we had the cameras in place, I watched the intersection on Imola Ave and Soscol (my business is in the Corporate Park) slowly but surely get to a point where red light runners were minimal.

Assuming the NVR is correct and you proceed, I assume your Traffic Division or someone will recommend how many and where they will be as traffic patterns may have changed since then, but hopefully Imola/Soscol and 3rd/Soscol are priorities.

Thank you for what you do for our community and for reading this.

Sincerely,

Steve Silva

Steve Silva, President
Steve Silva Plumbing Inc.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Clerk](#)
Subject: Citizen Input on Agenda item 141-2022 - Red Light Cameras
Date: Tuesday, May 03, 2022 1:17:04 PM

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[EXTERNAL]

I'd like to urge the Napa City Council to not reconsider implementing a red light camera program in the city of Napa. I'd like to point to a previous council's decision to get rid of the program acknowledging that it's not popular and may not be the deterrent that supporters had hoped it would be. Reviewing the police chiefs presentation shows only boiler plate justifications straight out of red light camera operators marketing materials and generalized statistics that don't prove either way that a red light program is needed or would meet the stated objectives. Slow Down Napa's objectives of making our roads safer won't be served by a handful of cameras at our busiest intersections. We should be considering traffic calming solutions and signal timing before we jump to imposing hefty fines that only make the red light camera operators rich at the expense of Napa citizens and visitors.

It's obvious nobody, including the police department, has really spent much time on this and I think stopping this now is the best option for Napa.

Brad Gates
City of Napa Resident & Business Owner



May 4, 2022

Dear Mayor Sedgley and Councilmembers

On behalf of First 5 Napa County, I'd like to support the City Staff's recommendation to pursue a contract for a red-light program in the City of Napa.

As stated in the staff report, Napa is the 2nd most dangerous city out of 105 similar sized cities for traffic safety. The number of severe road injuries is higher in Napa than the state average. In the past 4 years we have had 166 pedestrian crashes, 196 bicyclists' crashes and 18 total deaths.

Napa's previous red-light program, which ran from 2009-2017, was successful in reducing crashes at all locations, and even reduced crashes at intersections where the red-light program was not operating.

Children, the elderly, and disabled persons are at greatest risk when crossing at intersections. Please take action to protect our community, make our roads safer for walking and biking (and driving), and re-instate the red-light program in Napa.

Thank you for everything you do to promote a safe and healthy Napa!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joelle", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Joelle Gallagher
Executive Director
First 5 Napa County