



Legislation Text

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COUNCIL ITEM OF SPECIAL INTEREST: RED LIGHT CAMERAS

Staff Contact and Presenter: Rick St. John, Chief of Police

Purpose and Policy Guidance

This item is follow up to a Council Item of Special Interest brought forward by Councilmember Lauren Tolmachoff at the February 21, 2017 Council Workshop. Councilmember Tolmachoff requested information regarding the possibility of red light cameras in the City of Glendale to help prevent accidents at dangerous intersections. Staff is seeking guidance from Council regarding moving forward with a red light camera study and which option will best meet the needs of the study.

Background

Traffic safety and enforcement are top priorities for the Glendale Police Department. Accident data, as well as a 12-hour study conducted in October 2016 has shown that at intersections with traffic lights, speed and inattention contribute to red light related accidents. A three-year historical review of collisions from 2014 through 2016 determined that within the top ten (10) major intersections in the City of Glendale there were 2,258 collisions. Over that same timeframe, the following was noted:

- There were 74 fatal collisions
- There was a 72% increase in fatal collisions
- There were ten (10) red-light related fatalities

Analysis

If Council provides consensus to move forward, a red light camera study will be conducted in the City of Glendale. There are two options available to complete this study and staff is seeking Council's guidance.

The first option involves the Police Department choosing a 3-month period with relatively similar driving incidents per month at a specific problematic intersection. The first and last months would be monitored using routine enforcement, while the middle month would have a red light camera system installed. The Police Department would then measure the impact of the middle month with a camera system installed against the first month with no camera system, as well as the lagging effects of the removed camera system into the last month. Under this model, there is no cost to the City, but using a red light camera system for a 1-month period of time may not be a long enough to accurately measure the impact.

The second option involves having a red light camera system installed at an intersection, using a second intersection with a similar number of traffic incidents as the comparative intersection. Utilizing information

from the one-day 12-hour study, the Police Department has identified sets of paired intersections that have similar attributes (traffic density, commercial/residential zoning, and accident statistics) for the controlled study. The potential cost to the City for this option is approximately \$14,000, but that fee would be waived if the City chose to keep the red light camera system at the intersection and enter into an agreement with the private company providing the equipment.

The goal of the red light camera study would be to provide data to either support or refute the effects of red light photo enforcement at intersections with traffic lights and determine if red light cameras can change driving behavior. Staff time will be needed to assist with camera installation at the identified intersection. The scope of work should be completed in approximately five (5) to six (6) months.

Community Benefit/Public Involvement

The Glendale Police Department promotes roadway safety and encourages motorists to drive safely. If data collected shows that red light cameras can substantially reduce red light violations, future use of the cameras at intersections with traffic lights in City of Glendale may reduce roadway crashes and prevent crash-related deaths and injuries.

Budget and Financial Impacts

Whichever option Council feels is best suited for the red light camera study will determine the cost to the City.