



# CITY OF IOWA CITY COUNCIL ACTION REPORT

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August 6, 2024

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Ordinance amending Title 9, entitled “Motor Vehicles and Traffic,” Chapter 11, entitled “Traffic Cameras, Drones, and License Plate Recognition Systems,” Section 2, entitled “Definitions,” to allow Transportation Services to use automatic license plate recognition systems or devices for parking purposes, and to clarify the definition of “Automatic Traffic Surveillance System or Device.” (Second Consideration)

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Prepared By:	Eric R. Goers, City Attorney
Reviewed By:	Geoff Fruin, City Manager
Fiscal Impact:	None
Staff Recommendation:	Approval
Commission Recommendations:	N/A
Attachments:	<a href="#">Ordinance</a>

## **Executive Summary:**

Under the City's present ordinance, passed in 2013 during a time the City was considering deploying red light and speed cameras, the City is limited in utilizing license plate reader systems. As technology has advanced, and parking apps have grown in popularity with the public, the City has migrated to a system that utilizes license plate readers for the parking ramps and other parking purposes, greatly aiding efficiency. The amendment also clarifies that cameras installed and maintained by the Streets and Traffic Engineering Division of the Public Works Department are excluded from the definitions of "Automatic License Plate Recognition System" and "Automatic traffic surveillance system of device."

## **Background / Analysis:**

The ordinance at issue was passed following a petition initiative which, under the City Charter, cannot be repealed for two years. Eleven years have passed since adoption of the ordinance, so amendments are permissible. The prohibition on red light and speed cameras would remain in effect following passage of this amendment. The amendment also clarifies the acceptable use of footage from traffic engineering cameras to aid in law enforcement investigations. Traffic engineering cameras are located at signalized intersections throughout the community and serve the primary purpose of enduring orderly operation of the roadway network (e.g, remote troubleshooting of signals, observation of snow and flash flood conditions, etc.). Periodically, footage from traffic engineering cameras is utilized to assist in law enforcement investigations and have been critical in solving a variety of serious cases including assaults and homicides.