

Red-light cameras delayed, again

BY SEAN PEARCE
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York Region's new red-light camera enforcement program is expected to be up and running later this month.

Originally, the region planned to have the cameras operational by late June or early July, but installation of the hardware and finalizing the necessary agreements pushed the target date to late August/early September.

The region has now commenced testing of the equipment, to ensure images captured will be usable, and expects that process to be completed in two weeks or so, project manager Gregg Loane said.

Agreements with Toronto's processing centre, and Traffipax to install, operate and maintain the cameras are signed, Mr. Loane said, although approval by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation of the joint processing centre's enforcement officers remains outstanding.

The gross operating revenue for the program over the next two years is anticipated to be \$3.7 million, while the region expects it will take in about \$4.5 million in fines during the same period.

Earlier this summer, Mr. Loane

said he anticipates there will be fewer tickets issued than expected due to the late start, but he doubted the impact will be significant.

York Region officials have stressed the initiative is about safety rather than revenue.

The goal is to reduce the frequency of right angle, or "t-bone" collisions at intersections around the region, they added.

But that argument has not sat well with some.

The United States-based National Motorists Association, for example, has been critical of the deployment of red-light camera systems for any purpose.

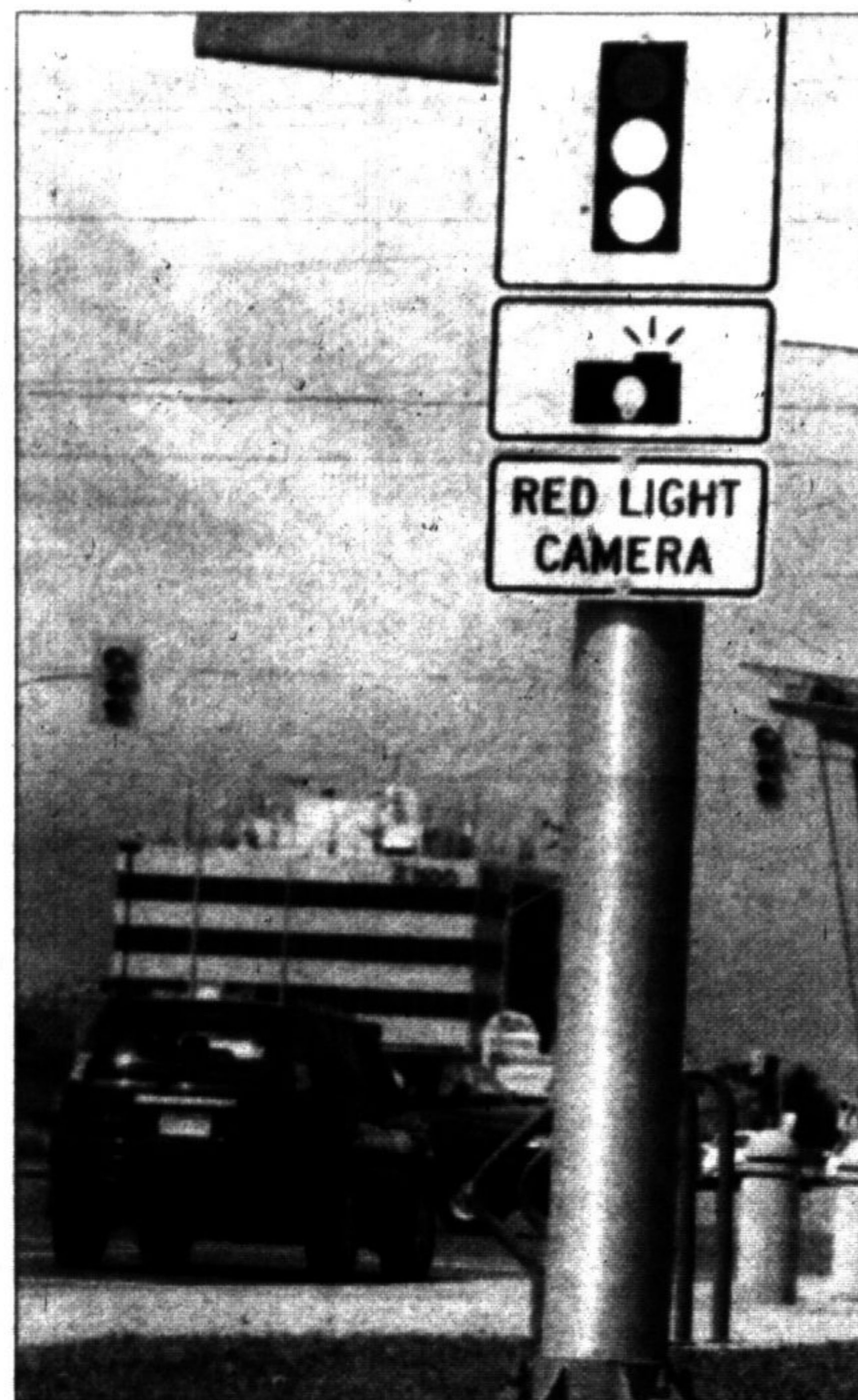
The association disputes the accuracy of studies touting the benefits of red-light cameras and alleges many are funded by manufacturers of the devices.

"The No. 1 thing to look at is increasing the duration of yellow lights at intersections," association spokesperson John Bowman said.

"That will lead to an improvement in safety, but most won't do that, because it reduces the amount of revenue the city receives."

He cited examples of American cities toying with the signal-timing to boost fine revenue.

For information, go to york.ca



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Signs and equipment ready, but cameras not quite yet at York Region intersections.

CRIME

Warning issued after sex assault on Stouffville train

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Riders are being asked to keep their eyes open for a suspect in a sex assault case in Markham.

On Aug. 15 at about 8 a.m. a 20-year-old woman boarded a Stouffville Line GO Transit train destined for Toronto and sat in an upper cabin.

When the train arrived at the Mount Joy station — the train had already been to the Stouffville and Lincolnville stations, both in Stouffville — a man came and sat directly beside her despite many seats being available.

He proceeded to touch the victim inappropriately until she disembarked at Unionville station in Markham. The woman was not physically injured during the incident.

The suspect is described as 6 ft. tall with a heavy build, brown skin, possibly South Asian, short dark hair, spiked



SUSPECT SKETCH: A woman said she was attacked on the Stouffville GO train.

style, brown eyes, a gap between his two upper front teeth, wearing black dress pants, a black suit jacket and white sneakers with a light blue star and a stripe on the side.

He was carrying a black backpack with red lettering on the side.

Anyone with information is asked to call the YRP Sexual Assault Unit at 1-866- 876-5423, ext. 7071.


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Attend the meeting to find out more - your opinion counts!

Tuesday, September 10th, 2013 - 7:00 - 8:00

at the Chalet at Bruce's Mill Conservation Area,
3291 Stouffville Road, Stouffville

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