

The Volt Vette Project

Chapter 4

I See The Light (Bulb)

I want to keep the Corvette operational as long as possible so I start the removal process by pulling the after market amplifier and 4 of the 6 speakers.

Next, I remove the instrument panel surround exposing the 4 tiny bulbs that light the panel at night, 2 are burnt out. Taking apart the rooftop brake light housing, I find it too has 2 of its 4 bulbs burnt out. Time to visit the Chevy dealer.

The parts man looks at his computer. His face tells me I'm going to take a hit, I may have to pay two dollars for a ten cent bulb.

Wrong! GM wants \$21. for each brake light bulb and \$42. for each instrument bulb!

I check with Checker Auto Parts. They have the brake light bulbs I need for \$10. each. Ouch!

I could go broke buying bulbs!



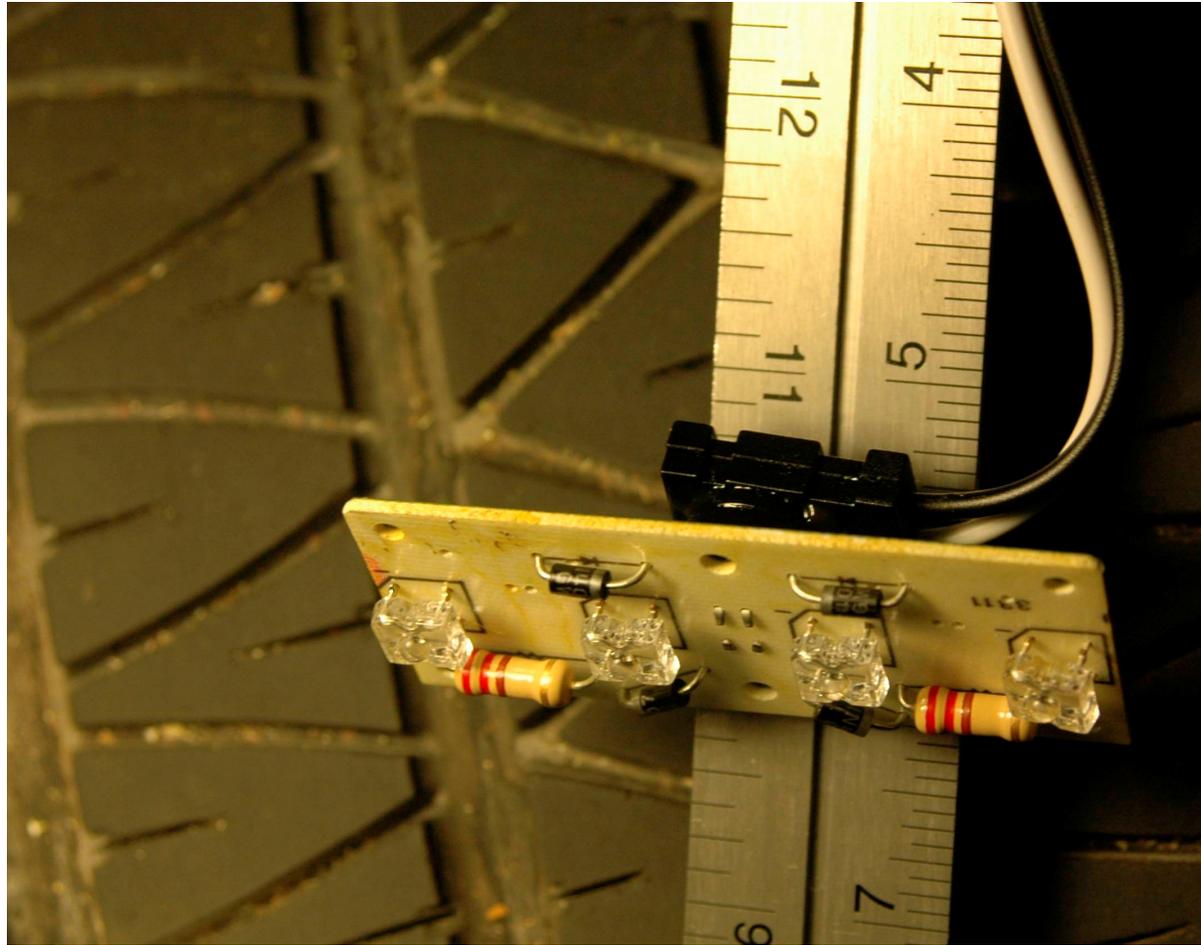
I put on my thinking cap and think about the Grand Plan. Phase one: Get the Vette Converted to Electric Power and on the road.

Phase two: Test and Improve. 2a. Reduce overall of weight of car 2b. Reduce electric draw. 2c. Reduce aerodynamic drag.

2b or not 2b? When in doubt give a shout, to Lee Hart. Since I hope to replace all the incandescent jelly bean size bulbs with LEDs during phase 2b, Lee advises me to avoid outrageously expensive jelly beans and go directly to energy saving light emitting diodes. Sounds like a money saving idea to me.

I buy a LED tail light for \$11. and take it apart. Inside is a circuit board holding 4 red LEDs.

It looked small enough to fit in the brake light housing, but it turned out to be a fraction of an inch too wide!



I had worked the best part of 3 days on this problem with little to show for it. If at first, second, and third, you don't succeed, move to a new problem. I took the Vette to my local garage and had the Freon recycled out of the AC system. I then parked the car very carefully in my garage, knowing the next time the Corvette hit the road it would be a very different, very clean machine.

