

Red-Light Cameras

SAFETY COMMITTEE UPDATE

APRIL 6TH, 2026

Policy Referral

□ Policy Question

- Should the City of Charlotte pursue the reinstatement of a red-light camera program?

□ Committee Charge

- Review data and information on the effectiveness of red-light cameras as a tool to reduce serious injury and fatal collisions on our high injury network
- Review legal interpretations associated with red-light cameras and related constitutional requirements governing cost-sharing models and recovery of municipal operating costs associated with such enforcement programs
- Evaluate the estimated net cost of implementing/operating a red-light camera program.
- Based on the legal and financial review, make any applicable recommendations to Council for consideration.

North Carolina Red-Light Camera History

1997	1998	1999-2006	2006	2016	2024	2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enabling State Legislation Passed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Charlotte Implements <i>Safelight</i> program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Camera systems deployed at 24 signals• <i>Speed Cameras</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City Council Suspends Charlotte's Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NC General Assembly passes S.L. 2016-64 (Local Act for Greenville*)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NC Supreme Court upholds Greenville's program and S.L. 2016-64	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Greensboro begins the process to reinstitute a program

Enabling Legislation and Ordinances

□ North Carolina Constitution

- Article IX Education - Sec. 7 County school fund

□ North Carolina General Statutes

- § 160A-300.1. Use of traffic control photographic systems.
- Session Law 2001-286 Senate Bill 243
 - *Local Act for municipalities in Wake County and the City of Concord – defined clear proceeds.*
- Session Law 2014-84 House Bill 1151
 - *Local act for Fayetteville allowed interlocal agreement between the City and Cumberland County Schoolboard*
- Session Law 2016-64 House Bill 1126
 - *Local Act for Greenville – Increased fines and allowance for an interlocal agreement between the City and Pitt County Schoolboard*

□ City of Charlotte Ordinances

- Chapter 14, Article IV. – Operation of Vehicles Division 3. – Traffic Control Photographic Systems

Red-Light Camera Program Results

□ Charlotte Safelight Program Results (1998-2006)

- Angle crashes decreased by 37% across all *SafeLight* intersections
- Angle crashes decreased by 60% on camera approaches
- All crashes decreased by 19% on camera approaches
- Rear-end crashes increased by 4% on camera approaches

□ National Results

- 2025 Insurance Institute for Highway Safety study
 - 20% reduction in all injury collisions at camera equipped intersections
 - 29% reduction in angle injury collisions at camera equipped intersections
 - Houston TX experienced a 23% increase at camera equipped intersections when their program was ended in 2011

Charlotte Signalized Intersections

- **Charlotte currently has more than 1,000 signalized intersections.**
- **Between 2020 and 2025 at signalized intersections**
 - 63 total fatal and serious injury collisions
 - 2,738 injury collisions
 - 2,732 property damage collisions
- **“Disregarded Traffic Signal” collisions make up 2%-3% of all collisions annually**
 - This Category made up 8%(12) of all fatal and serious injury collisions in 2025

Potential Program Funding Options/Costs

□ **Option 1 – City Funded Program using existing statutory approvals**

- City pays all program expenses upfront.
- City of Charlotte provides 90% (\$45.00) of each citation to Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
- City of Charlotte retains 10% (\$5.00) of each citation for program expenses

□ **Option 2 – Interlocal Program requiring General Assembly action**

- City provides all citation revenue to Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
- City invoices Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools actual program costs and is reimbursed.

□ **Preliminary cost estimates are in the \$4,000-\$5,000 per month/location.**

- 10 intersections equipped with cameras on a single approach would cost approximately \$600,000 annually.

Next Steps

- **Additional data and lessons learned from other communities**
- **Provide additional details on the City of Greensboro program**
- **Gather additional cost data for red light programs**