Why Red Light Cameras?

On an average day, five people will be seriously injured or killed in a traffic-related crash on Chicago’s streets.

Each year, Chicago has approximately 80,000 crashes:

- 20,000 resulting in injuries
- 130 resulting in fatalities

**Vision Zero Chicago**

Is the commitment and the plan to eliminate death and serious injuries from traffic crashes on Chicago’s streets by 2026. As a *Vision Zero* city, Chicago follows an international movement that incorporates policies, technologies, partnerships, and data-driven practices to make our streets safer. The *Vision Zero* Chicago Action Plan presents a method for targeting resources to improve roadway design, enforce dangerous driving behaviors, and inspire a culture of safety through education and outreach through 2019.

**Three-Year Action Plan Goals**

- Reduce death from traffic crashes 20% by 2020.
- Reduce serious injury from traffic crashes 35% by 2020.

*Crashes caused by red light running are more common than any other crash type and more likely to result in serious injury or death.*

A 2013 national study revealed that crashes involving drivers who ran red lights and other traffic controls were the most common type of urban crash (22%) in the US; injuries occurred in 39% of these crashes.

Source: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety
Red Light Camera Program

Red Light Cameras

Red light camera enforcement has been credited with several important benefits, including:

• Minimizing dangerous behaviors
• Reducing fatal crashes
• Improving traffic flow

Impact of Cameras in Chicago

In early 2017, Northwestern University Transportation Center completed a review of Chicago’s red light camera system and concluded that the system has led to a 10% reduction in injury-producing crashes and a 19% reduction in the most dangerous angle and turning crashes. They also documented a “spillover effect,” meaning crashes were reduced at intersections that do not have camera enforcement.
How the Red Light Camera Program Works: How a Potential Violation Is Captured

1. The camera system tracks the status of the traffic light signal and the position and speed of vehicles approaching the intersection.

2. If the traffic signal is red and the minimum red time grace period has elapsed prior to the violation point, the system captures the event with:
   - Two digital pictures (see below)
   - A 12-second video

* Starting on March 20, 2017, this time was increased from 0.1 to 0.3 seconds.
How the Red Light Camera Program Works: How a Ticket Is Issued

3 Each violation is manually reviewed twice:
   - First, by the red light camera vendor, Xerox
   - Second, by the City Department of Finance for official determination

Reviewers manually zoom in to the image, crop a photo of the license plate, and record the plate number for violation issuance.

4 If the violation is determined to be valid, a violation notice is mailed to the address to which the license plate is registered. Fines are currently set at $100.

5 All red light camera tickets may be contested through the Office of Administrative Hearings.
Northwestern University team developed a set of criteria to evaluate the safety impact of red light cameras at intersections. The criteria for evaluation are:

- Number of Angle, Turning, & Rear End crashes at the intersection
- Volume of vehicular traffic
- The number of violators
- Other characteristics of the intersection.

### PROPOSED REMOVALS (8)
- The data showed that these intersections registered high numbers of issued violations but no corresponding reduction in crash rates.
- Suggesting locations not benefiting from cameras and better placed elsewhere.

### PROPOSED NEW LOCATIONS (6)
- Score high on the Northwestern criteria for anticipated safety benefits
- Has low or no rear-end injury crashes