

SUMMARY and FISCAL NOTE*

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** Note that the Summary and Fiscal Note describes the version of the bill or resolution as introduced; final legislation including amendments may not be fully described.*

1. BILL SUMMARY

Legislation Title: AN ORDINANCE establishing additional uses for automated traffic safety cameras to increase safety; amending Sections 11.31.090, 11.31.121, and 11.50.570 of the Seattle Municipal Code.

Summary and Background of the Legislation: This legislation amends SMC provisions regarding use of automated traffic safety cameras to implement several new provisions authorized by the state legislature in 2022 with passage of the Move Ahead Washington transportation package. These provisions allow for 24/7 speed limit enforcement in school walk areas, park and hospital zones, and on additional streets – up to 1 camera per 10,000 population – that have either 1) been identified as a priority location in a local road safety plan that a city has submitted to WSDOT and where other speed reduction measures are not feasible or have not been sufficiently effective at reducing travel speed; 2) have a significantly higher rate of collisions than the city average in a period of at least 3 years and other speed reduction measures are not feasible or have not been sufficiently effective at reducing travel speed; or 3) is in an area designated by ordinance as a street racing zone.

For any of the new classes of full-time speed enforcement authorized by the Move Ahead Washington Act, 50% of the revenues in excess of the cost of installing, operating, and maintaining cameras must be remitted to the state’s Cooper Jones Active Transportation Safety Account. Currently, the remaining half of block the box and transit lane proceeds support improvements to curb ramps, accessible pedestrian signals and other improvements that support equitable access and mobility for persons with disabilities. Twenty percent of red light camera, and most school zone speed camera revenues, are appropriated to the School Safety Traffic and Pedestrian Improvement Fund, which helps fund investments intended to improve school traffic and pedestrian safety and directly related infrastructure projects; pedestrian, bicycles, and driver education campaigns; and installation, administrative, enforcement, operations, and maintenance costs associated with the school zone fixed automated cameras. Remaining red light camera proceeds are appropriated to the general fund unless otherwise appropriated by Council.

The City does not expect to see any revenues from cameras deployed under this legislation until mid-2024 and, therefore, this bill does not appropriate or establish a policy for use of the City’s share of net proceeds from newly authorized speed enforcement programs, though use of these funds could be the subject of future legislation.

2. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Does this legislation create, fund, or amend a CIP Project? Yes No

3. SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Does this legislation amend the Adopted Budget? Yes No

Does the legislation have other financial impacts to The City of Seattle that are not reflected in the above, including direct or indirect, short-term or long-term costs?

Upfront startup costs associated with installing new cameras will ultimately depend on a variety of factors that are difficult to determine in advance of the requisite equity and traffic analysis and an implementation plan. However, for the block-the-box and transit-lane pilot, each camera cost roughly \$4,000 per month. Once citations start to be issued however, it is expected that the expanded enforcement program would be financially self-sustaining, and potentially revenue generating. The goal of any new camera deployments would be to reduce violations and so it is reasonable to expect a significant drop in the number of citations 6-12 months after each camera enters operation. Any necessary budget modifications and appropriations authority for this program would be included in future budget proposals.

Are there financial costs or other impacts of *not* implementing the legislation?

Reducing speeding and other traffic safety violations through automated enforcement should have indirect financial benefits to the City and to the many travelers, their loved ones and employers impacted on an ongoing basis by reducing crashes, including crashes that cause death and serious injuries.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

a. Does this legislation affect any departments besides the originating department?

Yes. Seattle Municipal Courts will have an increase in citations to process, track, and resolve resulting in an increase of labor hours. The Seattle Police Department will see an increase in the number of photo enforcement cases officers will need to review. Any increase in labor costs to SPD would be covered through an existing camera enforcement agreement.

b. Is a public hearing required for this legislation?

No

c. Is publication of notice with *The Daily Journal of Commerce* and/or *The Seattle Times* required for this legislation?

No

d. Does this legislation affect a piece of property?

No

e. Please describe any perceived implication for the principles of the Race and Social Justice Initiative. Does this legislation impact vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities? What is the Language Access plan for any communications to the public?
SDOT's Transportation Equity Workgroup and RSJI Change Team have raised concerns about inequitable deployment and impacts of automated enforcement. While the impacts of traffic violence are felt most acutely in communities of color, traffic enforcement of all kinds appears to be disproportionately concentrated in the parts of the city with higher concentrations of BIPOC residents and the punitive impacts are felt more harshly for lower income residents. At the same time, camera-based enforcement can be less-biased than police-based enforcement without the same opportunities for violent escalation. However, there are several existing and potential means to reduce the inequitable impacts of camera-based enforcement that do exist, including requiring issuance of warnings for first violations, more deliberate deployment of cameras in an equitable manner based on public input, especially from BIPOC communities, reduced or income-based fines. Seattle Municipal Court will offer service in-lieu of fees or reduced fines for those experiencing financial hardship. Dedicating proceeds to safer infrastructure in BIPOC neighborhoods may also begin to make up for the historic inequities in investment that have resulted in higher crash rates in SE Seattle and other parts of the city with higher proportions of people of color compared with whiter parts of the city with far lower traffic deaths and serious injuries.

f. Climate Change Implications

1. Emissions: Is this legislation likely to increase or decrease carbon emissions in a material way?

Reduced speeds does correlate with reduced fuel use and therefore with lower carbon emissions. So camera speed enforcement can equate to reduced greenhouse gas emissions as well as reductions in air contaminants.

2. Resiliency: Will the action(s) proposed by this legislation increase or decrease Seattle's resiliency (or ability to adapt) to climate change in a material way? If so, explain. If it is likely to decrease resiliency in a material way, describe what will or could be done to mitigate the effects.

N/A

g. If this legislation includes a new initiative or a major programmatic expansion: What are the specific long-term and measurable goal(s) of the program? How will this legislation help achieve the program's desired goal(s)?

Automated enforcement, especially with regard to speed limit enforcement should result in fewer people driving at high speeds in areas where traditional forms of speed enforcement have not been effective and, therefore, result in reduced rates of crashes, reduced traffic deaths and reduced rates of serious injuries from crashes.