



Joseph M. Ferguson  
Inspector General

## OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL *City of Chicago*

740 N. Sedgwick Street, Suite 200  
Chicago, Illinois 60654  
Telephone: (773) 478-7799  
Fax: (773) 478-3949

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CONTACT: Rachel Leven, (773) 478-0534

### **OIG Reviews Red-Light Camera Program**

Recent articles in the *Chicago Tribune* have raised important questions about the Red-Light Camera program both past and present. In response to those reports, both Mayor Emanuel and Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) Commissioner Scheinfeld have requested that OIG conduct a review of the program. Both requests were unconditional in asking OIG to look at the program in a fashion the Office believes would best serve the public interest. In addition, OIG received a written request from aldermen to review the program. The aldermanic request is similarly open but also identifies specific questions of interest to the City Council that it hopes might be answered through an OIG review.

The legitimacy of any City program depends on public confidence that it is being operated fairly and effectively. Establishing this trust requires,

- accounting publicly for how the program has operated in the past;
- assuring that any individual inequities arising from past operational issues, when present, are redressed;
- assuring that the system going forward is operating within the law and according to the terms of the contract, and that CDOT immediately identifies and expeditiously addresses issues that may arise; and
- full public transparency concerning the operation of the system.

OIG is prioritizing an immediate review of the program in an effort to shed light on the first component. The Office has received, and expects going forward, the full cooperation and assistance of the City in that effort. OIG will publicly report the findings from its review of past activities, along with any recommendations for how the City, working with the new vendor, can assure the program operates effectively and fairly in the future. If the review reveals any indication of purposeful manipulation or unlawful conduct, OIG will take action to investigate and will work with the appropriate prosecutorial authorities.

“In the wake of recent media reports, the public’s questions regarding the Red-Light Camera program are understandable,” noted Inspector General Joseph Ferguson. “A multi-pronged approach is clearly needed to restore public confidence in this enforcement program. The Administration has separately announced steps it is taking to address concerns about past spikes and committed itself to the timely release of robust program data in the near future. In the

meantime, OIG will attempt to identify past program shortcomings, including any that may have allowed the citation spikes reported in the media, and it will report its findings and recommendations on how the City can manage the Red-Light Camera program more efficiently, fairly, and in a manner fully deserving of the public's trust.”

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