TOWN OF Herndon VIRGINIA

Town Council Work Session
Agenda Item 2.b.

Agenda Item: **Briefing on Leveraging Technology in Public Safety**

Meeting Date: November 5, 2025

Category: Discussion

Prepared by: Steven Pihonak, Chief of Police

Description:
The discussion will advise Council on technological advancements currently being integrated into Herndon Police Department (HPD) operations and will seek guidance and direction on the installation and operation of automated red light camera enforcement systems at designated intersections within the Town of Herndon.

Background:
This discussion is to advise the Council on the Herndon Police Department's (HPD) ongoing commitment to leveraging technology to enhance public safety, and seek the Council's direction on permitting the installation and operation of automated red light camera systems at designated intersections within the Town of Herndon. This initiative aligns with the Council's strategic plan to enhance public safety, modernize enforcement tools, and support multimodal transportation. By leveraging technology, the program aims to reduce red light violations, improve compliance with traffic signals, and is a force multiplier for traffic safety enforcement. A comprehensive public information campaign will accompany the launch to ensure transparency, community awareness, and support for safer streets that benefits drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, and all roadway users.

Timing Impact:
This item is being considered now in response to ongoing community concerns about intersection safety, recent traffic data indicating persistent red-light violations, and the Town's strategic commitment to proactive public safety measures. Advancing this discussion aligns with the Council's broader goals to leverage technology as a force multiplier, optimize officer deployment, and protect all roadway users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders. The timing also supports coordination with the upcoming Roadway Safety Action Plan and allows for a well-planned public information campaign ahead of potential implementation.

Strategic Focus Area:
Secure and Interconnected Community

Fiscal Impact:
No immediate fiscal impacts to adopt an ordinance allowing the use of red-light camera enforcement programs.

Under the proposed red light camera program, most contractors guarantee implementation will be cost-neutral or better for the Town of Herndon. This means that all expenses associated with equipment installation, maintenance, data processing, and program administration are covered by the contractor and offset by citation revenue. The Town would incur no upfront or ongoing financial burden. If citation revenue exceeds program costs, the Town may receive a share of the net proceeds, which can be reinvested into traffic safety initiatives. This model ensures fiscal responsibility while leveraging technology to enhance public safety without diverting funds from other priorities. While the program is designed to minimize financial impact, staff time will be required, as a sworn law enforcement officer must review each potential violation before it is processed and issued. This ensures due process, maintains enforcement integrity, and aligns with legal standards for automated traffic enforcement.

Legal Impact:
If directed by Council, an ordinance would be considered allowing the use of red light photo enforcement at a future meeting.

Staff Recommendation/Next Steps:
This is a discussion item; staff does not have a recommendation.

Attachments:
1. Presentation