



**CITY OF DURHAM**  
Office of Public Affairs  
101 CITY HALL PLAZA  
DURHAM, NC 27701

**News Media Contact:**

Amy Blalock  
Sr. Public Affairs Specialist  
(919) 560-4123 x 11253  
(919) 475-7735 (cell)  
[Amy.Blalock@DurhamNC.gov](mailto:Amy.Blalock@DurhamNC.gov)  
<http://Facebook.com/CityofDurhamNC>  
<http://Twitter.com/CityofDurhamNC>  
<http://YouTube.com/CityofDurhamNC>

## News Release

For Immediate Release: March 24, 2015

**Share!** Durham accident reduction program results in 52 percent vehicular crash decrease; <http://bit.ly/18USIGn>

### **Durham Accident Reduction Program Results in Vehicular Crash Decreases**

*297 Accidents, \$2.3 Million in Property Damages and 208 Injuries Prevented Since 2003*

DURHAM, N.C. – After years of hard work, the City of Durham has reduced vehicular accidents in targeted areas by more than 50 percent thanks to an ongoing accident reduction program.

In 2003, the City's Transportation Department set out to develop a method to identify and treat high-accident intersections that might otherwise go unnoticed. The North Carolina transportation system includes an estimated 100,000 miles of state- and locally maintained roads. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has an extensive safety improvement program; however, since it covers the whole state, only locations with the highest accident rates are targeted. City engineers developed Durham's local program to identify intersections in the city limits that might not qualify for NCDOT's program. The goal was to reduce injuries, property damages, and the frequency of crashes at problematic intersections in the city limits.

The program to date has achieved its current success rates by finding correctable patterns, applying countermeasures, and then monitoring those countermeasures for effectiveness. "The accident reduction program is a relatively new initiative, and because final assessment of each location is on a comparative basis of at least three years, we are now just beginning to see the cumulative results," said Transportation Engineer Larry McGlothlin with the City's Transportation Department. "Of the 85 locations treated through the program since 2003, 53 intersections now have final evaluations and have shown tremendous results thanks to the countermeasures

we've installed. The safety benefit of our changes will also continue beyond the limits of this study since the improvements are permanent.”

According to McGlothlin, investigations are initiated using a combination of methods, with the frequency and severity of crashes as two of the most common measures used to identify study locations. These methods, in addition to motorist observations, have led to 334 investigations which have resulted in 162 installed countermeasures and 17 pending countermeasures. Since the program's inception, these countermeasures combined have prevented 297 accidents, \$2.3 million in property damages, and 208 injuries.

An example of a particularly dangerous intersection that received attention as part of this program was the Cornwallis Road and Pickett Road intersection. By simply installing two additional stop signs to make an all-way stop condition, over the course of three years, this countermeasure reduced crashes from 33 to five, injuries from 25 to one, and property damages from \$157,465 to \$15,050.

According to McGlothlin, typical accident reduction countermeasures include things such as warning signs, guide signs, regulatory signs, sign locations, delineators, pavement markings, traffic signals, signal visors, signal back plates, supplemental signal heads, modified signal timing, modified clearance intervals, phasing upgrades, and removal of sight obstructions.

Each year, McGlothlin oversees the compilation of before-and-after data focusing on targeted crashes, total crashes, targeted injuries, and the estimated dollar value of property damage. Targeted crashes usually encompass the predominant type of crash at an intersection, for example angle crashes, rear-end crashes or side-swipe crashes. Targeted injuries are the injuries that result from the targeted crashes. Total crashes include all crashes at an intersection. The table below outlines notable highlights from the most recent report.

<b>Summary of Results – Three-Year Cumulative Total</b>			
	<b>Before Countermeasure Installation</b>	<b>After Countermeasure Installation</b>	<b>Percent Reduction</b>
<b>Targeted Crashes</b>	568	271	52 percent
<b>Total Crashes</b>	1,188	814	31 percent

<b>Targeted Injuries</b>	390	182	53 percent
<b>Property Damage</b>	\$5,521,910	\$3,196,700	42 percent

According to McGlothlin, the City’s accident reduction program is an ongoing effort and input is encouraged to help identify more locations that need to be studied as part of this program. “We are seeing good results with this program and want to encourage motorists to contact us if they have any safety concerns,” McGlothlin said.

To read the full report, visit <http://bit.ly/1xd8VSY>. For additional information about the City’s Accident Reduction Program, visit <http://durhamnc.gov/ich/op/dot/Pages/How-do-I.aspx> or contact McGlothlin at (919) 560-4366, ext. 36435 or by email at [Larry.McGlothlin@DurhamNC.gov](mailto:Larry.McGlothlin@DurhamNC.gov).

**About the City of Durham Transportation Department**

The City of Durham Transportation Department helps to strengthen the foundation, enhance the value, and improve the quality and sustainability of neighborhoods that are necessary for a strong and diverse community. The department is responsible for a broad range of transportation services, which include traffic signs and signals, transportation planning, parking operations, street lighting, the taxicab administration and bicycle and pedestrian planning. The City’s Transportation Department also oversees the Durham Area Transit Authority (DATA) public transportation system as well as the DATA ACCESS service for persons with disabilities. The City of Durham also leads planning functions for the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO). For more information, visit <http://DurhamNC.gov/ich/op/dot>.

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