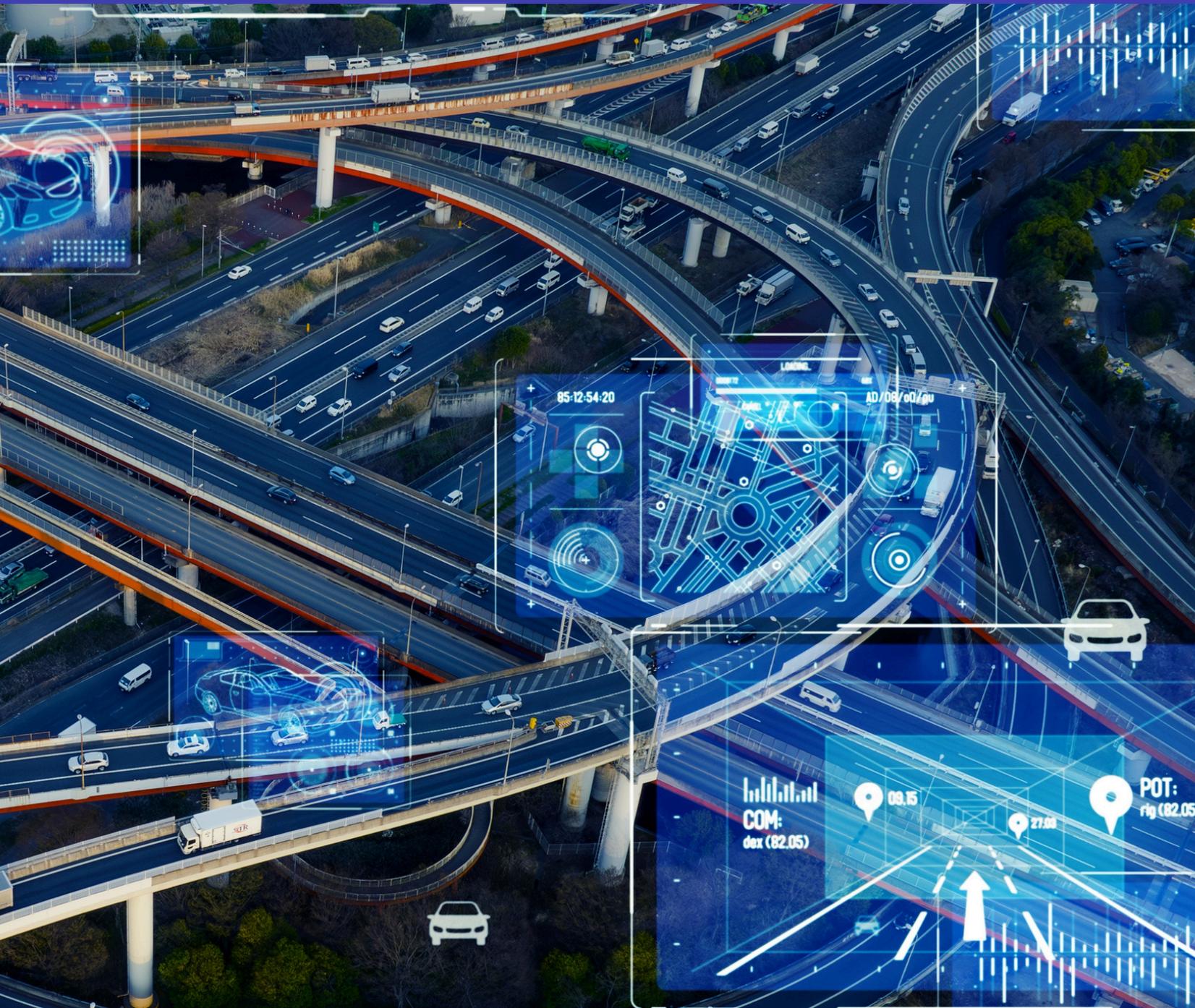# The State of Automated Traffic Enforcement Report 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2025 has seen a steady growth of Automated Traffic Enforcement (ATE) across North America. With rising pressure to reduce crashes, protect vulnerable road users, and improve public confidence in enforcement, more cities and states expanded or modernized their ATE programs than ever before.

Key milestones from the year include 63 new communities implementing speed cameras and 8 new communities adopting red-light camera programs, **representing a 25% and 12% increase in deployment, respectively.**

This momentum is even more evident in expanding school and work-zone enforcement initiatives nationwide, reflecting a clear shift in how jurisdictions are prioritizing safety. Together, these adoption trends signal a broad recognition: when enforcement technology is implemented transparently and rigorously tested, it becomes a powerful tool for reducing risk, improving compliance, and enhancing operational efficiency on the roads.

63 New communities added speed cameras in 2025

Public agencies increasingly turned to data-driven tools to meet Vision Zero goals, reduce manual workloads, and improve compliance without increasing in-person stops. As a result, ATE is no longer a fringe or controversial concept, it's becoming a standard component of the modern traffic safety playbook.

Together, these adoption trends signal a broad recognition: when enforcement technology is implemented transparently and rigorously tested, it becomes a powerful tool for reducing risk, improving compliance, and enhancing operational efficiency on the roads.

Visual highlights in this report illustrate year-over-year growth in adoption, reductions in key crash metrics, and emerging patterns in community sentiment and policy alignment. These insights, paired with analysis of technology innovation and legislative trends, provide a clear picture of where the industry stands, and what's coming next. Looking ahead to 2026, the ATE landscape will be shaped by the integration of predictive analytics, a shift towards prevention over enforcement, AI-driven evidence workflows, and deeper collaboration between public agencies and technology partners. This report offers both a snapshot of progress in 2025 and an outlook into ATE development in 2026 and beyond.

# INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE – SUMMARY

Introduction & Purpose

Automated Traffic Enforcement (ATE) has evolved substantially over the last decade. What began as isolated deployments of red-light cameras and speed cameras in a few jurisdictions is now part of a broader shift toward data-driven enforcement, operational efficiency and safer roads.

The purpose of this report is to provide a clear benchmark of where ATE stands in North America in 2025, and how agencies and technology partners can prepare for what's next in 2026. It aims to provide valuable insights and action steps for transportation agencies, enforcement authorities, city planners and technology stakeholders who are planning for the future of traffic safety.

Evolution of ATE

The roots of automated enforcement in the U.S. trace back decades. For example, systems of automated speed enforcement (ASE) and red-light cameras were documented as early as the 1980s and 1990s.

Studies over the years have consistently found that automated enforcement can reduce excessive speeds and certain types of crashes. **NHTSA**
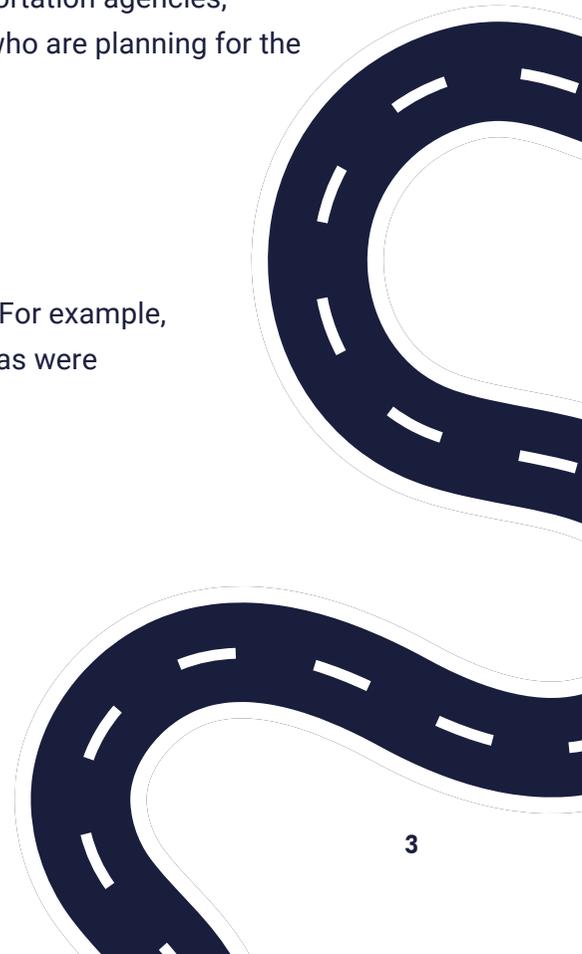
Despite early adoption, growth has been uneven. A recent report from the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) notes that "automated speed enforcement, if deployed equitably and applied appropriately […] can provide significant benefits." **Governors Highway Safety Association**

In a similar development, traffic-safety trends, including Vision Zero goals, increasing emphasis on vulnerable road-users (pedestrians and cyclists), and constrained manual-enforcement capacity, have contributed to the rise of ATE as a effective, strategic tool rather than just an "alternative" to traditional police enforcement.

GROWING IMPORTANCE OF DATA-DRIVEN ENFORCEMENT

Today, ATE is not solely about issuing citations; it's about gathering and acting on reliable data, streamlining evidence workflows, and integrating enforcement into broader traffic-management and smart-city ecosystems.

A recent article states that "Automated Traffic Enforcement (ATE) is increasingly recognized as a key tool in reducing road fatalities, deterring dangerous driving behaviors, and advancing Vision Zero goals." **Elovate**

For agencies, this means leveraging enforcement systems not only to penalize unsafe behavior, but to monitor trends, allocate resources, evaluate countermeasures, and communicate results to the public.The ability to calibrate enforcement devices, verify system accuracy, and support transparency is now central to successful deployment.

This report will explore how policy, technology, public sentiment, outcomes and challenges intersect in 2025 and will offer a roadmap for 2026. It will further deliver proof that properly-implemented ATE can deliver dual benefits: improved road-safety outcomes and enhanced operational efficiency.

POLICY LANDSCAPE – SUMMARY

Policy Landscape

In 2025, several U.S. states introduced or expanded legislation enabling the use of ATE, particularly in high-risk zones such as school and work zones:

- **North Carolina**: House Bill 982 **(NC Highway Safety Act of 2025)** authorized the use of electronic speed-measuring systems in state-maintained highway work zones, with civil penalties. A separate statute approved the use of automated cameras in **school zones during posted hours.**
- **Maryland**: A new law that took effect on October 1, 2025, permits automated speed enforcement in residential and school zones, with escalating penalties based on speed. This is part of the state's broader Vision Zero commitment, and adds to **existing work zone enforcement programs**.
- **Connecticut's** Department of Transportation has begun approving automated speed and red-light camera sites statewide, including in cities like New Haven and Milford, indicating a coordinated state-level role in permitting local enforcement programs under existing law.

## Regional Trends in Modernization & Flexible Deployment

Across regions, ATE programs are increasingly focused on targeted safety priorities, namely, school zones, work zones, and pedestrian corridors. Mobile and flexible enforcement strategies are also gaining traction, allowing jurisdictions to adjust coverage areas based on real-time risk data.

States are pairing legislation with clear standards on signage, calibration, and transparent program reporting to avoid public backlash and strengthen legitimacy.

CASE EXAMPLES OF SCALING PILOTS

Several jurisdictions that previously operated pilot programs are moving toward full-scale adoption. For example, Charlotte, North Carolina had earlier tested photographic speed enforcement and saw reduced crash severity in target corridors. New statewide authorization now allows cities to act on these proven results.

Albuquerque, New Mexico provides another strong example of a successful pilot evolving into a larger, more modern safety program. After launching its automated speed enforcement pilot in 2022, the city reported major reductions in excessive speeding and significant declines in severe crashes. In 2025, Albuquerque replaced 20 older units with **20 of Elovate's 4k, multi-lane high-accuracy camera systems** — upgrading the entire existing network — and is adding eight new speed safety cameras in high-risk corridors to expand coverage. This combination of replacement and expansion shows how strong pilot results can lay the groundwork for broader, technology-enabled safety improvements.
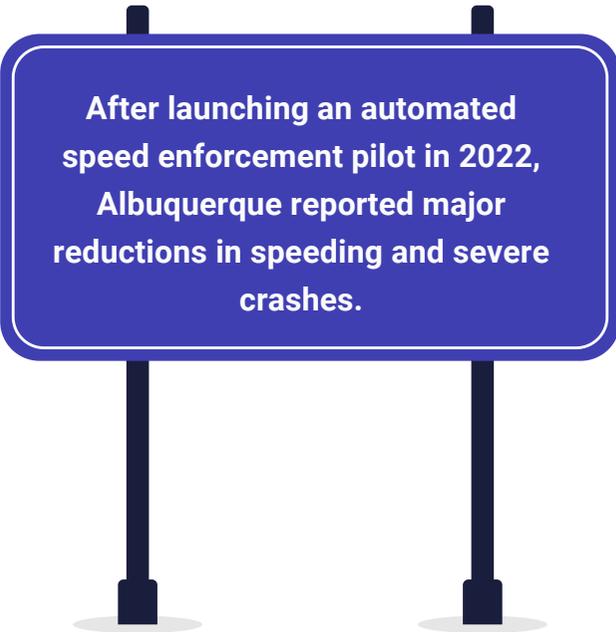
After launching an automated speed enforcement pilot in 2022, Albuquerque reported major reductions in speeding and severe crashes.

Shift in Federal and State Enablement

Federal infrastructure and safety grants increasingly support technology-based enforcement as part of the Safe System approach. The USDOT's competitive grants dashboard shows that ATE may be eligible under technology demonstration or deployment categories.

GHSA's 2024 report also highlights federal guidance now available to help communities launch equitable, outcome-based enforcement programs.

Moreover, some states are aligning ATE legislation with funding incentives or data reporting frameworks to ensure community benefits. These policy moves reflect a broader tone: enforcement must be transparent, fair, and linked to measurable public safety outcomes, not just revenue generation.

Shift in Federal and State Enablement

Federal infrastructure and safety grants increasingly support technology-based enforcement as part of the Safe System approach. The USDOT's competitive grants dashboard shows that ATE may be eligible under technology demonstration or deployment categories.

GHSA's 2024 report also highlights federal guidance now available to help communities launch equitable, outcome-based enforcement programs.

Moreover, some states are aligning ATE legislation with funding incentives or data reporting frameworks to ensure community benefits. These policy moves reflect a broader tone: enforcement must be transparent, fair, and linked to measurable public safety outcomes, not just revenue generation.

2025 ATE LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY TABLE

STATE	LEGISLATION PASSED	ENFORCEMENT TYPE	FOCUS AREA	NOTES
NORTH CAROLINA	**Yes (HB 982)**	**Speed, Camera-Based**	**School, Work Zones**	Civil penalties authorized; signage and calibration mandated
MARYLAND	**Yes (HB182/SB118 October 2025)**	**Speed Enforcement**	**Residential Zones**	Escalating fines tied to speed; Vision Zero framework
CONNECTICUT	**Yes (ATESD Program; 2024–2025 rollout)**	**Speed & Red-light enforcement**	**School Zones, High-Risk Corridors, Work Zones**	State-approved framework requiring CTDOT plan approval; municipalities procure vendors; separate CTDOT-led automated work-zone speed enforcement program
KENTUCKY	**Yes (HB664 Jared Lee Helton Act)**	**Speed enforcement**	**Work Zones**	Allows automated speed-enforcement devices in *active* highway work zones when workers + marked vehicle + officer are present
WASHINGTON (STATE)	**Not yet enacted into law (HB 1423)**	**Automated *noise* enforcement**	**Residential Zones**	Authorizing the use of automated vehicle noise enforcement cameras in vehicle-racing camera enforcement zones.

TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Technology continues to evolve rapidly across the enforcement landscape, enabling cities and states to modernize their ATE programs in ways that are more accurate, efficient, and aligned with broader public safety goals.

AI-Powered Detection & Classification
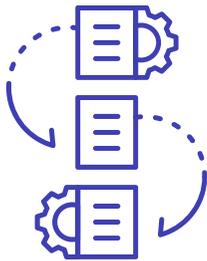
The rise of AI-based systems is helping agencies better identify and categorize violations with fewer false positives. These systems can improve object recognition, distinguish between vehicle types, and adapt to complex environments like multi-lane intersections or variable speed zones. AI doesn't replace human review, it strengthens it by increasing confidence and reducing workload in evidence validation workflows.

Cloud-Based Evidence & Real-Time Dashboards

Agencies are increasingly moving toward cloud-hosted platforms that streamline how enforcement data is stored, accessed, and processed. Cloud platforms support real-time dashboards, centralized evidence review, and remote approvals — reducing lag between detection and resolution. These systems also make it easier to scale enforcement across multiple zones while maintaining integrity and audit trails.

Smart City Integration

ATE solutions are beginning to integrate with broader smart city infrastructure, linking enforcement tools with real-time traffic flow data, public safety networks, and municipal performance systems. This creates opportunities to proactively target high-risk zones and measure enforcement outcomes as part of a unified mobility strategy.

Data-Driven Prevention & Equity-First Deployment

The future of enforcement is not just citation-based, it's predictive. Agencies are already using analytics to shift from reactive enforcement to proactive prevention, identifying risk patterns and adjusting camera placement accordingly. There's also growing attention on equity, ensuring technology is deployed fairly and reflects community input.

Innovation Culture at Elovate

As technology continues to accelerate, Elovate embraces a challenge-based culture — constantly iterating, testing, and refining to meet evolving client needs. While not every capability mentioned here is fully productized yet, our commitment is clear: we adapt fast, listen closely, and build for impact.

Whether supporting smarter workflows, improving customer support, or strengthening data integrity, our goal is to empower public agencies with tools that serve communities — not just compliance.

"At Elovate, innovation is driven by real operational challenges our customers face every day. We test, iterate, and refine with purpose, ensuring new capabilities translate into reliable, scalable solutions that deliver tangible results and make a lasting impact."

— Tim Bigwood, Chief Operating Officer

COMMUNITY & PUBLIC SENTIMENT

Public perception remains one of the most important — and often underestimated — factors in the success of ATE programs. In 2025, there was a marked shift in how communities engaged with and responded to automated enforcement initiatives.

Agencies that invested in transparent communication, educational outreach, and community engagement <u>saw significantly higher levels of support and compliance</u>. While public skepticism still exists, especially around concerns of revenue motivation or privacy, more jurisdictions are proactively addressing these concerns through early messaging and consistent visibility.

At Elovate, we support all clients in preparing for public education and community engagement efforts. While we do not directly run public-facing campaigns, we provide robust resources, message frameworks, and launch planning guidance to ensure our clients are well-equipped. When needed, we collaborate with trusted communications and PR partners to support city-led outreach.

Trends emerging in 2025 include:

»» **Community-first language in signage, mailers, and digital communications to reinforce safety — not penalties — as the core message.**

»» **Use of data visualization to show impact (e.g., crash reductions, speed reductions) before and after deployment.**

»» **Engagement of local advocates, including school administrators and work zone safety professionals, to personalize the purpose of enforcement.**

»» **Bilingual and culturally responsive outreach tailored to the needs of each community.**

These strategies are not just about optics, they are proving essential for building trust, especially in cities launching programs for the first time or expanding existing programs.

As more jurisdictions embrace enforcement as a shared community safety strategy, the role of clear, consistent public communication will only grow in importance. Our role is to help cities meet that need with expertise, agility, and empathy.

IMPACT & OUTCOMES

In 2025, the impact of Automated Traffic Enforcement (ATE) programs continues to be supported by evidence linking enforcement mechanisms to measurable safety improvements. While consistent nationwide data for all jurisdictions is still emerging, recent studies provide a strong foundation for the case that ATE delivers both safety and operational benefits.

Crash Reductions & Violation Compliance

- Red-light cameras in large U.S. cities **reduced the fatal red-light-running** crash rate by 21%, and all fatal crashes at signalized intersections by 14%.

- **Global reviews of speed camera programs** show crash reductions from 8% to 50% (all crashes) and 11% to 44% (severe/fatal) depending on site and program type.

- Since the program's launch in early 2025, Albuquerque, for instance, has reported reductions **of up to 89% in drivers exceeding the speed limit by more than 10 mph** at enforced locations, alongside measurable decreases in average travel speeds across multiple corridors.

Efficiency & Operational Gains

While most published studies focus on crash outcomes and compliance metrics, operational efficiency is a key benefit of well-designed ATE programs. For example, the infographic *"Work Zone Speeding – A Deadly and Costly Risk"* highlights the magnitude of risk and cost tied to work-zone speeding: in 2022, work-zone crashes were estimated at $37.9 billion USD in comprehensive costs, and driver delay alone reached 586.5 million hours, translating to $8.6 billion USD in annual user delay cost (**elovate.com**).

By reducing dangerous speeding and improving compliance in work zones, ATE can help mitigate these costs, cutting delays, reducing crash responses, and enhancing workforce safety. In addition, jurisdictions deploying cloud-based evidence platforms and automated violation review systems have reported notable reductions in manual processing hours and improved time-to-notification.

In Illinois, the Department of Transportation partnered with Elovate to modernize its work zone speed enforcement program. As of 2023, **the initiative achieved a 15% reduction in speeding violations**, improved time-to-notice delivery, and provided critical data for proactive traffic planning. The automated program also enabled IDOT to scale enforcement coverage while maintaining a lean staffing model — demonstrating how automation can both improve safety and reduce administrative burden.

Beyond safety outcomes, peer-reviewed research shows that automated enforcement delivers measurable operational efficiency gains for agencies. A 2024 systematic review of Automated Enforcement Systems (AES) titled *"The Impact of Automated Enforcement Systems on Traffic Management Efficiency"* **found that jurisdictions deploying speed and red-light cameras experienced traffic violation reductions of up to 40%, alongside accident reductions of up to 30%,** allowing agencies to shift resources away from high-frequency enforcement and toward higher-value safety activities. The study further concluded that automation significantly improves law-enforcement resource allocation, reducing reliance on manual stops, lowering administrative workload, and enabling more consistent, data-driven enforcement at scale. These efficiency gains, paired with improved compliance, demonstrate that ATE functions not only as a safety countermeasure, but as a modernization tool for traffic operations and enforcement workflows.

PRE–ATE IMPLEMENTATION:

8.6B	37.9B	586.5M
User Delay Cost	**Crash Cost**	**Vehicle-Hours of Delay**

POST–ATE IMPLEMENTATION:

5.16B	30.3B	351.9M
User Delay Cost	**Crash Cost**	**Vehicle-Hours of Delay**
-40% Decrease	*-20% Decrease*	*-40% Decrease*

Pre/Post Deployment Metrics Table

JURISDICTION	ATE TYPE	DEPLOYMENT YEAR	OUTCOME REPORTED	SOURCE
CHICAGO, IL	Red-light cameras	2015–2017	12% fewer injury crashes; 15% drop in severe crashes	FHWA Clearinghouse
WA STATE, PIERCE COUNTY	Work zone Speed cameras	2025	In first 90 days, 7,599 infractions issued.	Washington State Patrol
NYC, NY	Speed cameras	Ongoing	73% of drivers slowed down in zones with enforcement	NYC DOT Vision Zero
IDOT, IL	Work zone speed	2023	15% drop in speeding; improved data workflows	IDOT Case Study
NM, ALBUQUERQUE	Speed cameras	2022	Fatal traffic crashes down 20%	City of Albuquerque

These outcomes show that when paired with strong program design and public communication, ATE not only reduces risky driving but delivers operational wins.

CHALLENGES & CONSIDERATIONS

Despite clear progress in adoption and outcomes, Automated Traffic Enforcement (ATE) programs continue to face key challenges that require thoughtful navigation. From public perception and legislative roadblocks to concerns about equity, privacy, and sustainable funding, jurisdictions must plan carefully to ensure successful, fair, and lasting implementation.

1. Public Perception: A Balancing Act

ATE programs often operate in politically sensitive environments. Skepticism remains in some communities, fueled by historic missteps, inconsistent enforcement practices, or a lack of transparency. Critics frequently frame ATE as a "cash grab," questioning the intent behind deployment. These narratives can overshadow the data showing clear safety benefits.

According to a **Pew Research Center survey,** a majority of Americans support ATE when they believe it improves safety, but support drops when programs appear revenue-driven or lack transparency.

What works: Programs that clearly define goals (e.g., protecting pedestrians in school zones), set realistic metrics, and communicate consistently tend to enjoy stronger public and political backing. Educational campaigns, public dashboards, and third-party audits help build trust.

2. Equity & Privacy Considerations

Public concern around surveillance and equity has intensified in recent years. Civil liberties groups have raised valid questions about potential over-policing in marginalized communities or inconsistent citation impacts

The Vision Zero Network **notes that placement of cameras and fine structures** must be designed to avoid regressive outcomes and ensure enforcement aligns with the highest-risk areas, not just the most convenient or profitable. .

3. Equity & Privacy Considerations *(Continued)*

Agencies are now actively working to:

» **Design placement criteria based on crash and speed data, not revenue potential**

» **Offer tiered fine structures or diversion programs**

» **Provide options for contesting citations and explaining mitigating circumstances**

For example, in Chicago, the CDOT automated enforcement program **demonstrated measurable safety improvements**: fatal and severe-injury crashes fell by 36% at target camera sites, and in areas near enforcement cameras injury/fatal crashes declined 11% while they rose 19% city-wide. Recognizing historic equity concerns, the city's 2025 Equity in Enforcement Working Group **issued recommendations** to introduce reduced fine options, transparent use of revenues, and stronger public reporting.

This case highlights two important lessons:

1. Safety gains from ATE are real and measurable.
2. Equity, transparency, and public trust must be deliberately designed into the program — not assumed.

4. Funding & Sustainability

Many ATE programs are initially funded via vendor partnerships or grants, but long-term sustainability requires predictable budgets, legislative support, and clearly articulated ROI.

The U.S. DOT Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant program expanded in 2025, providing more than $1 billion in funding over multiple rounds for safety planning and implementation — including ATE support in many jurisdictions. However, access to these funds can be complex, and not all communities have the capacity to apply or administer the programs effectively.

Some agencies also struggle with manual workload, legal processing delays, and the resource strain of launching or expanding enforcement programs — challenges that can erode momentum if not addressed with planning and scalable tech infrastructure.

5. Legal and Political Hurdles

Despite increasing evidence of ATE's benefits, legal restrictions still exist in multiple U.S. states, and program expansion remains a politically charged issue in some regions. In states like Texas, and New Hampshire, legal prohibitions or sunset clauses prevent implementation.

However, the trend is shifting: 2025 saw new statewide authorizations in places like North Carolina and Montana, signaling growing legislative openness. In these states, pilot programs paired with strong public education efforts helped mitigate resistance and highlight early safety results.

North Carolina illustrates how early, targeted use of automated enforcement can support broader legislative action focused on protecting children. Prior to 2025, several jurisdictions in the state deployed automated cameras for red-light enforcement and school-bus stop-arm violations. Charlotte also conducted a multi-year photographic speed-enforcement pilot that showed improved speed compliance and reduced crash severity in selected corridors.

Building on these experiences, North Carolina enacted Senate Bill 391 in 2025 (Session Law 2025-47), explicitly authorizing automated speed enforcement in school zones statewide. The law establishes clear standards for device approval, signage, and civil notice procedures, providing legal clarity for municipalities.

This shift demonstrates how proven pilot results can translate into statewide policy, expanding the use of automated enforcement to enhance safety where it matters most, such as protecting children traveling to and from school.

For ATE to deliver on its promise, stakeholders must move beyond simply deploying technology. They must plan for:

>> **Transparent community engagement**

>> **Equity-aware program design**

>> **Long-term funding strategies**

>> **Scalable, efficient tech infrastructure**

ATE is not just a hardware solution, it's a system-wide shift in how we approach enforcement, road safety, and public trust. Agencies that embrace this complexity — and partner with organizations that can support them across strategy, communications, and implementation — will be best positioned to deliver meaningful, measurable change.

THE ROAD AHEAD

As we look to 2026 and beyond, the landscape for Automated Traffic Enforcement is shifting rapidly, from standalone programs to integrated systems that support broader transportation goals. The next wave of innovation will emphasize predictive analytics, cross-platform data collaboration, and equity-first program design that aligns safety outcomes with community trust.

Toward Predictive, Preventive Safety

Advanced ATE systems are beginning to move beyond reactive enforcement. With access to real-time data and AI-driven pattern recognition, agencies can anticipate where violations — and crashes — are likely to occur before they happen. This predictive enforcement model enables more strategic camera placement, targeted outreach, and smarter resource allocation.

Early examples of predictive enforcement frameworks are emerging in connected corridor pilots and Vision Zero-aligned cities where enforcement, engineering, and education intersect to address systemic risk.

In mid-2025, the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) **published results** from a predictive analytics pilot focused on a heavy construction area on I-270 near St. Louis. The program integrated historical crash data, real-time feeds (e.g., traffic volumes, incident reports), and machine-learning models to estimate where serious crashes were most likely to occur up to 24 hours in advance.

This predictive model was evaluated in July 2023 and found to correctly predict about 86% of serious incidents, with only a 14% false-positive rate. Nearly half of identified crashes were detected earlier than traditional sources such as police radio, Waze, or CCTV monitoring, allowing operations staff to proactively monitor high-risk areas and coordinate emergency response resources before crashes unfolded.

> **In 2025, on the I-270 in St. Louis, Missouri, a machine learning tool accurately predicted 86% of incidents, with 14% false positives.**

Seamless Data Integration & Smart City Alignment

The most forward-thinking agencies are treating ATE as an integral part in a larger smart mobility ecosystem. This includes integration with:

- **Traffic signal timing systems**
- **Emergency response coordination**
- **Real-time traveler information platforms**
- **Open data tools for community transparency**

These connections will enable safer, more efficient roads, especially in fast-growing urban areas. As cities digitize transportation infrastructure, ATE becomes a vital data source that not only enforces compliance but also informs planning, policy, and performance.

Equity–First Design as the Standard

The industry is also evolving in how programs are framed, built, and evaluated. Equity isn't a peripheral concern, it's becoming a design principle. Cities are developing enforcement models that:

- **Prioritize high-risk areas over high-traffic ones**
- **Adopt income-adjusted fine structures or alternatives**
- **Invest revenue into community safety improvements**

In this environment, technology providers must do more than supply hardware — they must enable transparent, inclusive, and adaptive solutions.
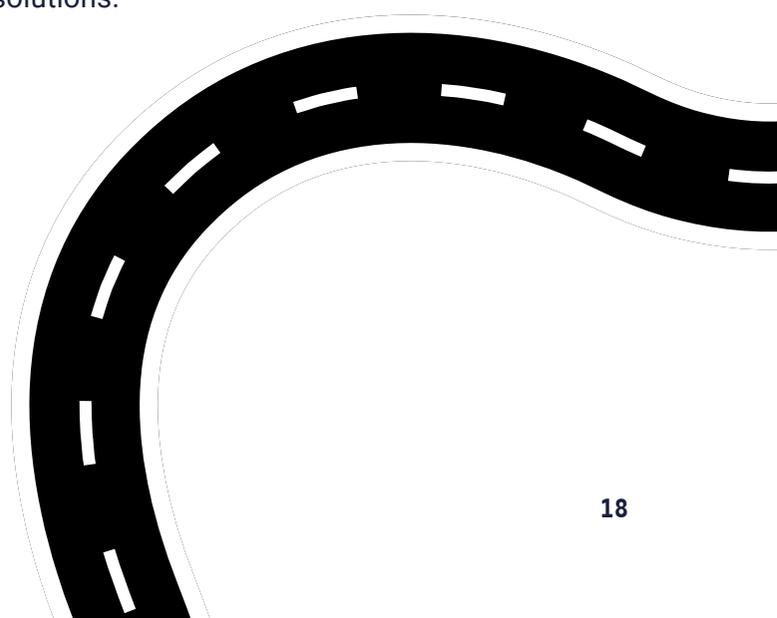
Elovate's Role

At Elovate, we see ourselves not only as a provider of best-in-class enforcement platforms — but as a full-spectrum partner. Our mission is to help cities and states modernize their programs, navigate complexity, and build solutions that reflect community values and measurable impact.

We offer more than tools. We provide:

›› **Strategic guidance from planning through launch and expansion**

›› **Data infrastructure that supports human review and automated workflows**

›› **Community resources that prepare agencies for public communication**

›› **Rapid innovation cycles aligned to agency and public needs**

"The future of automated traffic enforcement is about building systems that operate reliably at scale. Our focus is on helping agencies deploy enforcement programs that are efficient, transparent, and resilient, so they can deliver consistent safety outcomes without adding operational burden."

— **Tim Bigwood, Chief Operating Officer**

"Every city we partner with has different challenges, but what unites them is a desire to build safer roads and communities for their citizens. Our role is to help them deliver both, efficiently and equitably."

— **Victoria Fulton, Senior Director of Growth & Retention**

The path forward is clear: smarter, safer, and more equitable roads require collaboration between public agencies and partners who understand the full scope of challenges ahead.

If you're looking to evolve your enforcement strategy — or start one from the ground up — we invite you to partner with us. Together, we can shape the next era of road safety.

Learn more about Elovate and how we're helping jurisdictions across North America and Europe lead the way at elovate.com

elovate