

FROM HESITANCY TO CHAMPION

THE CASE FOR AUTOMATED TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT

40,990

Americans killed in road crashes in 2023 – a **25% increase vs. a decade ago** (TRIP, 2024)

28%

of all 2023 traffic fatalities were speeding-related – **up 21% since 2018** (NHTSA)

1,149

people killed by red-light runners in 2022. Half were pedestrians or cyclists (IIHS)

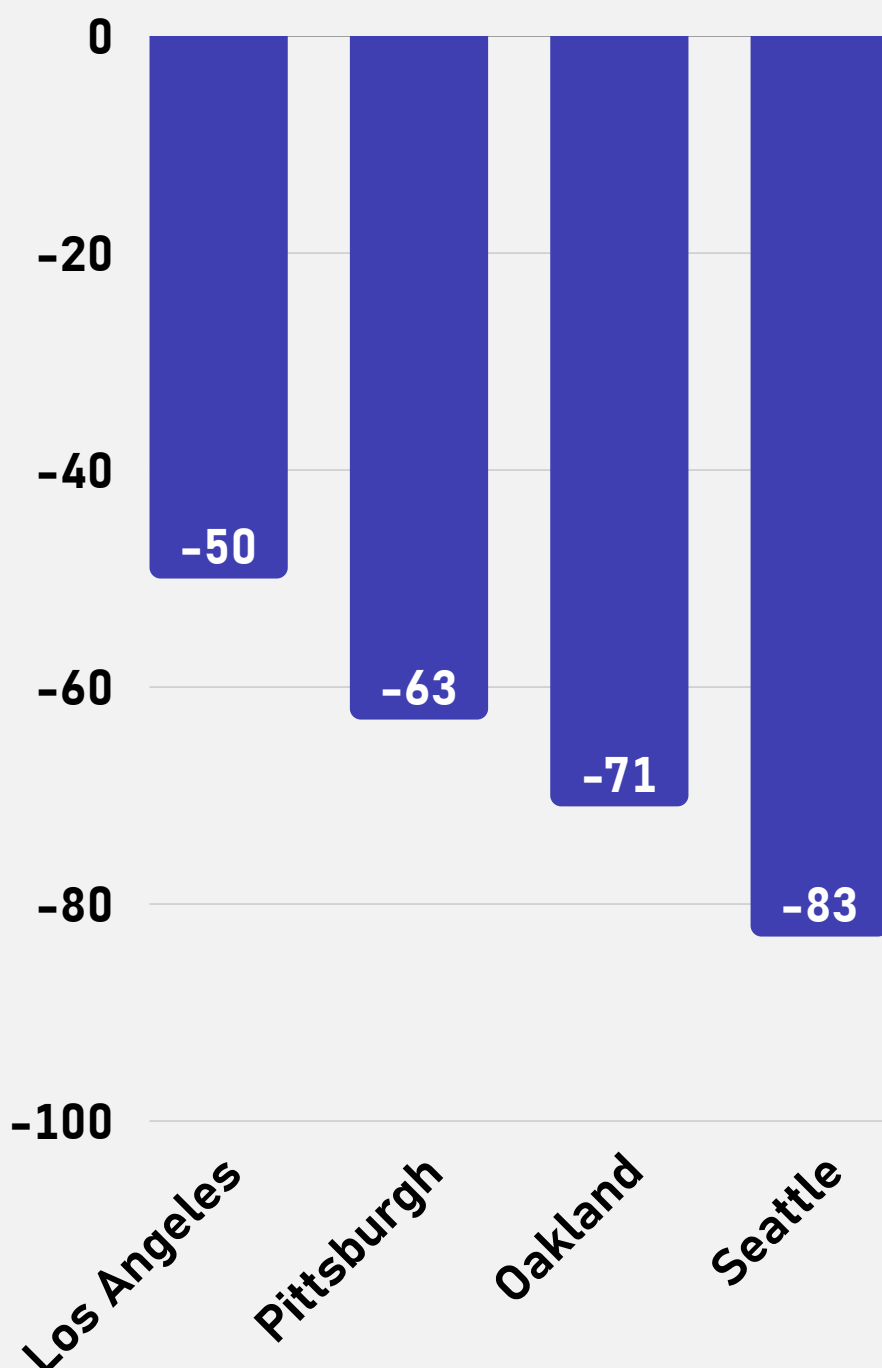
\$1.83 T

societal cost of fatal & serious traffic crashes in 2024 (TRIP/NHTSA)

THE ENFORCEMENT GAP

A Stretched Workforce Needs Smarter Tools – ATE Helps Fill the Gap

DROP IN TRAFFIC STOPS POST ATE DEPLOYMENT:



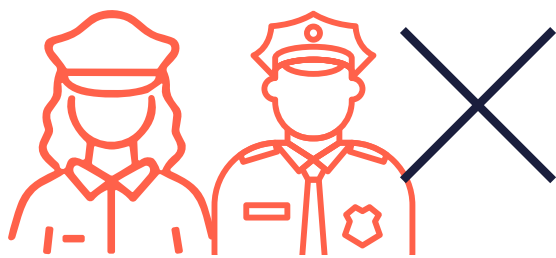
- **Officers now spend up to 70% of their shifts responding to priority calls** – leaving little time for proactive traffic enforcement.
- The IACP 2024 survey found agencies operating at an average 91% of authorized staffing – **a near 10% workforce deficit nationwide.**
- The correlation is clear: **As police have stepped back from traffic stops, U.S. roads have grown significantly more deadly.**

ADDRESSING THE 4 CORE OBJECTIONS

THE FEAR:

THE REALITY:

FEAR #1: "ATE WILL REPLACE OFFICERS AND ELIMINATE JOBS"



Automating traffic enforcement removes a core policing function, threatening officer roles and justifying budget cuts to department headcount.

Every citation is reviewed by a sworn officer. ATE does not remove officers – it redeploys them. Every flagged violation is verified by a trained officer before issuance.

No program operates without law enforcement oversight. Officers are freed to focus on violent crime, DUIs, school zone safety, and serious crash investigations – the high-stakes work that requires a human presence.

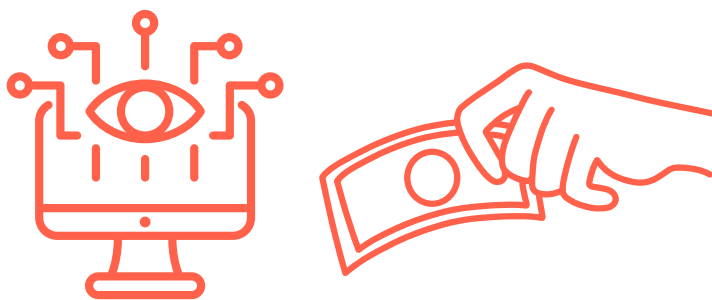
FEAR #2: "I DON'T TRUST THE TECHNOLOGY TO BE ACCURATE"



Cameras and sensors will generate false positives, issue wrongful citations, and expose departments to legal liability and community backlash.

Up to 100% vehicle detection accuracy. Modern radar and LiDAR systems provide court-admissible evidence packages including timestamped images, speed data, and plate ID. Officers review all events and exercise professional judgment – the same discretion they apply in the field. Drivers always retain the right to contest any citation.

FEAR #3: "THE COMMUNITY WILL SEE THIS AS BIG BROTHER OR A CASH GRAB"



Speed cameras will be seen as revenue tools, not safety tools – damaging the community's trust in the police department.

65% of voters across party lines ...agree that traffic stops for minor violations divert police resources from serious offenses (Vera Action, Feb 2025). ATE reduces racially disparate traffic stops – one of the most pressing community trust issues in modern policing. Fewer stops means fewer points of tension between officers and residents.

FEAR #4 – "OFFICERS WILL LOSE SKILLS AND BECOME DEPENDENT ON TECHNOLOGY"



If cameras do the enforcement, officers will stop developing traffic enforcement judgment and procedural skills over time.

Force Multiplier, Not Replacement. ATE handles high-volume routine monitoring – freeing officers for high-judgment situations: DUI stops, crash investigations, school zone presence, community engagement. The next generation of officers – digital natives – already see technology as essential to effective policing, not a threat to it.

OFFICER ROLES IN AN ATE PROGRAM



Officers review every potential violation before any citation is issued



Analyze speed trends, identify high-risk corridors, direct patrol resources



Focus on school zones, DUI enforcement, crash response, and community visibility



Provide expert testimony when citations are contested in court

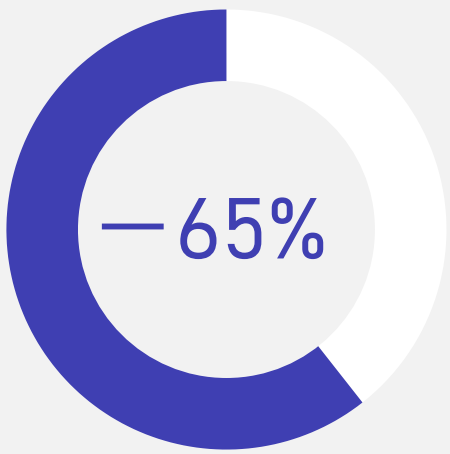


Law enforcement sets enforcement zones, thresholds, and manages parameters

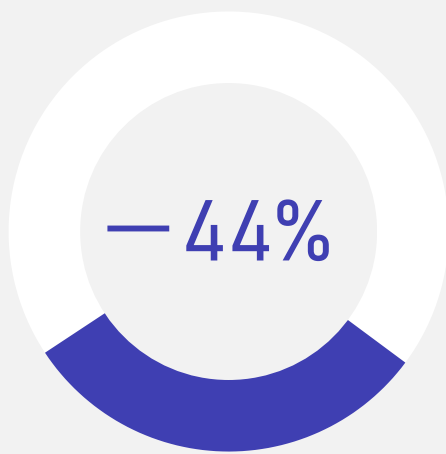


Engage the public on transparency, outcomes, and program trust-building

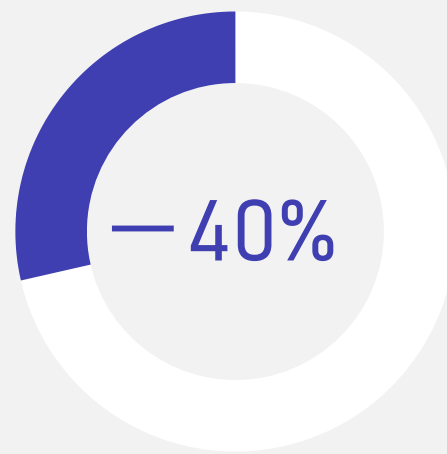
PROVEN SAFETY RESULTS FROM ESTABLISHED PROGRAMS



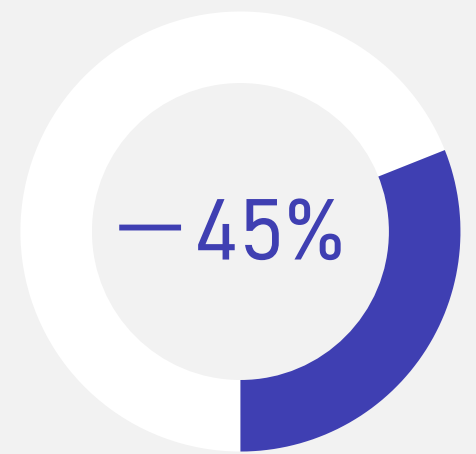
Reduction in speeding vehicles



Reduction in serious injury & fatal crashes



Reduction in red-light intersection crashes



Reduction in fatal crashes over 10 years

FROM LAW ENFORCEMENT — IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"Automated speed enforcement cameras are a force multiplier for APD. The program helps deter people from speeding and allows officers to conduct enforcement in other parts of the city."

— Harold Medina, Chief of Police, Albuquerque Police Department City of Albuquerque official press release, August 2025

CASE STUDY: MARYLAND SAFEZONES

Launched October 2009 by MDOT SHA, Maryland State Police & MDTA – a law enforcement partnership from day one.

- ✓ All citations verified by Maryland State Police or MDTA Police before issuance – sworn officers in the loop at every step.
- ✓ Program has expanded steadily – proof that law enforcement buy-in grows as results are demonstrated.
- ✓ Continuous year-over-year reduction in vehicles exceeding enforcement speeds from 2010–2022.
- ✓ Operators do not need to be in work zones – reducing officer exposure to dangerous high-speed environments.

PROGRAM ADOPTION IS ACCELERATING

222 U.S. communities using automated speed safety enforcement as of March 2024 – up from 211 at end of 2023 (IIHS)

- ✓ Speed cameras reduce speeding by up to 65% – a level no traditional patrol program can match at scale.
- ✓ The 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) unlocked federal NHTSA grant funding for ATE in school & work zones – a historic shift.
- ✓ Washington D.C. issued 580,000 automated citations in 2013 vs. 80,000 by officers – 7x the enforcement reach.
- ✓ 2025 saw the largest wave of new ATE legislation ever recorded across U.S. states (FFJC, 2025).

THE BOTTOM LINE

ATE doesn't reduce policing – it elevates it.

Officers in established ATE programs aren't being replaced – they're being redeployed to the high-value, high-judgment work that requires a sworn officer. The technology handles routine volume; the officer handles everything that matters most. Departments that embrace ATE become safer, more efficient, more trusted – and better able to focus on the serious crimes their communities need them to address.

SOURCES

NHTSA | IIHS | TRIP (2024, 2025) | NACTO | IACP 2024 Recruitment & Retention Survey | MDOT SHA SafeZones Program | Police1 / What Cops Want 2023–24 | Governor's Highway Safety Association (GHSA) 2023 | MDPI Safety Effectiveness Review (2025) | Vera Action February 2025 Poll | Fines & Fees Justice Center 2025 | Officer.com / | NPR (2023) | VITRONIC / Police1 (2025)

This brief is intended for internal use in law enforcement outreach and communications campaigns supporting ATE program adoption.