

# EIGHT REASONS YOU NEED TRAFFIC DATA AND ANALYTICS NOW



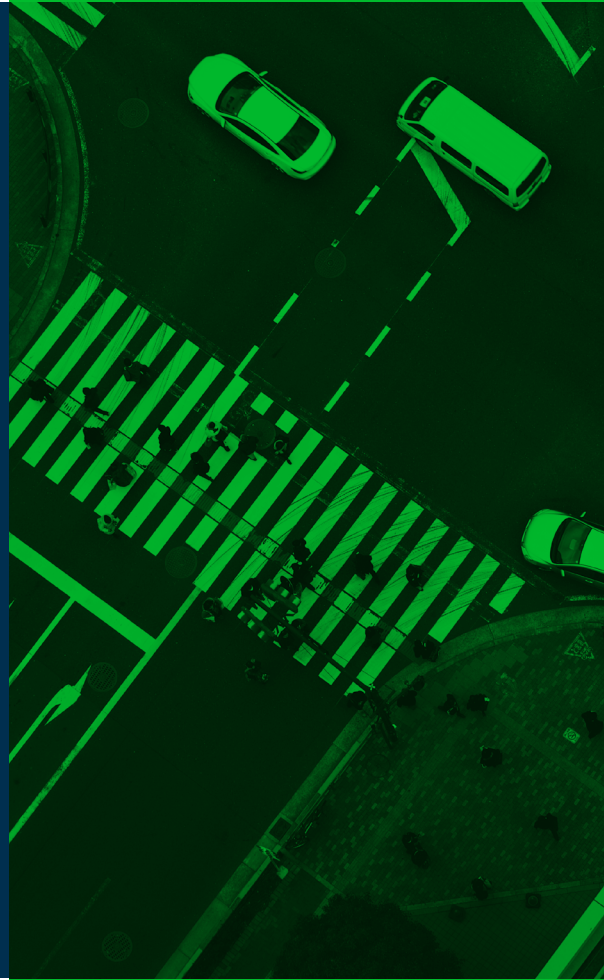
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## Introduction

As towns and cities everywhere become more populated and industry continues to grow, our roads become more congested with cars as people travel for work, to shop or visit with friends and family, and trucks and delivery vehicles as industry moves goods across our cities, states and nation.

For law enforcement, increased traffic has traditionally meant more officers assigned to carry out the important, never-ending task of managing traffic speed and safety. But as we've discussed previously in our white paper, [Three Ways Radar Speed Displays Help You Maximize Resources and Budget](#), budget cuts and hiring freezes have made it necessary to become more resourceful in order to achieve goals and manage safety risks.

The answer to this dilemma lies in approaching the problem from a new perspective—one that leverages the technology at a department's fingertips with cutting-edge automation that amplifies its impact. This paper provides eight compelling reasons to introduce a data-driven strategy to your traffic management program to realize measurable results now and for the future, making roads safer for everyone.

### Reason #1 Obtain Grants and Funding

When you apply for a grant or other kind of funding to support traffic calming and safety initiatives the competition can be significant. Your application is considered among hundreds of others from agencies with similar needs as yours, so how can you ensure that your grant application stands out as a good candidate to those on the reviewing committee?

The fact is that you are more likely to obtain funding for the purchase of traffic devices and new program initiatives if you demonstrate that you have both sufficient need and the ability to accurately measure results and prove program success. Fast, centralized access to comprehensive traffic data and analytics provides both, by allowing personnel to generate and distribute reports on demand for rapid response and measurement.





To qualify for certain grants, providing reliable traffic data and analytics helps you to illustrate your problem statement related to speeding issues. With others, such as state Traffic Safety Information System initiatives, the ability to generate reports is a must in order to be eligible.

Reports that are helpful in demonstrating your funding needs include site-specific speed summaries, 85th percentile volumes by day and time, and speed limit to average speed comparisons. Reports that measure success over time include traffic sign effectiveness reports, which chart the percentage of vehicles slowed down by a specific radar speed display, and volumes by compliance reports that display the number of vehicles that are speed-limit compliant, those inside the speed threshold, and those violating the speed limit by a predetermined percentage. By running the same report for two different time periods, you can compare the “before” and “after” data to track net changes.

If you are required to comply with a Traffic Safety Information System initiative to facilitate access and integration of traffic data with other agencies, you are required to provide comprehensive information from all your traffic devices, which you have at your fingertips with an online reporting system. With a single centralized database stored in the Cloud, other agencies can easily access your traffic data through a secure Internet connection using a login and password you provide.

## Reason #2 Justify a Budget Request

Similar to when your department submits a grant application, data analytics can be enormously helpful at budgeting time. According to the IACP's Best Practice Guide in Smaller Police Agencies, when requesting expenditures in the capital improvements program, the extent to which you can show legitimate need now and results later can mean the difference between a thumbs up or thumbs down from the budgeting decision-makers.

Another factor in your ability to successfully secure budgeting approval is whether you can demonstrate how the community will save money by making staff more efficient and effective. One way to accomplish this is being able to accurately identify where officers should be deployed for maximum impact and to cut down on officer deployment where speeding is no longer an issue, perhaps due to the placement of radar speed displays. All Traffic Solutions TraffCloud™ Enforcement Priorities Report lists recommended enforcement priorities ranked by site, time of day, and day of the week for the most effective enforcement activity.



RANK	SITE	DAY OF THE WEEK	TIME	SPEED LIMIT	AVG SPEED	AVG VIOLATION SPEED	85% SPEED	AVG # VEHICLES	AVG # VIOLATION
1	Across from Mt Nittany United Methodist Church, NB	Saturday	15:00-16:00	25	31.0	39.8	289.0	289.0	73.0
2	Across from Mt Nittany United Methodist Church, NB	Saturday	15:00-16:00	25	32.0	39.8	268.0	268.0	64.0
3	Across from Mt Nittany United Methodist Church, NB	Saturday	17:00-18:00	25	30.0	39.4	391.0	391.0	63.0
4	Across from Mt Nittany United Methodist Church, NB	Friday	17:00-18:00	25	30.0	39.5	416.0	416.0	62.0
5	Across from Mt Nittany United Methodist Church, NB	Saturday	14:00-15:00	25	32.0	38.8	238.0	238.0	59.0
6	Across from Mt Nittany United Methodist Church, NB	Monday	15:00-16:00	25	30.1	39.4	36.0	366.0	58.0
7	Across from Mt Nittany United Methodist Church, NB	Saturday	11:00-12:00	25	31.0	38.5	36.0	311.0	58.0

Having access to pre-designed, flexible reports on all your traffic devices in one place and available from an Internet connection saves officers considerable time because they no longer have to deal with manually collecting and entering data into spreadsheets or data file management. Less time spent on paperwork means greater accountability and more time staff can be on the streets where they are most effective.



### Reason #3 Clear Complaints

Police departments understand the importance of following up on neighborhood complaints regarding speeding vehicles on a particular stretch of road. The ability to address these concerns in a timely manner improves community relations and helps lighten the volume of paperwork for officers and staff.

At times, these complaints prove to be more of a perception problem. Other times there is basis for concern and remediation, but being able to prove or disprove speed issues has oftentimes involved assigning officers, using handheld Lidar, to manually monitor and track driver speeds. Lidar guns are helpful to law enforcement, but most officers still record the data by hand and then enter it all into spreadsheets for tracking and analysis. This process is labor-intensive, slows down reaction time and is error-prone due to its manual nature.

One solution is to first install a speed radar display on the road in question. Place the display on the road in “stealth mode” so that it can inconspicuously gather speed data without appearing to be operational to passing drivers. If the data comes back and shows that most everyone is obeying the speed limit, you can clear the complaint without using considerable resources. If there is a problem, you know that you need to take action, such as posting an officer with a Lidar device on the road for enforcement.

Using a web-enabled Lidar gun that records and transfers speed data to a central online location in real time, officers can access and analyze more accurate data to determine average speed, 85th percentile and the number of violations in a specific time period. This data can be analyzed using a reporting tool that’s built into your traffic management solution to measure the degree to which you have successfully calmed traffic.





## Reason #5 Resource Prioritization

Between budget cuts and hiring freezes, careful utilization of your resources is extremely important. If you have traffic statistics, such as peak speed violation times and locations ranked in order of quantity and severity of violations, you can effectively allocate officers to areas where speed enforcement is critical. As mentioned in Reason #2 earlier in this paper, some traffic management reporting systems can compile this data for you using parameters you provide, such as time of day, day of the week or by a specific list of locations.

When you can quickly retrieve a timely report that ranks enforcement priorities for you, it takes the guesswork out of allocating personnel where they will be most effective, which maximizes your resources as well as your budget.



## Reason #6 Proof of Success

There are many instances where law enforcement is called upon to prove the success of their traffic calming and traffic safety measures. Some financially-related reasons, such as receiving state grants, have already been covered in this paper. Other times the reasons are more focused on community relations.

Some police departments are called upon frequently to speak at community “town hall” or HOA meetings on issues related to traffic calming or local traffic safety programs. Other times you may need to address resident complaints of speeding on a particular street or neighborhood. When you have access to traffic analytics you can run reports and pull statistics before your meeting to share program results. Many All Traffic Solutions customers tell us they share TraffiCloud reports regularly on their websites or email reports directly from TraffiCloud to HOAs. The HOAs post the information on their websites or publish it in monthly community newsletters.

Of course, sharing traffic data reports is standard operating procedure with most law enforcement agencies. (In fact, we understand that police chiefs love them!) There’s no better way to provide positive, immediate proof of the improvements you have made than with timely, well-organized reports that use colorful graphs and charts to draw attention to the data.



### Reason #7 Long-term Planning

Traffic data can help identify what your agency will require in the future in terms of traffic safety and enforcement. Analyzing traffic data allows law enforcement to identify the locations and severity of safety issues in the community to see which are trending upward and will require more long-term solutions, such as adding more traffic lanes or signals. If your agency shares traffic data with your municipality, they will find the data enormously helpful in planning and budgeting for road improvements and construction.



### Reason #8 Holistic View of the Future

More and more municipalities are sharing data between agencies so that everyone can benefit from a larger, integrated database that paints a more holistic picture of the future.

For example, when law enforcement shares data on traffic volume by hour with the public works department, the latter can use that intelligence to plan the best times to assign road crews on a neighborhood street. Law enforcement may want to use count and classification data gathered by the public works department to identify where trucks or motorcycles are speeding through neighborhoods and other reasons why additional traffic enforcement may become necessary.

The city's traffic engineers will find vehicle count data useful in determining how long to make turning lanes or identifying stretches of road where they may need to reroute trucks away from heavy local traffic. Urban planners can use traffic data intelligence to plan new business and shopping districts, parking facilities and residential developments.

When public agencies share their data, everyone benefits from the combined pool of intelligence it creates.

## Conclusion

As law enforcement finds itself continually challenged by the growth in population, commerce and sheer volume of traffic, adopting a data-driven strategy to traffic management is more critical than ever. By applying a “data analytics mindset” you can capitalize on the trends you see taking place for more informed decision making that leads to better resource utilization, reduced speeding violations, improved community relations and safer roads for everyone. If you would like to simplify and streamline the collection, management and distribution of traffic data in your municipality, we’re here to help.



Ask us for a personal demo of **TraffiCloud™**, the traffic management solution that lets you control your traffic devices and data from any Internet-ready device 24/7, providing a new level of awareness while reducing the amount of time needed to manage your traffic devices and information.

Call 866 366 6602 or email us at [sales@alltrafficsolutions.com](mailto:sales@alltrafficsolutions.com)



TraffiCloud leverages our patented technology (US Patents 8,417,442; 8,755,990; 9,070,287; 9,411,893) to deliver unique cloud-based management, features and functionality.

All Traffic Solutions delivers cloud-based traffic management solutions, including radar speed and variable message displays, imaging products and intelligent transportation systems for law enforcement, transportation and communities. Our innovative TraffiCloud™ traffic management platform is changing the way communities solve their most complex traffic, transportation and parking challenges by allowing them to manage all their traffic equipment remotely, as well as leverage data to increase traffic safety, streamline their operations and achieve lasting results.

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