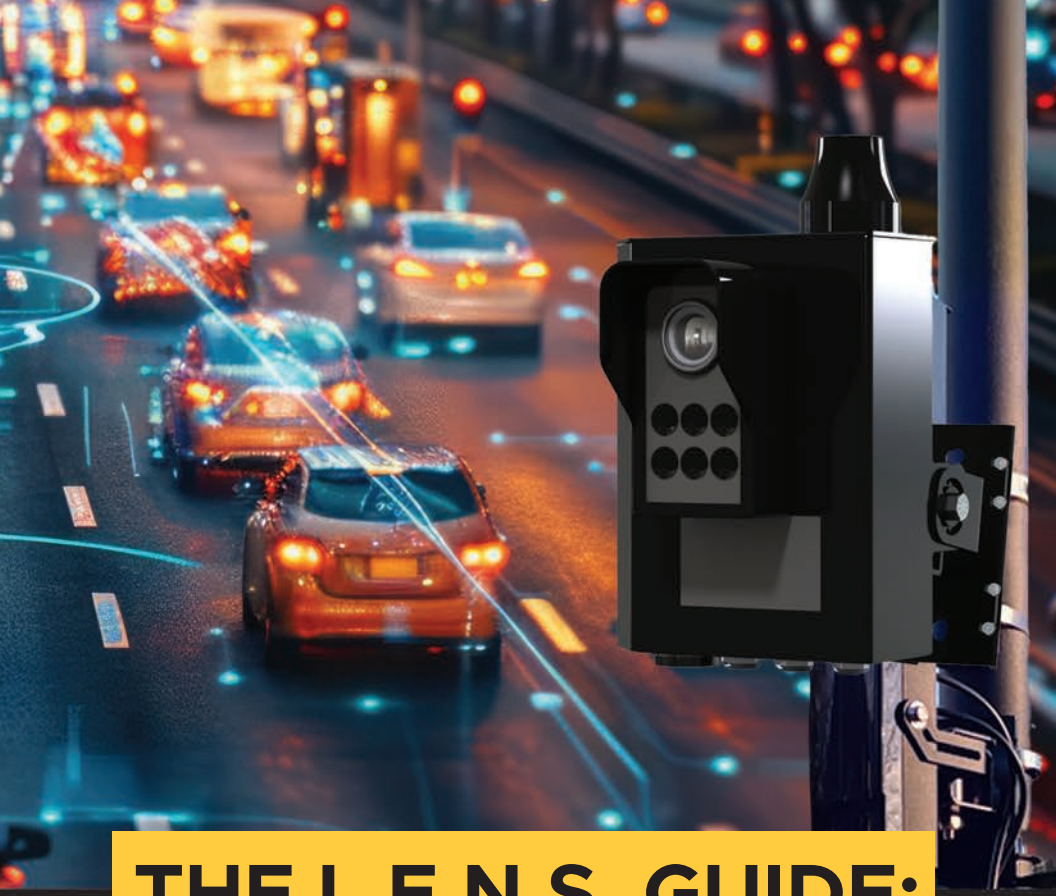

THE L.E.N.S. GUIDE:

Law Enforcement Navigation Strategy

for Speed Cameras

TRAFFICLOGIX

A Concise Guide to Understanding and Implementing SSC (Speed Safety Cameras) in Your City

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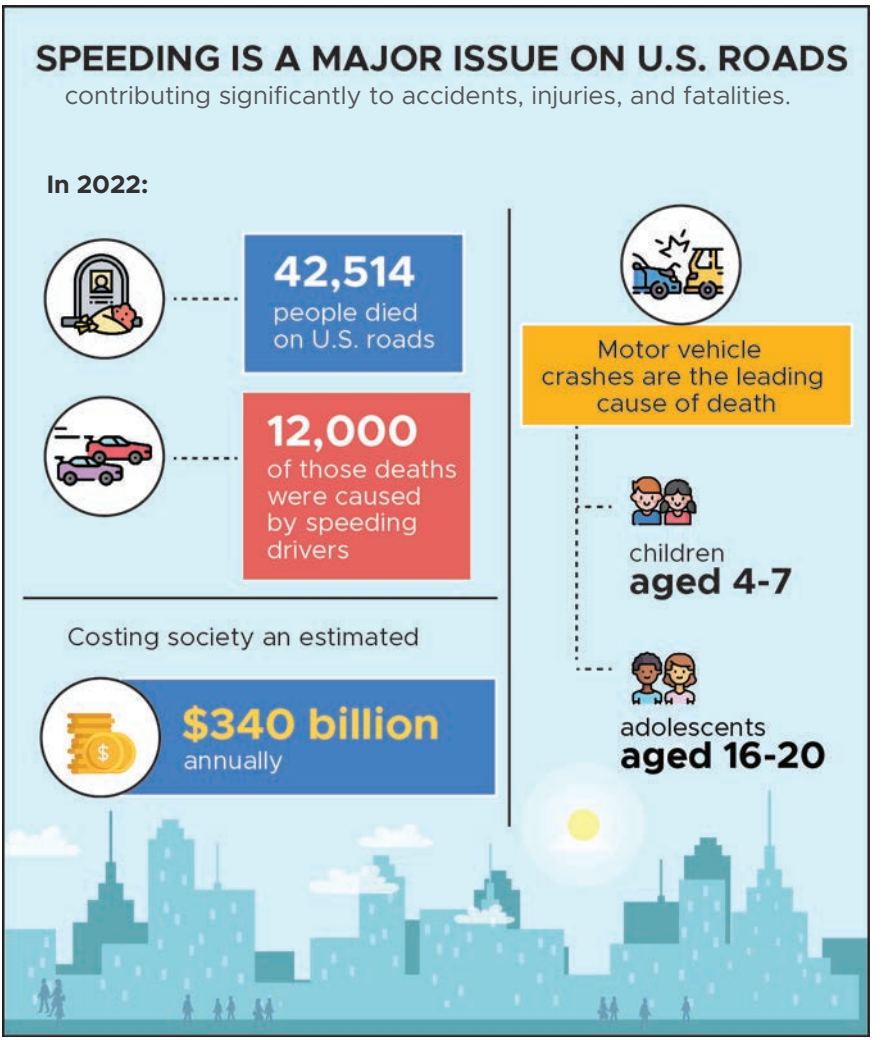
1. THE NEED FOR INTERVENTION

The Danger of Our Streets



U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg and NHTSA Deputy Administrator Dr. Steven Cliff have both highlighted the severity of this crisis, urging action to prevent these deaths from becoming the norm.

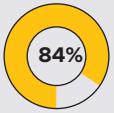
Driver Attitudes

Despite efforts to curb speeding, many drivers admit to regularly exceeding speed limits. An American Automobile Association (AAA) study found that:

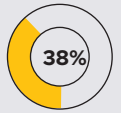
Nearly half of drivers **exceeded speed limits** on freeways

Over 40% **did so on residential roads**

An IPSOS survey revealed that:



84% of drivers **believe that drivers speed** some of the time



Only 38% **admitted they aren't always aware of their speed.**

Common reasons for speeding include perceived peer behavior, time pressures, overconfidence, and lack of awareness.

2. ENFORCING SPEED LIMITS

Traditional Enforcement Techniques

These include a mix of passive (traffic calming measures, radar signs) and active (police patrols, fines) methods to enforce speed limits.

Before implementing SSCs, cities should assess the effectiveness of previous strategies and identify areas where SSCs can be most impactful.

Speed Safety Cameras

Speed Safety Cameras (SSCs) are often implemented when other methods fail to reduce speeding. These cameras are part of a broader strategy to enhance road safety, with goals including reducing speed-related crashes and addressing persistent speeding issues.

> "In areas where we've had concerns, we've deployed the speed boards, we've deployed the speed humps....but we needed that added measure of enforcement for drivers that continue speeding."
>
> **Adam Crozier, Director of Corporate Strategy, County of Brant, ON**

3. WHY SPEED CAMERAS?

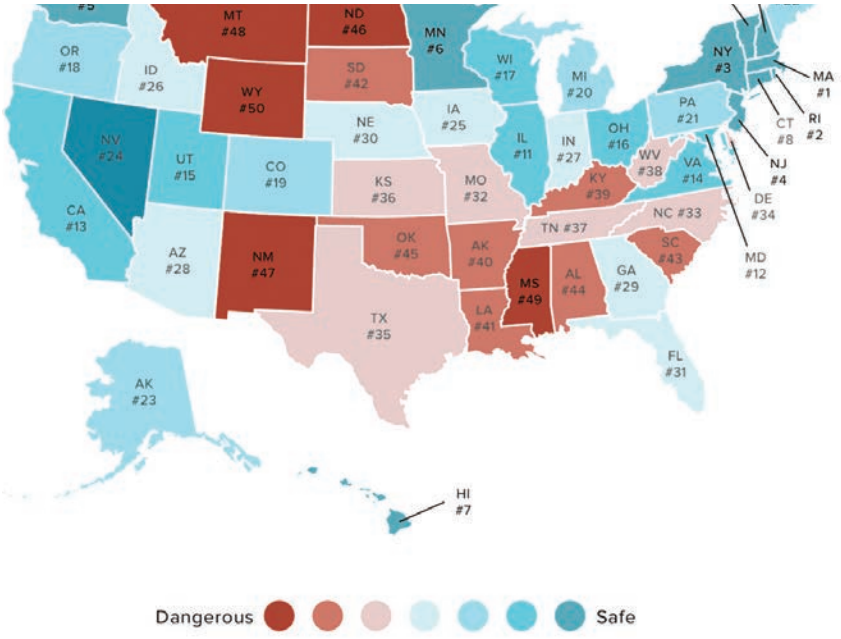
Rationale and Benefits

Speed cameras are effective in reducing crashes and fatalities, particularly in high-risk areas like school zones and construction sites. They minimize the need for police presence and prevent repeat violations. Examples of successful SSC programs include Pennsylvania's Automated Work Zone Speed Enforcement and New York City's school zone program, both of which saw significant reductions in speeding and injuries.

> "[The speed cameras serve as] a force multiplier that isn't human driven but still has the same impact on traffic safety."
>
> **Chief Kelly McCarthy, Police Chief, Mendota Heights, MN**

Addressing and Assessing Need

To incorporate speed cameras effectively, cities must first assess safety needs using crash data and traffic studies to determine where SSCs will have the most impact. This data helps target areas with the highest risk of speeding-related incidents.

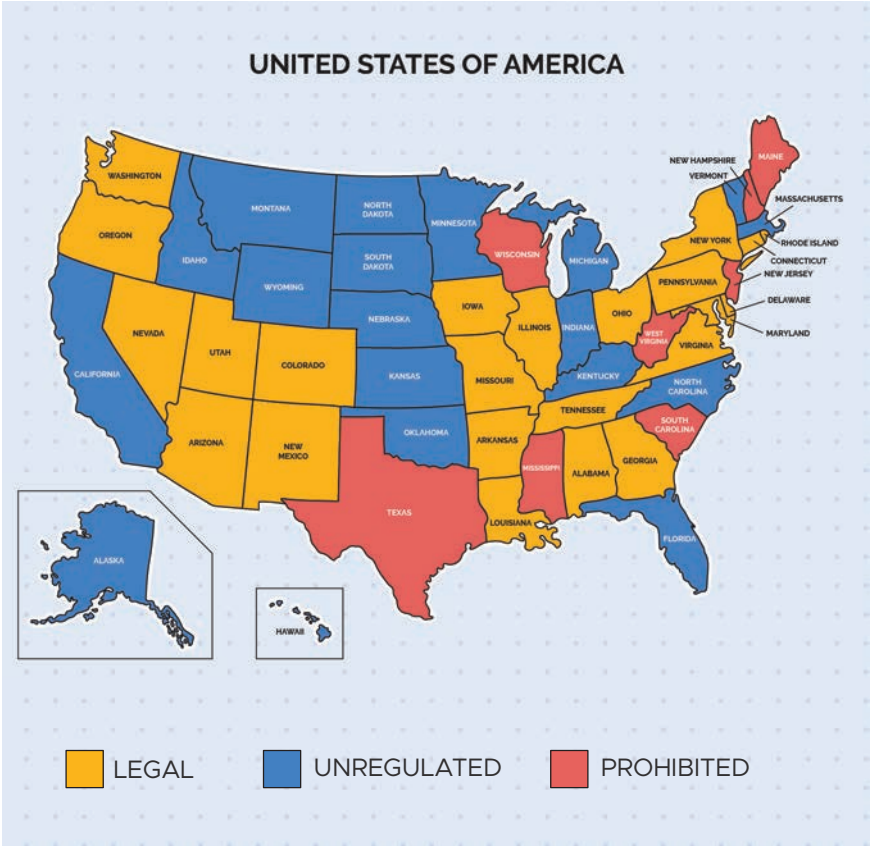


Kaz Weida (2023, May 23). Safest and Most Dangerous States for Drivers. https://www.safewise.com/blog/safest-states-drivers/

> "It's not just addressing speeding in that particular area, [the goal of the speed cameras] is to get people to be more mindful of speeding in their everyday driving."
>
> **Adam Crozier, Director of Corporate Strategy, County of Brant, ON**

4. LEGAL RAMIFICATIONS

Implementing SSCs requires careful consideration of state laws and regulations, which vary widely. As of 2024, SSCs are legal in 21 states, while 21 others have no laws, and seven states prohibit their use. Legal reviews ensure that SSC programs comply with local regulations. Where SSCs are not allowed, warning-only cameras offer a legal and effective alternative.



5. STRATEGIC PLANNING

Community Stakeholders

Successful SSC programs require collaboration with community stakeholders, including law enforcement, city council, traffic engineers, public health agencies, and residents. This ensures diverse input, public support, and a focus on safety over revenue.

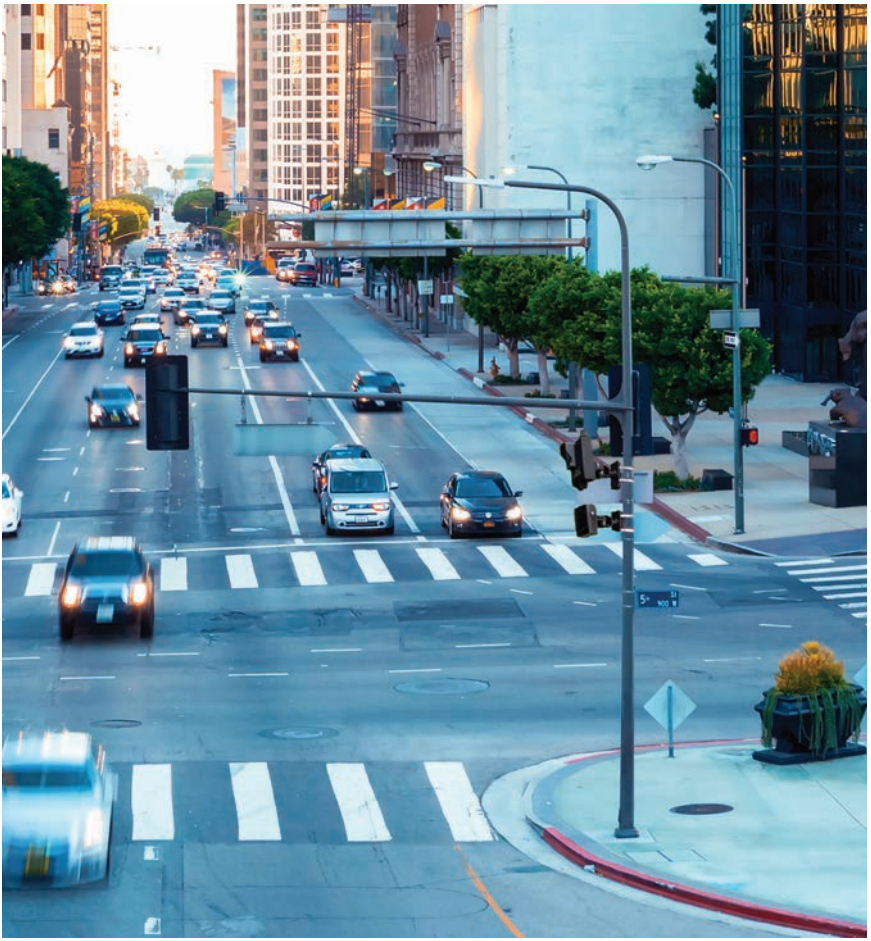
Public Acceptance and Concerns

Gaining public acceptance is crucial. SSC programs should prioritize safety, use transparent communication, and involve the public in the decision-making process. Addressing public concerns about revenue generation and privacy is essential for successful implementation.

6. IMPLEMENTING AN SSC PROGRAM

Choosing Sites and Setting Speed Thresholds

Sites should be selected based on crash data and traffic studies. Speed thresholds for violations should be carefully considered, and cities must decide between overt (visible) or covert (hidden) cameras.



Initiation and Warning Period

Before full enforcement, cities should launch a warning period to help drivers adjust. This period involves operational SSCs but only issuing warnings instead of fines, helping to build public compliance.

7. ASSIGNING RESPONSIBILITY AND PROCESSING VIOLATIONS

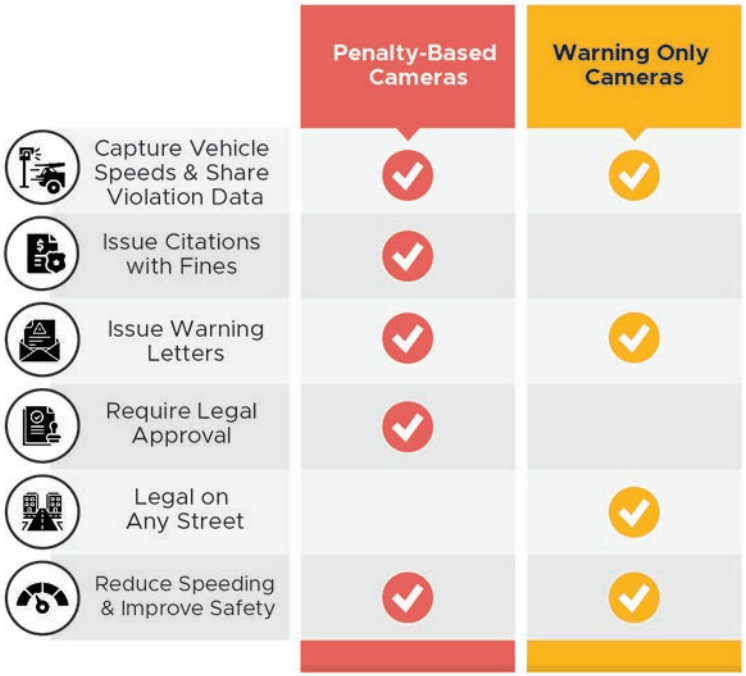
Liability and Citation Processing

States vary in whether vehicle owners or drivers are held liable for violations. Clear guidelines for processing citations, including validation and auditing, are necessary to ensure fairness and compliance with the law.

8. TYPES OF SPEED CAMERAS

Penalty-Based vs. Warning-Only Cameras

Penalty-based cameras issue fines, while warning-only cameras, legal in all jurisdictions, send warnings without fines. Both types effectively reduce speeding, but warning-only cameras are a viable option where traditional SSCs are not legal.

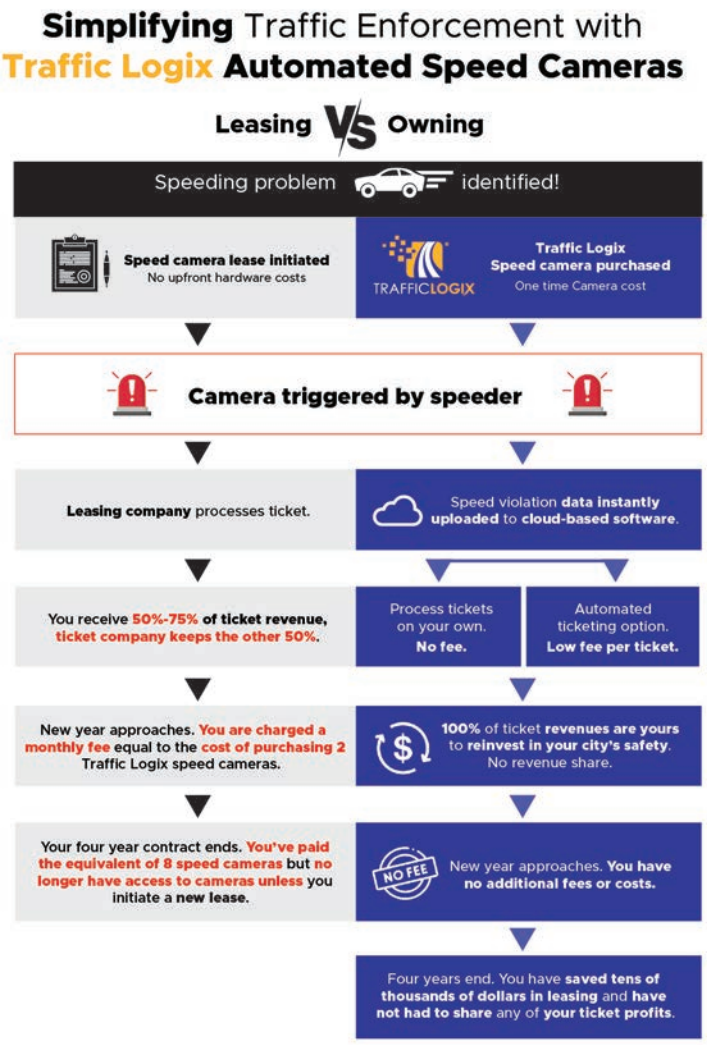


> "These do really seem to get drivers to slow down. And based on what we're seeing so far, the number of speeders driving at really egregious speeds is dropping the most."
>
> **Chief Kelly McCarthy, Police Chief, Mendota Heights, MN**

9. CHOOSING A VENDOR

Outsourcing vs. Ownership Model

Cities can either lease SSCs and services from vendors or purchase and manage them in-house. Each model has cost and operational implications, with the ownership model offering long-term savings and flexibility.



10. THE SSC PROCESS

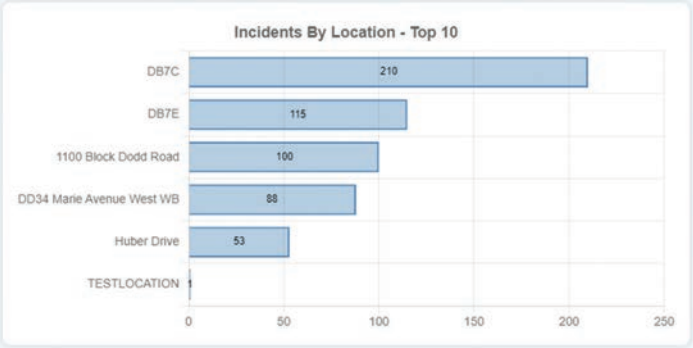
The five steps of SSC processing

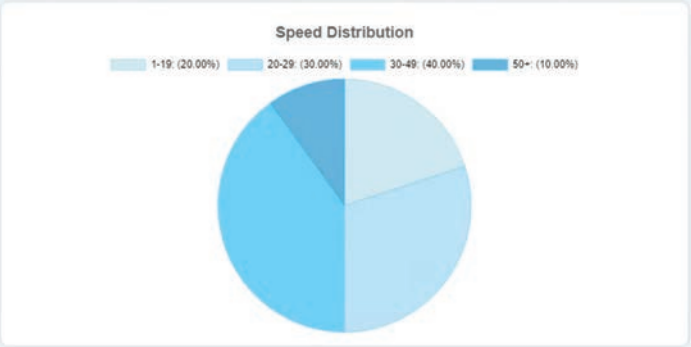
The process of capturing and managing violations can be conducted entirely by third party providers or managed in part by in-house staff. The process includes:

11. DETERMINING EFFECTIVENESS

Evaluating Key Data Points

Regular monitoring of SSC data, including crash rates, citation frequency, and traffic patterns, is key to assessing program effectiveness. This data helps refine SSC placement and operations.



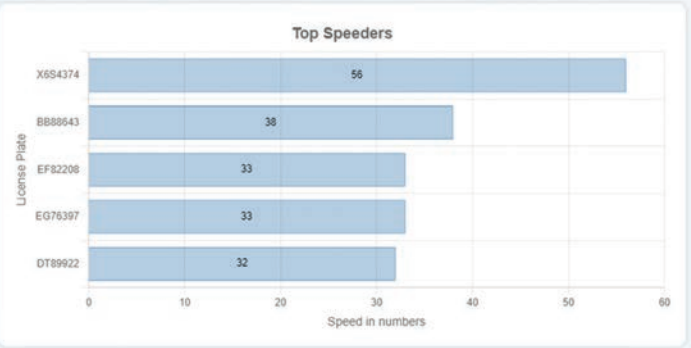


Rejected By Month

Month	2023	2024
January	0	34
February	0	0
March	0	2
April	0	0
May	0	0
June	0	0

Skipped By Month

Month	2023	2024
January	0	27
February	0	1
March	0	1
April	0	0
May	0	0
June	0	0



Use of Fine Revenue

Revenue from fines should be transparently reinvested into safety initiatives to build public trust and enhance road safety.

Conclusion

Implementing SSCs requires careful planning, legal compliance, and community engagement. Regular evaluation and transparent communication are vital to sustaining public trust and ensuring the program's success. **The ultimate goal is to enhance road safety and prevent unnecessary injuries and fatalities on local roads.**

Some of the images were designed by Freepik

https://trafficlogix.com/