

Photo Enforcement

Background and Service Delivery Options

September 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents 1

Introduction 2

 Purpose of Report..... 2

 Photo Enforcement – History in St. Albert 2

Statistical information..... 3

 Annual ATE Reports 3

 Political Environment and Impact of New ATE Guidelines..... 9

 Service Delivery Options 11

 Recommendation..... 14

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Report

To provide Executive Leadership with information on the status of Photo Enforcement Services in St Albert as well as service delivery options as a result of the reduction in the scope of the program that was announced by the Government of Alberta.

Photo Enforcement – History in St. Albert

- 2001 - introduced in St. Albert (two mobile units, two Red Light cameras).
- 2008 - Speed on Green technology turned on.
- 2011 - Third mobile unit and portable “CanCam” introduced.
- 2012 - One additional Red Light/Speed on Green camera approved.
- 2013 - Reviewed inhouse vs. contract service delivery (status quo contract preferred choice).
- 2014 - New company awarded contract (Global); new laser technology introduced.
- 2019 (May) - Contract with Global renewed for five additional years.
- 2019 (December) – Government of Alberta (GOA) announces that they will be reviewing the Alberta ATE program and also prohibits municipalities from installing new ATE equipment, upgrading existing ATE equipment and adding new ATE locations while the review is underway.
- 2021 (June) – City approves, Global’s request to amend ATE contract to reduce the total enforcement hours from 12, 094 hrs/year to 9,064 hrs/year.
- 2021 (December) - GOA announces the completion of the program review and implements new more restrictive guidelines for municipalities. They also continue the 2019 zone and equipment freeze.
- 2022 (December) – GOA announces that they are extending the freeze on zones and equipment to December 1, 2023.
- 2023 (January) – City approves, Global’s request to amend the ATE Contract to further reduce the total enforcement hours from 9,064 hrs/year to 6,850 hrs/year.
- 2023 (November) – as the service contract was coming to an end, SCOW/Council directs Administration to continue with photo enforcement services in a status quo fashion.
- 2024 (May) – City and Global Traffic sign a new 5 year service delivery agreement after Global was awarded the contract following a competitive bid process. Service contract outlined status quo.
- 2024 (June) – GOA formally signalled its intent to significantly reduce the photo enforcement program parameters starting in December of 2024.
- 2024 (December) – GOA made its formal announcement prohibited all use of photo enforcement except for speed and stop sign related offences in school

zone, playground zones, constructions zones, and for red light camera offences. They further prohibited photo enforcement use on all provincial highways and connector roadways (including St. Albert Trail). Applications for exemptions were permitted on a case-by-case basis if there is proof of high frequency collisions at a site and other safety measures have proven ineffective.

- 2024 (December) – The City and Global agree to temporary contract amendments that reduce the total scope and hours of enforcement to ensure compliance with the GoA direction as well as allow time for review for the future of photo enforcement in St Albert.
- 2025 (March) – GoA publishes the new Photo Enforcement guidelines and clarifies some unanswered questions related to program parameters.
- 2025 (May) – The City and Global agree to a temporary contract extension in a status quo fashion, to October 31 2025, allowing more time for Global to propose service adjustments and fees for the City to consider moving forward.
- 2025 (May) – Global provides the City with an informal proposal on what services are viable for them to provide along with the associated fees.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

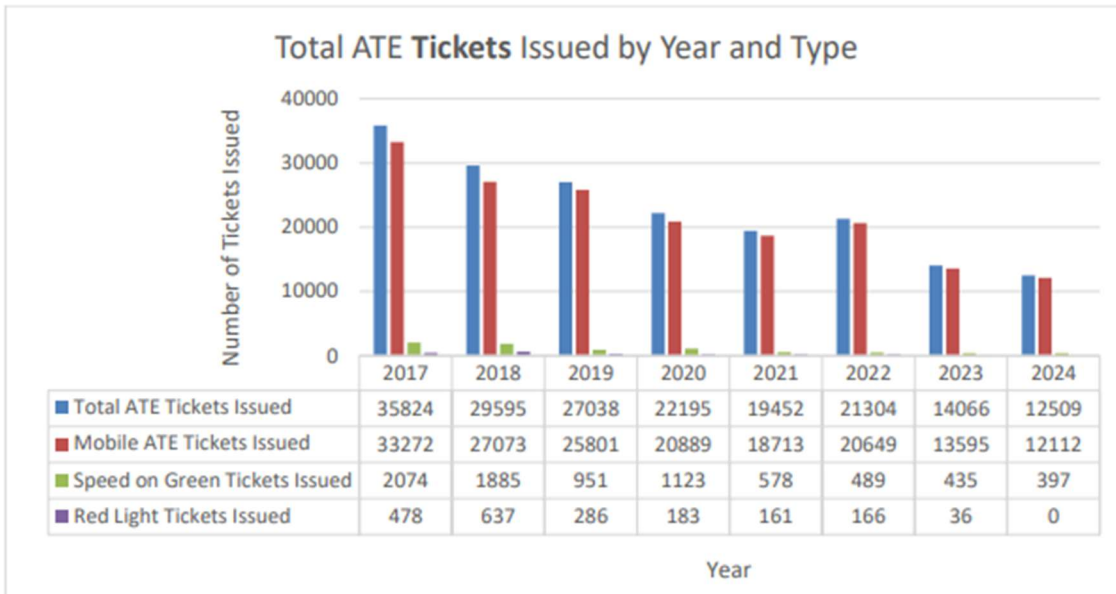
Annual ATE Reports

Annual ATE reports have been created and posted to the public website since 2019 and provides the public with key performance metrics and information on the program.

These reports can be viewed in their entirety at: <https://stalbert.ca/city/eps/mes/photo-enforcement/reports/> .

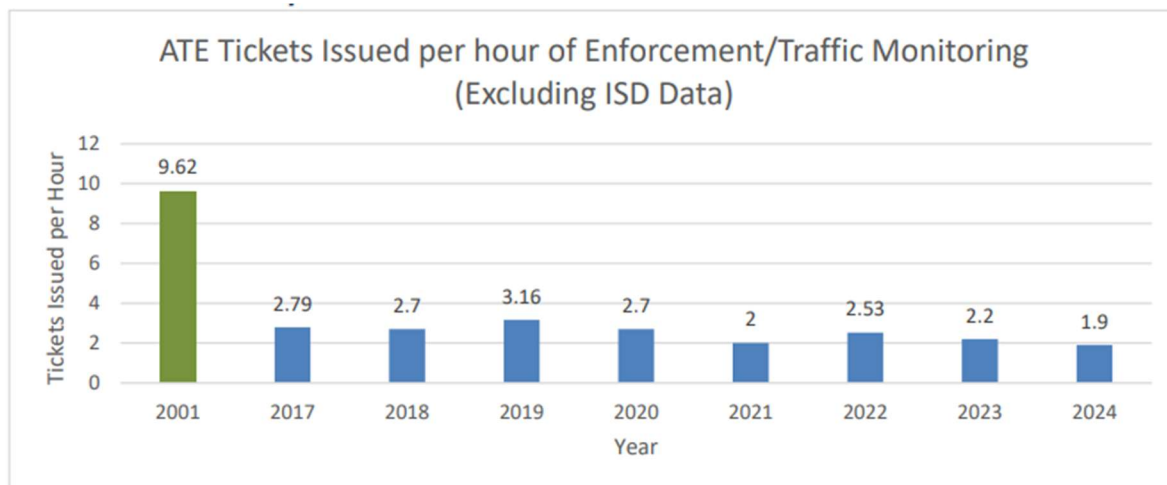
See below for some key trends and graphs from the 2024 Annual Report:

ATE Tickets Issued by Year



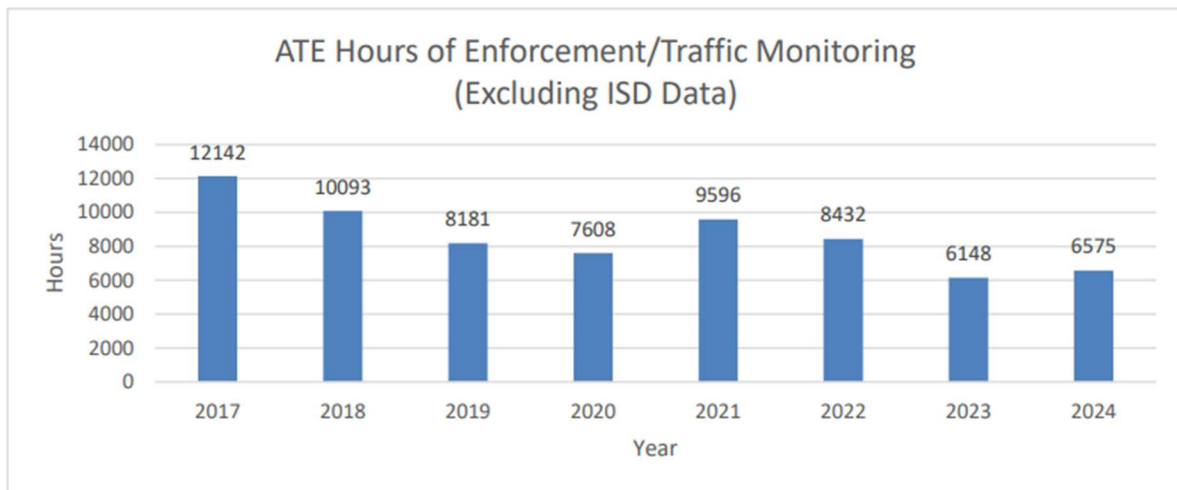
There has been a decline in the total number of ATE tickets issued since 2017. In 2024 there was a decrease in the total tickets issued from 2023.

ATE Tickets Issued by Hour of Enforcement



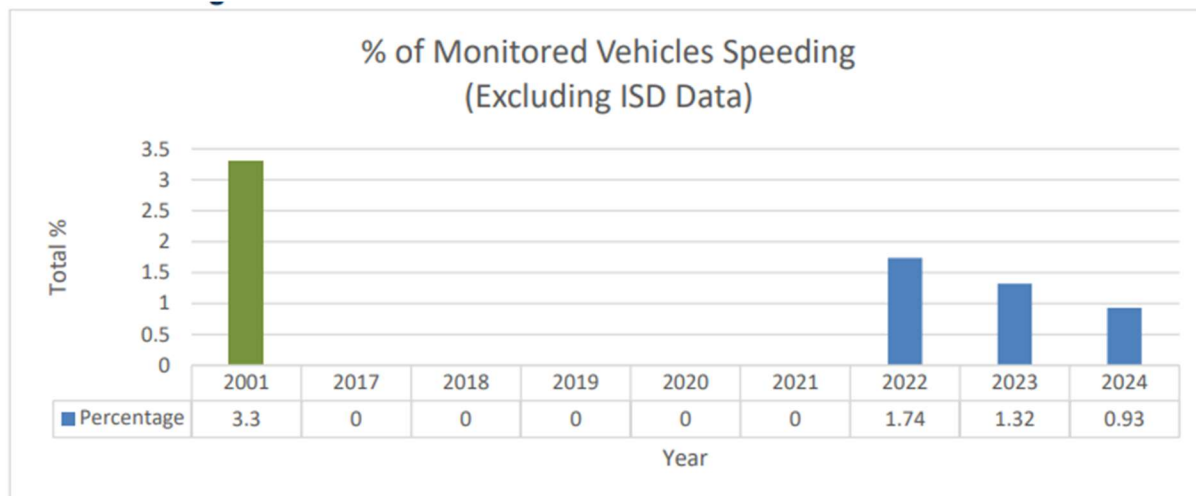
The total number of tickets issued per hour of enforcement tends to be between 2 and 3 tickets per hour over the last 7 years with a slight decrease from 2023 to 2024. It is important to note that when St. Albert first introduced ATE technology to the community in 2001 the total number of violations per hour of enforcement was 9.62. This represents an 80% decrease over the last 22 years.

ATE Hours of Enforcement



The total number of hours spent monitoring and enforcing speed limits through automated enforcement technology has increased slightly in the last year.

ATE Percentage of Vehicles Speeding

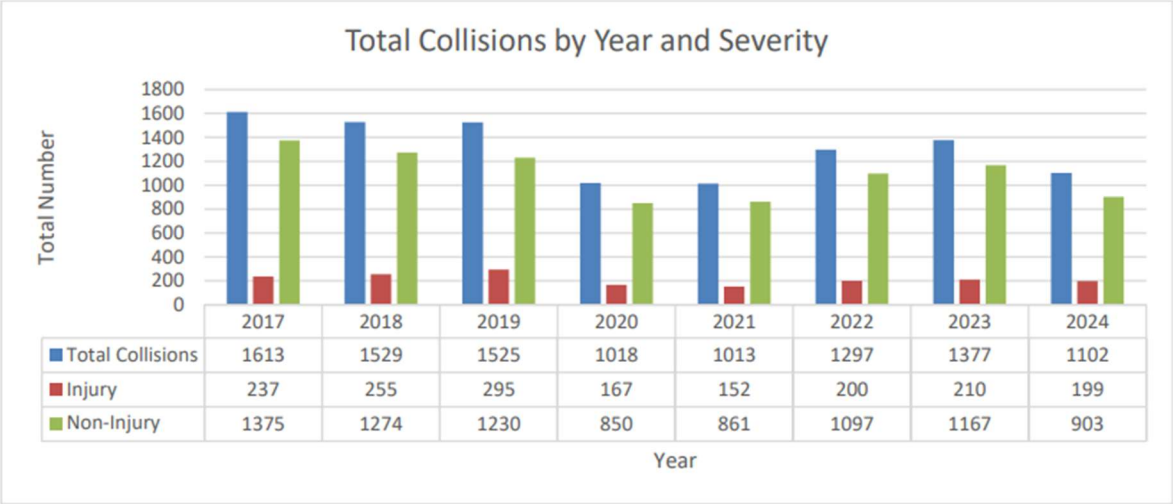


*data not available for years 2017 to 2021.

*There was an error in the 2022, 2023 reports that has been corrected for 2024.

This graph represents the total percentage of vehicles that were caught speeding beyond the set threshold of the system. In 2001 when the program was introduced in St. Albert the rate was 3.3%. In 2024, 23 years later it was .93. This statistically represents a 72% decrease.

Total Collisions

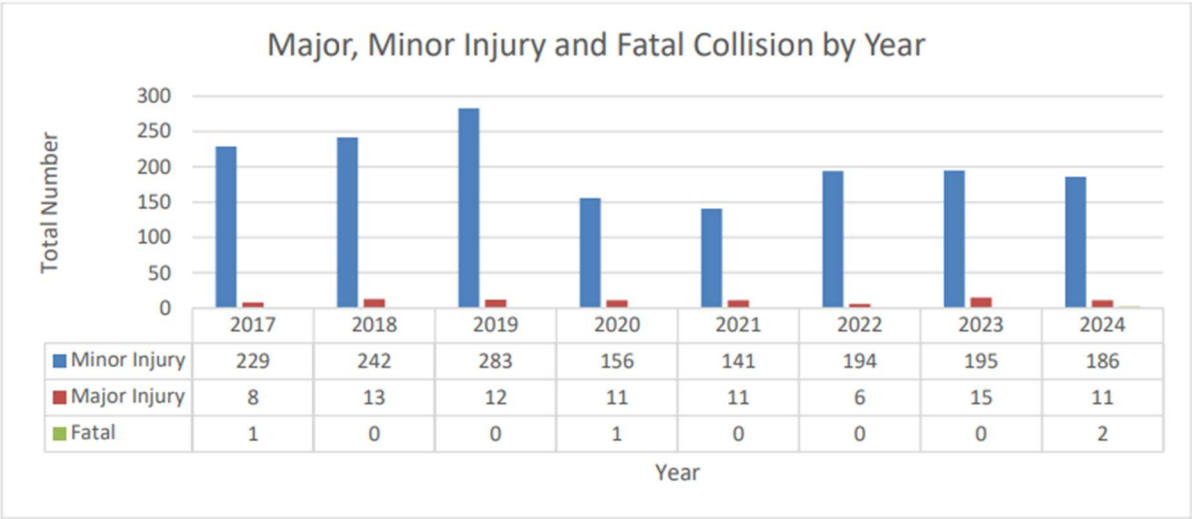


The average **total collisions** for the last 3 years (2021 to 2023) were 1229. The 2024 total of 1102 represents a **20% decrease**.

There was a slight decrease in the total injury collision from 2023 to 2024, however the average total **injury collisions** for the last 3 years (2021 to 2023) were 187. The 2024 total of 199 represents a **6% increase**.

The average total **non-injury collision** for the last 3 years (2021 to 2023) was 1042. The 2024 total of 903 represents a **13% decrease**.

Major, Minor Injury and Fatal Collisions



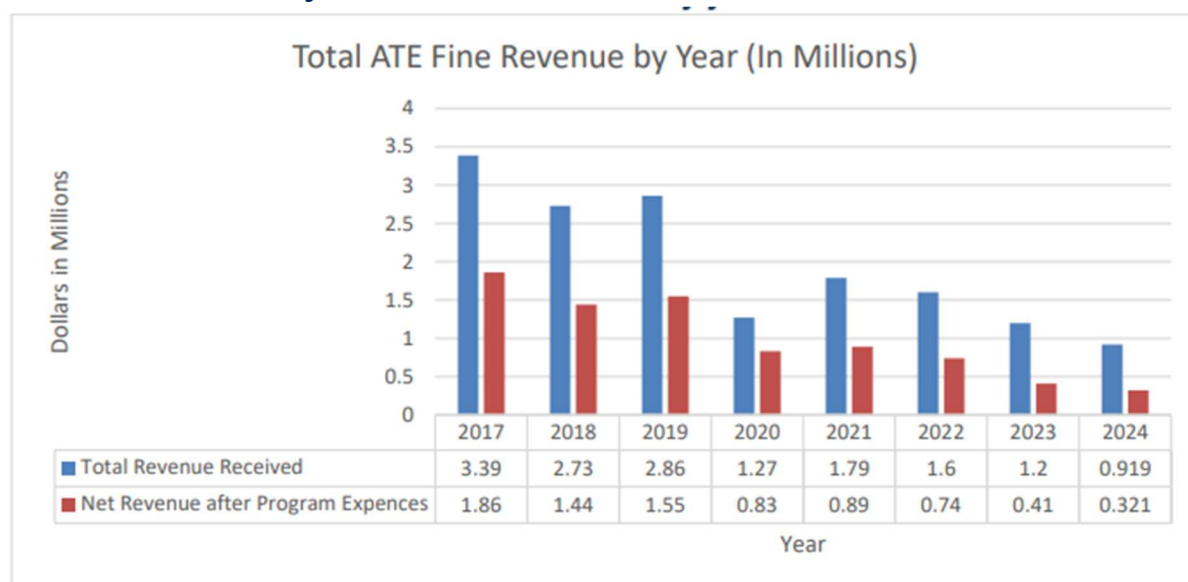
**Major Injury collisions are those where it is reported that 1 or more persons have been admitted to the hospital.*

The average minor collisions for the last 3 years (2021 to 2023) were 176. The 2024 total of 186 represents an **6% increase**.

The average total major collisions for the last 3 years (2021 to 2023) were 11. The 2024 total of 11 represents a **0% no changes**.

The average fatal collisions for the last 3 years (2021 to 2023) were 0. The 2024 total of 2 statistically represents a **200% increase**.

ATE Fine Revenue by Year



From a department finance and accounting perspective all fine revenue received from traffic violations within the Policing Services Branch (including automated enforcement) rolls down to the bottom line of the Emergency Services Department net expenses. The Emergency Services Department funds the RCMP Contract as well as the Municipal Enforcement/Community Peace Officer program. This includes expenses related to the RCMP's 6-person Traffic Unit as well as the City's 2-person Community Peace Officer Traffic section in Municipal Enforcement.

From broader corporation perspective, the Transportation Branch of the Engineering Services Department invests in a number of annual traffic and transportation safety related items. In 2024 the City of St. Albert spent approximately \$572,000 in specific transportation and traffic safety initiatives. This includes things such as [Traffic Calming Program](#), In Service Safety Reviews, Intersection Safety Improvement Designs, Pedestrian Crossing Improvements and Driver Feedback (speed sign) supply and installations. The above noted expense does not include larger projects such as road widening or traffic flow redesigns even though we know that they also have incidental influences in transportation and traffic safety design.

Overall, the City's corporate investment in transportation and traffic safety continues to exceed any net revenue that is received from the automated enforcement program.

Traffic Safety Program Performance Targets

1. 20% reduction in Major Injury Collisions by 2027.

*Using average injury rate from 2021-202 as a base line

**Major injury collision means at least 1 person was reported to be admitted to the hospital

2. Zero Fatal Collisions

	2021 - 2023 Average	2024 Target	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2025 Actual	2026 Target	2026 Actual	2027 Target	2027 Actual
Major Injury Collisions	11	10.5	11	10	TBD	9.5	TBD	9	TBD
Fatal Collisions	0	0	2	0	TBD	0	TBD	0	TBD

Based on the Strategic Targets set out in the Policing Services Traffic Safety Plan, the rates did not meet the 2024 target for Major Injury Collisions. From the 2021 to 2023 baseline rate to 2024, there has been a no increase the number of Major Injury collisions.

Political Environment and Impact of New ATE Guidelines

Photo enforcement has been approved for use in Alberta since the late 90's and has evolved and been controversial ever since. Over the last number of years, the environment and public perceptions surrounding Photo Enforcement have grown increasingly negative. It is likely a result of a combination of reasons versus any single issue. Some of these reasons include but are not limited to:

- Perceived lack of Police oversight and control. Some agencies had little police involvement which often led to municipalities running a program that was not consistent with Police Traffic Enforcement Plans.
- Tolerances. With no standards surrounding speed tolerances, some jurisdictions where setting enforcement triggers lower than what traditional enforcement would pull someone over for. This leads to perceptions of revenue motivation vs safety.
- Over reliance on Photo Enforcement as a means of traffic enforcement. Some jurisdictions were placing more of an emphasis on the use of photo enforcement as a replacement to traditional enforcement because of its cost efficiency and revenue generating model.

As public perceptions have grown negative and support has decreased, so too has the political messaging. In 2018 the Government of Alberta commissioned [an independent study on photo radar use in Alberta](#). The review found that:

- photo radar does make a small contribution to traffic safety in the province, but is not being used in a way to maximize traffic safety
- Alberta saw a reduction in collisions overall, over a 10-year period - of that, photo radar was responsible for:
 - 1.4% reduction in traffic collision rates
 - 5.3% reduction in the proportion of fatal collisions
- municipalities wanted the guidelines to be updated to provide more clarity for photo radar operations
- provincial guidelines could be used more effectively to maximize traffic safety outcomes

In February of 2019, the then Minister of Transportation Brian Mason was quoted in media stating that *“we are going to humanely put the cash cow down”*, during a press conference. Following the release of this study, the GOA conducted some engagement and ultimately [announced sweeping changes to the program in December of 2021](#).

In December of 2024, the new [Alberta Minister of Transportation and Economic Corridors, Devin Dreeshen, announced](#) significant changes to the Alberta Photo Enforcement Program and was quoted saying, *“I am announcing the end of photo radar as a revenue generator, going forward its focus will be on traffic safety”* and *“fire up the grill and say goodbye to the photo radar cash cow”*.

Changes that were announced and subsequently written into the new mandatory guidelines which included:

- Photo Speed Enforcement being restricted to school, playground and construction zones
- Intersection Safety Devices being restricted to red light enforcement only (no speed on green)
- No Photo Enforcement on Provincial Highways or connector roadways (*St. Albert Trail was confirmed to be included as a “Connector Roadway” therefore use of Photo enforcement on that roadway is prohibited*).

On a case by case basis, Municipalities are permitted to apply for exemptions in areas where they can demonstrate high collision frequency and severity and that other safety measures are ineffective.

Service Delivery Options

Given, this new environment and regulatory framework, Administration has reviewed three (3) options for the program's future.

Option A – Continue Photo Enforcement (to the extent possible)

In this option, Administration would finalize a service delivery contract with the current vendor (Global Traffic Services Ltd.), that would continue providing Photo Enforcement services to the community, where deemed viable, necessary and in compliance with the new guidelines.

An informal quote has been obtained from Global Traffic, and should the City move forward with this option, Administration would finalize the contract with the following provisions:

Mobile Enforcement

- Minimum of eight (8) hours per week and a maximum of twenty (20) hours per week (unless otherwise mutually agreed on) of school and playground zone enforcement.
- Construction zone enforcement done on an as needed and as viable basis after site reviews are conducted that consider, public safety, traffic conditions and size and length of the construction project.

Red Light Camera Enforcement

- Red Light Camera enforcement provided through Global's new and proprietary G3red system (currently under review by the GoA for Provincial approval).
- Red Light locations reviewed and if viable/mutually agreed to, deployment and services would be initiated and aligned with provincial requirements.

Should the installation of a Red Light Camera be deemed necessary and viable, the City would be responsible for the costs for installation of a new pole and additional power source (if required at the particular location). Ongoing operating costs would be a similar invoicing model to the mobile enforcement.

Value Add Options

Global Traffic will provide additional services to the City on an as needed, requested and negotiated cost bases. These value-add services include:

- Mobile Stop Sign enforcement in School, Playground, Construction zone or exempt locations.
- Traffic Analyzers for traffic studies, project planning independent or in tandem with enforcement.
- CrashCam accident detection and video recording at high-risk intersection. These recording services can be sold back to insurance companies and also used for law enforcement purposes, collision reconstruction or infrastructure planning.
- Parking Photo Enforcement including permit systems.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contractor has most of the risk in terms of loss of capital investment should the GOA eliminate program. - Takes advantage of the available traffic safety tools at our disposal to continue to work towards vision zero and safe streets. - Fine revenue will continue to be received and overall the photo enforcement program will at minimum continue to be cost neutral for mobile enforcement. - There will be no requirement for Administration to seek additional funding during the 2026 budget deliberations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staffing and contract oversight will continue to be necessary to ensure that GoA program standards can be complied with. - Some negative public perceptions related to Photo Enforcement use may continue.

Option B – Hybrid Model - Increase Community Peace Officer FTEs

This option outline some of the service delivery options that would see an increase to traditional in person enforcement resources that would help offset the shortfall that has been created by the reduction in the photo enforcement program scope.

Increasing the total number of Community Peace Officers can be an additional service added to either Option A (Continued Photo Enforcement) or Option C (Cease all photo enforcement).

If Council desired to move forward with this increasing the total number of Community Peace Officers, Administration would look to recruit with a primary goal of filling the pro-

active traffic enforcement services gap that has been created by the reduction of the photo enforcement program scope.

In Option A, that gap is estimated to be approximately 5,500 hours of enforcement service. In Option B, the gap is estimated to be approximately 6,500 hours of enforcement.

After taking into account leave and normal work detractors, it is estimated that each 1.00 FTE Community Peace Officer would be able to provide approximately 1100 hours of pro-active on-road traffic enforcement services. Detailed assumptions on these two approaches are below.

	Option A + Option B	Option C + Option B
Enforcement Gap	5,500 hours	6,500 hours
Number of Traffic CPOs required	5	6
Net Annual Operating Cost <i>(includes benefits and fine revenue estimate)</i>	\$62,100 x 5 Officers = \$310,500	\$62,100 x 6 Officers = \$372,600
Capital Cost for Vehicles, IT and equipment	3 Patrol Vehicles @ \$180,000 each = \$540,000 + \$60,000 for computers, uniforms, radios, etc,	3 Patrol Vehicles @ \$180,000 each = \$540,000 + \$80,000 for computers, uniforms, radios, etc,
Total Estimated Cost (for first year)	\$910,500	\$992,600

**Additional combinations can be considered if desired. Key assumptions are that each CPO is approximately \$125k/yr (Salary/benefits), each patrol vehicle is approximately \$180k, Traffic Duty Officer would bring in an estimated \$62k in fine revenue per year.*

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Addresses the traffic enforcement gap left behind from the Photo Enforcement program reduction. - Increases the available MES/CPO resources for incidents and events such as but not limited to emergency management, corporate security, urgent bylaw enforcement issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased capital and ongoing operating costs resulting in increased taxes to fund. - Will increase the demands on building accommodations, HR and IT support, and may have additional impacts on supervision/oversight/organizational structures. - May draw some negative public reaction towards increased taxes to cover costs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will required Administration to increase the funding ask in Budget 2026 and beyond to account for the implementation of this options. This option may take between 12 and 18 months to fully implement and may see some additional funding needs depending on the outcome necessary reviews related to supervisor/oversight/organizational structures.
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Option C - Cease All Photo Enforcement Services

Under this option, the current photo enforcement contract would be terminated, and no photo enforcement services would be delivered to the community.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May be seen as a positive move by some members of the community. - Will increase administrative capacity as work associated to contract management/oversight, provincial reporting, analysis and site reviews/justification will be eliminated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does not take advantage of all enforcement tools available to address Traffic Safety issues reported by residents. - Will increase demand on traditional in person law enforcement. - May bring on some negative reactions from School Boards related to reductions in enforcement activity within school zones. - Removes the potential to subsidize costs associated to public safety as any net proceeds that could come from the program would be eliminated.

Recommendation

After considering all the factors. Policing Services is recommending proceeding with the level of service as outlined in Option A – Continue Photo Enforcement (to the extent possible).

There is little downside to moving forward with amending the current contract and continuing to provide photo enforcement services to the community. The contract model will ensure that the service at minimum will be cost neutral and will not place additional tax burden on residents, while it addresses a traffic enforcement demand that works towards keeping the community streets safe through speed and right light enforcement.

Moving forward with this model will allow Administration time to fully understand the impacts of that the photo enforcement scope reduction will have and if it will be necessary or not to increase pro-active traffic enforcement with traditional in-person methods.