

Case Study

DEPARTMENT MAXIMIZES RESOURCES AND SAFETY USING PORTABLE TRAFFIC DEVICES AND REAL-TIME DATA

ALL TRAFFIC
SOLUTIONS



Clarendon Hills, Illinois is a suburb of Chicago with a population of approximately 8,600. The Clarendon Hills Police Department employs seven police officers who are kept busy protecting lives, property and the rights of citizens—in addition to, regulating and controlling traffic.

The Department initially purchased the first of two Shield 12 radar speed signs to increase driver speed awareness. It did not take long for the Department to realize the value of providing real-time speeds to drivers traveling throughout the village. According to Sgt. Zach Finrock, “The Shield 12s collect accurate speed and volume data that the Department could not obtain any other way. You can put an officer on a street to take manual information all day, but this approach does it for us.”

Sgt. Finrock continues, “We’re a small village with limited resources. We deploy our Shield 12s on residential streets where we get the most complaints. We use speed reports to hone in on high violation locations and deploy officers at optimal times for speed enforcement. Having the data is hugely valuable because we can address complaints more effectively and efficiently and show the village where we do or don’t have an issue. It’s a great tool.”

The data collected by the signs is automatically uploaded to the ATS TrafficCloud remote management service. From there, the Department can run ready-made speed, volume and enforcement priority reports in seconds using any Internet-connected device. Sgt. Finrock stated, “TrafficCloud has been invaluable to us. It’s the tool we will always use. Everybody’s town is different, and there are many ways to use TrafficCloud for your particular traffic challenges. The TrafficCloud reports are really useful for following up on citizen complaints, but more importantly, they tell us when and where we’re having the most speeding occurrences so we can identify enforcement priorities.”

Clarendon Hills also uses their ATS StatTrak portable roadside vehicle counter classifier to identify where they’re experiencing ongoing traffic congestion problems. “We were having issues with parking on stretches of road that are very hilly. Because of the uneven terrain, blind spots were preventing drivers from seeing around parked vehicles, which generated numerous complaints. We wanted to understand what was going on. Are people speeding, then slowing down to

1



2



These video clips show two of the speed-dependent messages displayed on the Department’s SpeedAlert 24 radar message displays. *Double-click on each image to activate the video.*

1



2



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park? How many vehicles are traveling on that street during rush hour? Do we need to make wholesale parking adjustments and should we implement restrictions? We used the StatTrak to assess the situation.”

The Department implemented a quick traffic study using StatTrak to collect speed and volume data in order to determine whether to implement changes across the board or only during certain hours. The data collected enabled them to recommend to the Village Board that temporary restrictions be implemented during weekdays. The Police Department would then conduct another study and reassess the situation to see whether it improved. Because StatTrak is portable and lightweight, it can be moved wherever data collection is needed—for example, to determine whether road construction affects traffic volume. StatTrak is also used to benchmark and compare speed and volume data on major roads. The Department collects data at the beginning and at the end of the year, then compares the two time periods to understand speed and volume trends. Their overall goal is to use this data to help reduce roadway crashes.

“The Clarendon Hills Police Department is moving to data-driven enforcement because it allows for better use of our time. For example, we recently put together our report for the Law Enforcement Safety Challenge. A major part of this yearly report is based on data from the

StatTrak. The bidirectional counts are great—we can count vehicles with a very low percentage of error and have valuable roadway data.” The Department won first place for similar-size departments in the 2017 Illinois Traffic Safety Challenge and also received the Judges’ Award for top overall recognition.

SpeedAlert radar message display gets positive feedback from residents

Clarendon Hills uses their SpeedAlert 24 radar message display and ATS 5 Trailer for roadside messaging including public service announcements, support for DUI campaigns, increasing driver awareness of the dangers of texting and driving during Distracted Driving month, and sharing safety messages during holiday travel season. They develop their own messages and can also use pre-programmed messages.

In addition to the SpeedAlert’s messaging capability, the red and blue strobe lights on the speed trailer are highly effective in grabbing the attention of speeding drivers. Sgt. Finrock adds, “We receive very positive feedback from residents, who can see cars slow down as they pass the sign. We’re a smaller village with limited resources. The SpeedAlert acts on our behalf when we can’t be there—it’s the tool in our back pocket.”

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