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To: *everyone; _Council Members; Andy Rieger; Denise Holder; Eddie Sims; Jane Cannon; KGOU; KOCO; KOKH; Ktok; KTOK; Norman News; Oklahoma Daily
Subject: Video Cameras at Signalized Intersections

City of Norman
201 West Gray
Norman, Oklahoma 73069

Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Video Cameras at Signalized Intersections

From time to time, the City of Norman receives questions regarding the video cameras located at several of our intersections. The overhead cameras that are seen at traffic signals in Norman are solely for the purpose of detecting the presence of vehicles in order to provide the best distribution of green time based on traffic demand. They are cost-effective replacements for in-ground induction loops that are cut into the pavement.

The cameras are not focused on the driver, but instead on the vehicle as it moves towards the intersection. As the vehicle enters defined areas or "zones" within the camera's field of view, the camera's processor detects a change in the "zone". An output is sent to the traffic signal's controller (the computerized "brain" housed in a nearby metallic cabinet controlling the intersection's timing) that says a vehicle is requesting green time for its direction.

The first traffic signal video detection system was installed in May of 2000 at the intersections of Lindsey Street with the Interstate 35 on and off ramps. Since then, systems have been installed at 24 of the 140 signalized locations in the City.

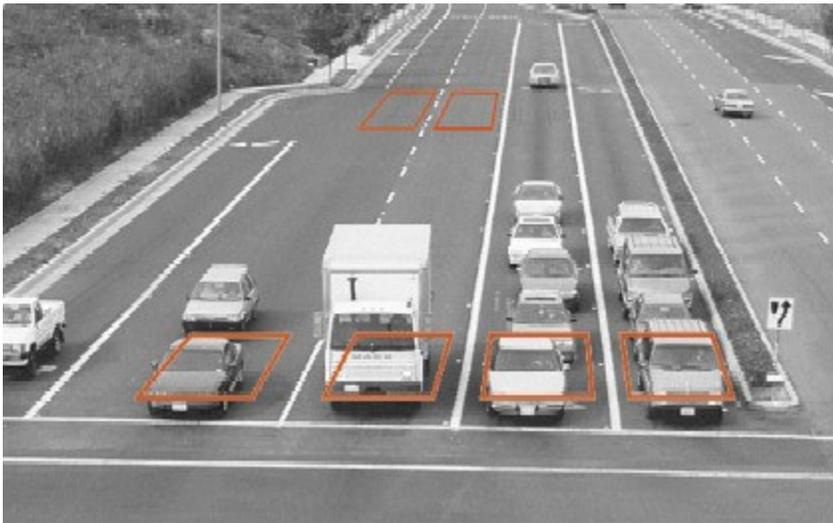
The City of Norman began utilizing traffic signal video detection systems because in most cases they cost less to install and maintain than the older inductance loop type system. Specific benefits include:

1. Utilizes above-ground detection
2. Offers a combination of data and malfunction alarms
3. High reliability
4. Flexible configurations
5. Wide-area detection
6. No road closure needed for installation and configuration
7. Low maintenance cost

8. In the event of construction detours, or incident management situations, video detection cameras can quickly be relocated, unlike detection loops.
9. Video detection cameras can be used to perform vehicle counts, which are used by Traffic Engineering to evaluate signal timing.
10. Better detection of motorcycles and bicycles

There is no constant observation or archiving of these images. The camera view is a fixed focus, fixed location image (there is no zooming or moving the cameras once they are installed). The image is analyzed by the camera processor only for the simple presence of vehicles within defined areas or "zones".

Typical view from a video detection camera:



The red rectangles are the "zones" drawn via processor software to target the areas to detect vehicles.

These particular cameras are in no way tied to any law enforcement system. They are solely for detecting the presence of vehicles within their view. They are not capable of producing an image detailed enough to read license plates or facial features.

Neither the City of Norman nor the State of Oklahoma have ordinances or enabling legislation that permits the use of cameras for enforcement of speed limits or red light running.