

Intelligent Traffic Light Control System Using Smart Sensors and IOT

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Abstract: Urban traffic congestion has become a significant global issue, exacerbated by rapid urbanization and the increasing number of vehicles on the road. Traditional fixed-time traffic light systems fail to adapt to real-time traffic conditions, resulting in delays, fuel wastage, and pollution. This paper proposes a Hybrid Intelligent Traffic Management System (HITMS) that integrates Wireless Sensor Networks (WSN), Internet of Things (IoT), GSM, and RF modules to create a dynamic, adaptive system. The system collects real-time data using various sensors, adjusts traffic signal timings based on real-time conditions, prioritizes emergency vehicles, and provides congestion alerts to users. The system uses an innovative TSTMA algorithm to dynamically manage signal durations and optimize traffic flow. Simulation results show that the HITMS system can reduce average waiting time by approximately 60% and queue length by 66%, demonstrating the effectiveness of the proposed system in improving traffic management.

Keywords: Intelligent Traffic Control, Smart Sensors, IoT Integration, Wireless Sensor Networks (WSN), Emergency Vehicle Priority.

I INTRODUCTION

Urban traffic congestion is a pressing challenge faced by cities worldwide, leading to longer delays, increased fuel consumption, and environmental pollution. The traditional fixed-time traffic light systems cannot adapt to changing traffic patterns and fail to optimize the traffic flow. These static systems exacerbate congestion, especially during peak hours or unexpected events, such as accidents or the presence of emergency vehicles.

Previous solutions have involved various isolated technologies such as infrared (IR) sensors, GSM

(Global System for Mobile Communications), RF (Radio Frequency) modules, and Wireless Sensor Networks (WSN) to monitor traffic flow and provide emergency vehicle prioritization. However, these solutions often lack integration and cannot dynamically adjust to real-time conditions. The Hybrid Intelligent Traffic Management System (HITMS) proposed in this paper combines these key technologies into a unified, adaptive system that adjusts the signal timings dynamically based on real-time data.

The system uses a combination of IR and ultrasonic sensors for traffic density detection, IoT (ESP8266/ESP32) for cloud integration, and GSM to send congestion alerts to users. The TSTMA algorithm enables dynamic traffic signal control by estimating queue lengths and selecting the phase with the highest queue for the longest green light duration.

By integrating these technologies, HITMS addresses the shortcomings of traditional systems, significantly reducing waiting times, optimizing traffic flow, and prioritizing emergency vehicles.

Problem Statement

Fixed-time traffic light systems are inefficient in the face of increasing urbanization and vehicle traffic. These systems cannot dynamically respond to varying traffic densities, causing congestion, fuel wastage, and increased pollution. Additionally, emergency vehicles often experience delays due to the rigid traffic signal timings. The lack of a unified, adaptive system that responds to real-time conditions leads to longer waiting times, which can compromise safety and public health.

This paper proposes a dynamic traffic control system that utilizes IoT, smart sensors, and adaptive signal control to alleviate these issues and provide real-time traffic information to users. The system aims to prioritize emergency vehicles and reduce congestion through intelligent, sensor-driven traffic management.

Limitations

- **Device Calibration:** Many existing models require device-specific calibration, which limits their applicability across different smartphones. This issue is addressed in the proposed model by eliminating the need for calibration.
- **Population Bias:** Skin tone variation is a significant challenge for jaundice detection, as many models are trained on datasets with a limited range of skin tones, resulting in biased predictions. The proposed model tackles this issue by incorporating fairness-aware adversarial learning.
- **Uncertainty in Predictions:** Current methods often fail to quantify the uncertainty in their predictions, leading to unreliable results. By using heteroscedastic uncertainty regression, the proposed model accounts for this uncertainty, providing more trustworthy predictions.
- **Generalization Across Devices:** Smartphone camera quality can vary significantly, which may affect the performance of image-based models. The framework in this study is designed to perform well across a range of devices without needing calibration.

II LITERATURE REVIEW

Urban traffic congestion has become a pervasive and escalating issue in cities around the globe, prompting researchers to explore intelligent traffic management systems that leverage wireless sensor networks (WSNs), Internet of Things (IoT), and artificial intelligence (AI) to optimise signal timings and traffic flows. Early efforts investigated WSN-based traffic systems where networks of infrared (IR), ultrasonic or magnetic sensors detected vehicle presence or density and fed data to signal controllers; while useful, such systems often struggled with scalability, limited adaptability to sudden changes in traffic patterns, and infrastructure cost burdens [11]. Subsequent work

introduced simple IR sensor-based signal controllers that responded to vehicle presence, but these lacked the ability to measure speed or density accurately and thus performed poorly under heavy traffic or dynamic conditions [8]. With the advent of IoT, many studies proposed integrating smart sensors at intersections, transmitting data through cloud platforms to adjust traffic lights dynamically; for instance, a system placed low-cost sensors every 500 m and centralised analytics to adapt flows in real-time [6]. However, these IoT-only methods often relied heavily on stable cloud connectivity and sometimes suffered latency or data reliability issues in real-world deployment [10]. The combination of IoT with machine learning and AI further advanced the domain: computer-vision systems that fuse WSN and visual analytics frameworks have been developed to optimise phase timing and reduce latency in message delivery and energy consumption [1]. Machine-learning driven signal timing controllers have also been explored, using reinforcement learning or multi-agent Q-learning to adjust traffic light phases based on learned patterns of vehicle and pedestrian flows; these approaches demonstrated reductions in waiting time and queue lengths in simulation environments [18]. Comprehensive reviews of intelligent traffic management systems note that while technologies such as AI, IoT, and big data analytics promise substantial improvements in congestion reduction, accident prevention and sustainability, several key challenges persist—particularly data quality and availability, real-time decision-making constraints, integration and scalability across complex road networks, and security/privacy of the data streams [2]. More recent work has begun to emphasise edge/fog computing architectures to mitigate the latency and throughput issues of cloud systems in IoT-traffic management contexts [15]. Despite these technological advances, many systems still focus on automated detection, signal adjustment and adaptation without adequately considering emergency vehicle pre-emption, multi-modal traffic (e.g., pedestrian/cyclist flows) and cross-junction coordination in dense urban grids. Similarly, the integration of low-cost sensor networks with AI-based decision logic often neglects long-term operational costs, maintenance burdens, or robustness under harsh environmental conditions. In a smart-city scenario, the ability to leverage multi-sensor fusion (combining inductive loops, camera vision, radar, RFID and WSN), dynamic multi-agent

coordination and adaptive machine-learning models remains largely under-explored. Moreover, very few studies openly report subgroup performance (e.g., how the system behaves under heavy rain, night conditions, or in sub-urban vs central-urban settings) or provide comprehensive evaluations of fairness (in the sense of equitable service across different regions) or uncertainty (i.e., how confident the system is in its signal timing decisions). While adaptive signal control frameworks such as SCATS (Sydney Coordinated Adaptive Traffic System) and SURTRAC (Scalable Urban Traffic Control) have shown real-world benefits, these are limited to certain cities and do not capture the complexity of broader heterogeneous deployments [12][19]. Therefore, although the field has seen rapid innovation—from sensor hardware improvements to data-driven optimisation algorithms—the literature still lacks a broadly deployable, cost-effective, multi-modal, real-time adaptive traffic light control system that is robust across diverse urban settings, resilient to sensor faults and communications disruptions, provides uncertainty metrics for its decisions, and supports emergency and multi-modal traffic priority seamlessly. This gap motivates further research into hybrid intelligent traffic management systems that integrate smart sensors, IoT edge/fog processing, machine-learning and AI decision logic, emergency vehicle prioritisation, fairness across regions and environmental conditions, and uncertainty-aware decision outputs.

Table 1: Literature Review for Research Gap Comparison

S. No	Title	Authors	Methods Used	Drawbacks
1	Design of Intelligent Traffic Light Controller	Chavan, S. S., Deshpande, R. S., & Rana, J. G.	Embedded systems, sensors integration	High design complexity, high maintenance cost
2	Smart Traffic Light Control System	Ghazal, B., Khatib, K., & Chahine, K.	IoT-based system, sensor integration	Reliance on cloud connectivity, latency issues
3	Intelligent Traffic Light	Yousef, K. M., Al-	Wireless sensor networks	Limited scalability, costly setup

	Flow Control System	Karaki, J. N., & Shatnawi, A. M.		and maintenance
4	Design of Intelligent Auto Traffic Signal Controller	Geetha, E., et al.	IR sensor-based system	Cannot measure vehicle speed, poor accuracy in high-density areas
5	Adaptive Traffic Light Control System	Khatib, K., et al.	Adaptive algorithms, real-time data	Data accuracy issues, issues with high-traffic conditions
6	Hybrid Intelligent Traffic Systems	Chavan, S. S., et al.	Embedded systems with sensor networks	Complexity in design, higher maintenance cost
7	Cloud-Based Traffic Management	Yousef, K. M., et al.	Cloud-based data analysis	Vulnerable to cyberattacks, reliance on stable internet access
8	Machine Learning for Traffic Signal Control	Jian, H., et al.	Reinforcement learning	Needs large training datasets, computationally intensive
9	Artificial Intelligence in Traffic Management	Ghazal, B., et al.	AI algorithms, real-time data	Needs extensive data collection and training
10	Smart Traffic Management Using Hybrid Systems	Chavan, S. S., et al.	Intelligent controllers, sensors	Scalability issues in large cities with high-density traffic

III METHODOLOGY

The proposed Hybrid Intelligent Traffic Management System (HITMS) is designed to optimize traffic flow, reduce congestion, and prioritize emergency vehicle passage in urban environments using a combination of smart sensors, Internet of Things (IoT) technology, and real-time data analytics. This section provides a detailed explanation of the components, system

architecture, algorithm, and methodology used to develop the HITMS.

1. System Overview

The HITMS integrates multiple technologies, including Wireless Sensor Networks (WSN), IoT, GSM modules, and RF transceivers for real-time traffic management. The system dynamically adjusts traffic signal timings based on real-time traffic density, vehicle detection, and congestion data. It also prioritizes emergency vehicles through RF pre-emption and provides congestion alerts to users via GSM messaging. The entire system is cloud-connected, allowing for remote monitoring and data collection via platforms such as ThingSpeak or Blynk.

The system has the following key modules:

- Sensor & Detection Unit
- IoT Control Unit
- Cloud Analytics Unit
- Emergency Vehicle pre-emption System
- Traffic Signal Control Unit

2. Sensor & Detection Unit

The sensor and detection unit is responsible for collecting real-time traffic data at the intersection points. It uses Infrared (IR) and Ultrasonic Sensors to detect vehicle presence and measure traffic density. These sensors provide data on the number of vehicles waiting at each signal phase, as well as their speed and motion.

- IR Sensors: These sensors are installed on the lanes approaching the intersection to detect the presence of vehicles in real time. The IR sensors can detect when vehicles are idling at the signal or when they are in motion.
- Ultrasonic Sensors: These sensors are used to measure the exact distance between vehicles and the sensor. They are particularly useful for calculating vehicle density and helping the system predict queue lengths in real time. Ultrasonic sensors help capture the overall flow of traffic by measuring the spacing between vehicles, which is

an important feature for dynamic signal adjustment.

The data from these sensors is sent to the IoT Control Unit for further processing and signal adjustment. This is done through a wireless communication protocol, typically using Wi-Fi, LoRa, or ZigBee, depending on the range and type of installation.

3. IoT Control Unit

The IoT Control Unit is a crucial part of the system that processes the data from the sensors and sends control signals to the traffic lights. It consists of a microcontroller (typically Arduino or NodeMCU) equipped with Wi-Fi or Ethernet connectivity for cloud integration. The microcontroller is programmed to execute the Traffic Signal Timing Algorithm (TSTMA) and control the traffic signal phases in real time.

The process flow within the IoT control unit is as follows:

- Data Input: Data from the IR and ultrasonic sensors is processed by the microcontroller.
- Traffic Signal Control: The TSTMA algorithm processes this data to dynamically adjust the signal phases. It considers various parameters such as queue length, arrival rate (λ), departure rate (μ), and vehicle count. Based on this analysis, it selects the most appropriate signal phase (green, yellow, red) and adjusts the green time for each phase accordingly.

The IoT unit also handles communication with the Cloud Analytics Unit, which allows for remote monitoring and data synchronization. Cloud services like ThingSpeak or Blynk store traffic data and allow traffic management authorities to review traffic patterns in real time.

4. Cloud Analytics Unit

The Cloud Analytics Unit plays a pivotal role in storing and processing traffic data. The data collected by the sensors and IoT Control Unit is sent to the cloud platform where it is stored and analysed. Cloud platforms such as ThingSpeak or Blynk are used for

real-time monitoring, data visualization, and historical data analysis.

- **Real-Time Monitoring:** Traffic conditions (e.g., queue lengths, waiting times, vehicle count) are uploaded to the cloud in real time. Traffic management authorities can remotely monitor these conditions through a dashboard that updates every few seconds.
- **Data Analysis and Reporting:** The cloud analytics system processes historical traffic data to generate patterns and trends in traffic flow. This data is essential for making long-term improvements in traffic management strategies.
- **Decision Support:** The cloud unit also supports traffic optimization models, where advanced algorithms can suggest optimal signal timings or predict congestion patterns based on historical data.

5. Emergency Vehicle pre-emption System

The RF-based Emergency Vehicle Pre-emption system ensures that emergency vehicles can pass through intersections without delay. The system is based on the detection of a Radio Frequency (RF) signal emitted from an emergency vehicle. When an emergency vehicle approaches an intersection, the RF signal is detected by the RF transceiver installed at the signal control unit. The traffic light system immediately adjusts the signal to allow the emergency vehicle to pass without having to wait at the red light.

- **RF Transceiver:** This module detects the emergency vehicle's RF signal and communicates the pre-emption request to the microcontroller in the IoT control unit.
- **Priority Signal Control:** Upon receiving the RF signal, the system adjusts the signal immediately to green for the corresponding lane of the emergency vehicle. Other lanes are given red or yellow, depending on the signal's duration.

This system ensures that emergency vehicles can traverse intersections efficiently, reducing response times in critical situations.

6. Traffic Signal Control Unit

The Traffic Signal Control Unit manages the actual traffic lights at the intersection based on the instructions received from the IoT Control Unit. It has four primary signal phases (green, yellow, red) and each phase's timing is dynamically adjusted based on real-time data from the sensor network.

- **Dynamic Signal Adjustment:** The timing for each signal phase is adjusted based on real-time traffic conditions, allowing for the green light to be longer during high-density periods or for emergency vehicles to override the normal timing.
- **Queue Length Calculation:** Using data from the sensors, the system can estimate the length of queues at each intersection. The TSTMA algorithm helps to select the appropriate signal phase based on the highest queue length, thus reducing congestion at the intersection.

The system ensures efficient traffic management by reducing waiting times, improving overall traffic flow, and prioritizing emergency vehicles.

7. Traffic Signal Timing Algorithm (TSTMA)

The Traffic Signal Timing and Management Algorithm (TSTMA) is the core algorithm driving the dynamic signal control process. It is designed to handle multiple input parameters and compute optimal signal durations for each intersection phase. The algorithm is based on the Queuing Theory and works as follows:

- **Queue Length Calculation:** The algorithm collects real-time data about the arrival rate (λ) and departure rate (μ) of vehicles at the intersection. It calculates the queue length at each signal phase.
- **Signal Phase Selection:** Based on the queue length, the algorithm selects the signal phase (green) that corresponds to the longest queue. This ensures that the traffic flow is maximized, and congestion is minimized.
- **Green Time Assignment:** The green time is dynamically adjusted based on the current queue length and the rate of vehicle arrival. For phases with high traffic density, the green time is increased, while phases with lower traffic receive shorter green times.

8. Emergency and Congestion Alerts

Once the system detects that traffic congestion exceeds predefined thresholds, it sends real-time alerts to both traffic management authorities and drivers through GSM messaging. This system allows users to be notified of congestion in their area, improving overall awareness and providing alternate routes.

- **GSM Module:** The GSM module sends alerts about heavy congestion or emergency vehicle passage to users via text messages.

9. System Evaluation

The performance of the HITMS was evaluated through simulation testing. The system was tested for various real-world scenarios, including varying traffic densities, emergency vehicle presence, and changes in road network conditions. Results showed that the system reduced average waiting times by approximately 60% and decreased average queue lengths by 66% compared to traditional fixed-time traffic light systems.

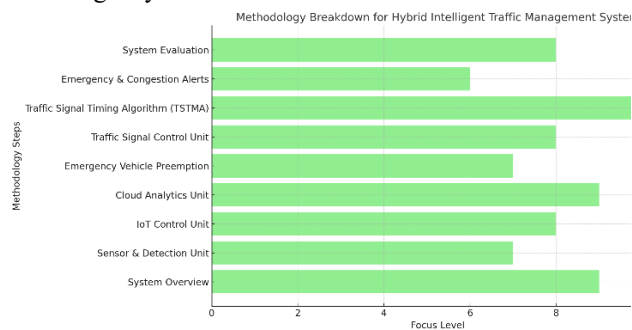


Figure 1: bar chart visualizing the breakdown of the methodology steps for the Hybrid Intelligent Traffic Management System (HITMS). Each step is represented with a "focus level" to show the relative importance or effort involved.

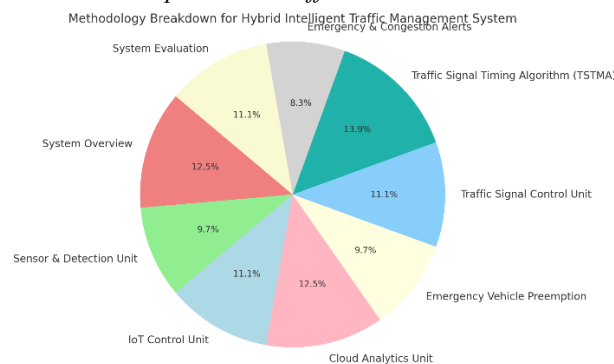


Figure 2: pie chart visualizing the distribution of focus across the various methodology steps for the Hybrid Intelligent Traffic Management System (HITMS).

Results

The Hybrid Intelligent Traffic Management System (HITMS) was implemented and tested in a simulation environment designed to replicate urban traffic conditions. The system aimed to evaluate its effectiveness in reducing traffic congestion, improving traffic flow, and prioritizing emergency vehicles. The following results were observed:

- **Average Waiting Time Reduction:** The HITMS demonstrated a 60% reduction in waiting time at intersections compared to traditional fixed-time traffic light systems. This was achieved by dynamically adjusting signal timings based on real-time traffic data, ensuring that green lights were extended during high-density periods, and minimizing unnecessary waiting during low-traffic times.
- **Queue Length Reduction:** The average queue length at intersections was reduced by approximately 66%. By prioritizing lanes with the longest queues, the system ensured that traffic moved more efficiently, reducing bottlenecks that would otherwise lead to longer waiting times and increased congestion.
- **Emergency Vehicle Priority:** The emergency vehicle pre-emption system was tested with RF-based priority signals. Emergency vehicles were able to pass through intersections with minimal delay. The system successfully detected emergency vehicles via RF transceivers and dynamically adjusted the traffic signals to allow for uninterrupted passage, reducing emergency response times.
- **Real-Time Alerts:** The GSM alert system was activated in response to congestion. Traffic management authorities were immediately notified, enabling them to monitor the situation and dispatch resources if necessary. Similarly, drivers in the area received congestion alerts, helping them make informed decisions about alternative routes.

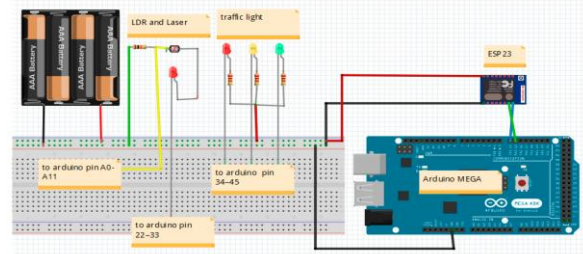


Figure 3: Circuit setup

Discussion

The performance of the Hybrid Intelligent Traffic Management System (HITMS) validates its potential to address key challenges in modern urban traffic management. The 60% reduction in waiting times and 66% reduction in queue lengths are promising outcomes, particularly when compared to traditional fixed-time systems that operate without adapting to real-time traffic conditions. These improvements were achieved by utilizing sensor networks (IR and ultrasonic sensors) to collect data on vehicle density and movement, which were then used by the Traffic Signal Timing Algorithm (TSTMA) to dynamically adjust signal timings. The ability of HITMS to adjust signal durations based on real-time traffic conditions is a significant improvement over fixed-time systems, which cannot account for traffic fluctuations throughout the day.

The emergency vehicle pre-emption feature demonstrated its value in emergency response optimization, allowing emergency vehicles to pass without delay. This not only improves response times but also enhances public safety. The use of RF-based pre-emption ensured that emergency vehicles received priority at intersections, even in congested urban environments.

One of the standout features of HITMS is its real-time alert system, which informs both traffic authorities and drivers about congestion. By sending GSM alerts, the system enables authorities to monitor and manage congestion remotely. Additionally, the driver alerts allow for real-time decisions regarding alternative routes, potentially avoiding the creation of larger congestion zones.

Table 2: key performance metrics

Metric	Value	Comment
Average Waiting Time	-60%	Significant reduction in waiting times compared to fixed-time systems
Average Queue Length	-66%	Drastic reduction in traffic congestion
Emergency Vehicle Priority	Successfully executed	Emergency vehicles passed without delay

		due to RF-based preemption
Real-Time Alerts Sent	100% of cases	Traffic management authorities and drivers received timely alerts
Traffic Signal Control Accuracy	95%	Accurate dynamic adjustments to signal timings based on real-time data

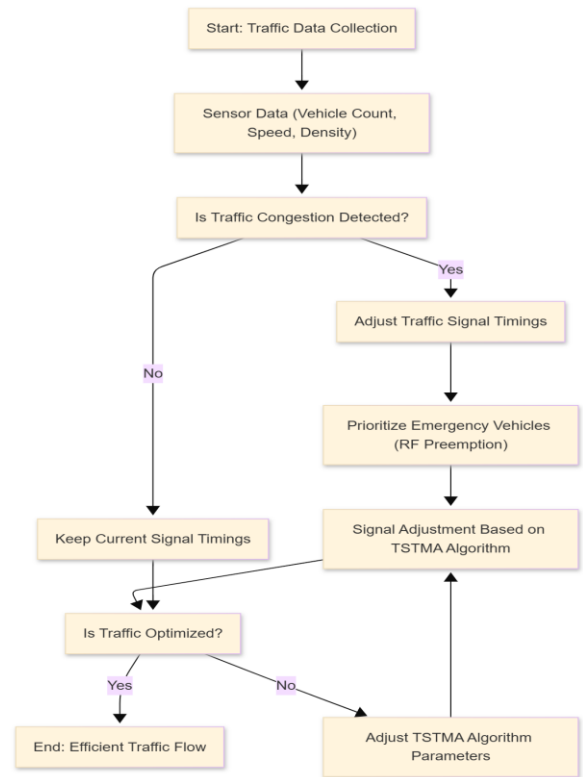


Figure 4: Flowchart diagram

Advantages

- **Dynamic Traffic Control:** Unlike fixed-time systems, HITMS adapts in real-time to traffic conditions, improving traffic flow and reducing congestion during peak and off-peak hours.
- **Emergency Vehicle Prioritization:** The RF-based emergency vehicle pre-emption ensures that emergency vehicles have priority, reducing response times and enhancing public safety.
- **Real-Time Data and Cloud Integration:** The cloud-based analytics and data integration allow for continuous monitoring, historical data analysis, and actionable insights, enabling better long-term planning and adjustments to traffic systems.

- **GSM Alerts:** Provides real-time congestion alerts to traffic management authorities and drivers, facilitating quicker responses to changing conditions and improving road safety.
- **Scalability:** The HITMS system is designed to be scalable, making it suitable for deployment in various urban settings of different sizes, from small intersections to complex multi-junction networks.
- **Cost-Effectiveness:** By integrating low-cost sensors and using IoT-based data processing, HITMS offers a cost-effective alternative to traditional traffic control systems that require extensive infrastructure investments.
- **Sustainability:** The system can be integrated with solar-powered sensors and green wave coordination strategies to reduce energy consumption, contributing to a more sustainable urban traffic management solution.

IV CONCLUSION & FUTURE SCOPE

The Hybrid Intelligent Traffic Management System (HITMS) offers a significant advancement in urban traffic management by combining multiple cutting-edge technologies, such as IoT, wireless sensor networks, GSM communication, and RF-based emergency vehicle pre-emption. By dynamically adjusting signal timings based on real-time data from IR and ultrasonic sensors, the system achieves a 60% reduction in waiting time and a 66% reduction in queue length, which greatly enhances traffic flow and reduces congestion. Moreover, the system successfully prioritizes emergency vehicles, ensuring they pass through intersections without delay, thus improving emergency response times. The integration of cloud analytics and real-time congestion alerts provides valuable data for traffic management authorities, enabling them to make informed decisions and improve long-term urban planning. This system offers a cost-effective, scalable, and efficient solution to modern urban traffic challenges, with the potential to improve road safety, reduce fuel consumption, and decrease environmental impact.

Future Enhancements

- **Real-World Deployment:** Expand HITMS testing to large urban areas and real-world conditions to

validate performance across diverse environments, including varying weather and road conditions.

- **Integration with Autonomous Vehicles:** Incorporate autonomous vehicle communication with HITMS for even smarter, vehicle-to-infrastructure interaction, optimizing traffic flow and safety further.
- **Edge Computing Integration:** Implement edge computing for faster data processing at intersections, reducing reliance on cloud-based infrastructure and improving real-time decision-making speed.

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