

Stop Signs – When Are They Warranted?

Stop Signs should NOT be used to control speed

Stop signs may seem like a simple way to manage traffic flow at street intersections. But when stop signs are installed but are **not warranted** there are often unintended consequences:

* **Drivers Won't Stop** - Unneeded stop signs are frequently ignored. Drivers on the major street either roll through or run through the stop sign, because in their experience, there is little cross-traffic. This puts pedestrians and cross-traffic at risk. Residents frequently complain that drivers do not come to a complete stop at 4-way stop signs. If you observe motorists at many 4-way stops, you would find that nearly half of the drivers fail to make the required stop.

* **Stop Signs Don't Slow Speeds** - Numerous studies nationwide have shown that speeds within a block of the stop sign are largely unaffected by the stop. Naturally, motorists have to slow down when approaching a stop sign. But, they often speed up quickly after the stop to make up for lost time or out of frustration. Overall speeding is not reduced by the stop sign and frustrated drivers do not drive safely.

* **Stops Increase Noise and Pollution** - Stopping and starting cause increased tire and engine noise. Residents living near the stop will experience an increase in traffic noise. Stopping and idling at unwarranted stop signs also increase automobile exhaust and fuel consumption unnecessarily.

* **Increased Pavement Deterioration** - Intersections where stop signs occur also tend to deteriorate faster resulting in increased road maintenance costs.



STOP SIGN INSTALLATION STANDARDS

City staff have specific regulations and guidelines to follow when evaluating intersections. The installation of any stop sign must meet the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) standards. Below are the criteria from the MUTCD for installing stop signs.

Section 2B.07 Multiway Stop Applications

The decision to install multiway stop control should be based on an engineering study.

For more information on the criteria for Stop sign selection please visit the following link:

<https://www.waynesboro.va.us/DocumentCenter/View/11476/Criteria-for-Stop-Sign-Installation>