
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Report ECW-02-2020 All Way Stop Policy Update

For Consideration by Council in Committee on March 3, 2020



OBJECTIVE:

To inform Council of a proposed evaluation process for all way stop requests that provide community benefits but do not meet technical traffic engineering warrants and approve the updated 2020 All Way Stop Policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report ECW-02-2020 All Way Stop Policy Update be received;
2. AND THAT the All Way Stop Policy, included as Attachment 2 to Report ECW-02-2020, be approved.

Respectfully submitted: Tyson Haedrich, M. Eng., P. Eng., General Manager of Engineering & Capital Works

Approved: Craig Manley, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Haldimand County Council is authorized by the Highway Traffic Act to install stop signs at any intersection within the municipality. The consideration of whether or not to install stop signs requires Council to balance technical traffic engineering input with the needs of local residents who believe that the introduction of an all way stop will improve the liveability of their community.

The County's current All Way Stop Installation Warrant Policy process is based on technical justification outlined in Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM) Book 5. These technical requirements are based on traffic volumes, traffic splits, pedestrian volumes, collision counts, visibility restrictions, etc. and do not take into account community input.

The adoption of the proposed All Way Stop Policy with the community justification process will provide a method for all way stops that have significant public support to be approved at intersections where technical traffic engineering warrants are not met.

BACKGROUND:

One of the challenges faced by municipalities is the implementation of all way stop signs. The consideration of stop signs require municipal councils to balance technical traffic engineering input versus the desires of local residents who believe that the introduction of an all way stop will improve the liveability of their community.

The County's current traffic engineering warrant process was approved through Report PS-EI-06-2007 Re: Speed Limit Policy and All Way Stop Policy and is based on technical justification outlined in Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM) Book 5 which provides the Province's requirements for the installation of all way

stop signs. These technical requirements are based on traffic volumes, traffic splits, pedestrian volumes, collision counts, visibility restrictions, etc. and do not take into account community input.

The completion of this evaluation process takes considerable staff time to collect the necessary data, complete the technical review and evaluation and draft the report to Council.

Based on a review of past Council reports all way stop requests generally fall into two categories:

- locations identified by staff that meet the technical warrants and are approved by Council; and,
- locations requested by the public that do not meet the technical warrants but are approved for installation by Council (contrary to staff report recommendations) based on a community need.

Given the fact that the majority of all way stops requested by the public that do not meet the technical warrants are approved by Council, it is clear that an alternative process that includes community input would be beneficial to enable the installation of all way stops, subject to a safety review, at locations that do not meet the technical traffic engineering warrants.

ANALYSIS:

To understand how other municipalities are dealing with all way stop requests staff conducted a review of a number of municipalities in the area. This review revealed that the majority of the municipalities are using only a technical traffic engineering evaluation based on the OTM Book 5 warrants, with most providing a staff report that allows Council to provide input on the final outcome.

However, there are a few municipalities, notably the City of Brampton and the Town of Caledon, that have adopted an evaluation process with community input that allows for all way stops to be approved when technical warrants are not met. The community process is based on public input and is intended to give Council an alternate process to address local resident concerns with traffic conditions.

Based on the need to provide an alternative process for all way stop requests and the review of other municipalities' approaches staff are recommending an update to the existing all way stop policy to provide two evaluation processes for all way stop requests (see Attachment 1). The first is the existing process based on technical traffic engineering considerations (warrants) and the second is based on community input with staff providing a review of the request to ensure the installation will have no safety impacts.

The two proposed all way stop evaluation processes are as follows:

Technical Justification Process

The technical justification process is based on the OTM Book 5 warrants and will remain the same as outlined in the existing policy. For all way stop requests that meet the technical requirements a report will be brought to Council recommending an all way stop be installed.

Community Justification Process

The new community justification process will require that significant local public support is shown for the installation of an all way stop at a particular location. Support for the all way stop will be based on the principle that 75% of the residents within 250 metres of the intersection are in agreement with the all way stop and will typically involve a petition.

This process also requires the support of the local councillor through discussions with staff regarding the rationale for the all way stop installation.

Once these two conditions are met staff's technical review of the all way stop request will be reduced to a safety review of the proposed all way stop location. Examples of safety reasons that an all way stop will not be recommended include urban areas with speeds posted higher than 60 km/h, offset

intersections, locations where traffic will be required to stop on a grade and locations with sign visibility issues.

The adoption of the proposed All Way Stop Policy (see Attachment 2) with the community justification process will provide a process for local residents to request an all way stop at an intersection where technical traffic engineering warrants have not been met.

It should be noted that unnecessary stop signs can be frustrating to drivers and may lead to increased speeds between stops, unsafe situations for pedestrians due to non-compliance with the stop sign and negative impacts to overall traffic flow. It should also be noted that the function of an all way stop is to control the right of way and should not be considered as a speed control device. In addition to the issue of stop compliance, unnecessary stop signs also lead to increased vehicle emissions impacting the environment.

It is also important to understand that irrespective of technical rationale or warrants, the final decision as to whether or not to implement an all way stop lies with Council as provided in Section 137 of the Highway Traffic Act which states *“the council of a municipality may by by-law provide for the erection of stop signs at intersections on highways under its jurisdiction”*.

FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Not applicable.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:

Not applicable.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: Yes

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposed All Way Stop Evaluation Process
2. Proposed All Way Stop Policy