Following a comprehensive traffic study that reviewed 400 stop signs in GPW, it was determined that 38 of these signs located at 23 intersections do *not* meet the warrants and criteria in the Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MMUTCD). As a result of this study, a follow-up program has been developed to systematically remove stop signs, particularly multi-way stop signs, that are not compliant with the MMUTCD mandates.

F.A.Q. ABOUT STOP SIGNS

What is the "Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices"?

The *Michigan Manual* is an adaptation of a *Federal Manual* which regulates all traffic control devices in each state. The purpose for this is to ensure that every such device in Michigan has standardized designs, sizes, color schemes, verbiage and lettering throughout the state. The *Manual* defines a traffic control device as:

> *"....all signs, signals, pavement markings and other devices used to regulate, warn or guide traffic, placed on, over, or adjacent to a street, highway pedestrian facility or bikeway by authority of a public agency having jurisdiction"*

Michigan adopted the Federal Manual in 2005, along with the *Michigan Supplement* which addresses items in our Michigan Motor Vehicle Code that conflict with the 2003 Federal MUTCD, as well as special items that are unique to Michigan.

Why is Grosse Pointe Woods and other cities removing stop signs?

A 2005 Michigan Department of Transportation directive is requiring that all traffic control devices in Michigan must be brought into compliance with the "*Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices" (MMUTCD).* The D.O.T. mandate reads in part:

> *"....Unless a particular traffic control device is damaged, non-compliant devices on existing highways and bikeways shall be brought into compliance with the current edition of the MMUTCD as part of the systematic upgrading of substandard traffic control devices (and installation of new required traffic control devices) required pursuant to the Highway Safety Program, 23 U.S.C.§ 402(a)...."*

Without a stop sign, won't drivers be more likely to speed?

The primary purpose for stop signs is to assign the right-of-way to vehicles at intersections in order to reduce conflicts and crashes. Dozens of studies reveal that stop signs are largely ineffective in slowing down drivers or reducing traffic. In fact, the *MMUTCD* clearly states that: "Stop signs SHALL NOT be used for speed control"!

In many cases, speeds are actually *higher* between so-called "nuisance" stop signs and once the signs are removed, average speeds may decrease. If you were to actually sit and observe several driver's actions at a particular stop sign, you'll notice that once a vehicle stops (or at least slows down) the

driver will accelerate and continue down the street at whatever speed they select. Simply stated; The only area where stop signs actually slow down traffic is the area within about 150 feet of the stop sign, which does not benefit entire blocks or neighborhoods.

For more comprehensive information about these studies, please read W. Martin Brethertons's traffic study titled: "Multi-way Stops—"The Research Shows the MUTCD is Correct!" at http://www.ite.org/traffic/documents/aha99b49.pdf

What are the state and federal requirements for a stop sign?

According to the MMUTCD, stop signs should be used if engineering judgment indicates one or more of the following conditions exist:

A. Intersection of a less important road with a main road where application of the normal right-of-way rule would not be expected to provide reasonable compliance with the law;
B. Street entering a through highway or street;
C. Un-signalized intersection in a signalized area; and/or
D. High speeds, restricted view, or crash records indicate a need for control by the stop sign.

What are the advantages to removing unwarranted stop signs?

Unnecessary stop signs have a negative impact on roadways, intersections, and neighborhoods. There are several advantages to removing unwarranted stop signs:

1. Reduced automobile emissions and pollution from stopping and idling;
2. Decreased fuel consumption;
3. Frequently reduces the 85th percentile speeds (average speeds of 85% of drivers);
4. Reduction of noise from brakes and accelerating vehicles;
5. Increased pedestrian & bicycle safety (eliminates the false sense of security);
6. Reduced angle and rear end crashes;
7. In many cases, traffic flows may improve;
8. Reduced driver frustration;
9. Reduced citizen complaints about drivers who frequently disregard stop signs;
10. Reduced potential for municipal liability at non-compliant intersections.

If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, please contact Officer Beghin at the Grosse Pointe Woods Traffic Safety Division at 313-343-2416 or sbeghin@gpwmi.us.