Adding a stop sign on a local road is a significant decision that affects safety, traffic flow, and driver expectations. According to the **Indiana MUTCD**, which mirrors the **federal MUTCD** with some local adaptations, stop signs **should not** be used for speed control or convenience. Instead, they are installed based on clear engineering judgment and/or a traffic engineering study. Here's a concise guide tailored for a **Public Works board**:

When to Consider Installing a Stop Sign (Indiana MUTCD Guidance)

1. To Assign Right-of-Way at Intersections

- The intersection has **limited sight distance**.
- The intersection is **not self-regulating** (i.e., drivers are unclear on who has priority).
- One road has **substantially higher volume** than the other (major/minor road configuration).

2. Warrants for a Multi-Way Stop (Per MUTCD Section 2B.07)

A multi-way stop *may be warranted* if **one or more of the following conditions** apply:

- **Crash history**: Five or more **correctable crashes** (e.g., right-angle, left-turn, or pedestrian collisions) within a 12-month period.
- **Minimum volume**:
  - Major street: ≥300 vehicles/hour (total of both directions) for any 8 hours of an average day.
  - Minor street: ≥200 vehicles/hour (approach direction) for the same 8 hours.
- **Significant delay** to traffic on the minor street.

3. Special Conditions

- **Near schools, parks, or high pedestrian activity areas** — but only if visibility and volumes support it.
- **Temporary conditions** like construction or detours — must be removed afterward.

When NOT to Use a Stop Sign

- To **control speed** — this leads to driver frustration and non-compliance.
- As a **traffic calming measure** — consider speed humps, narrowing, or other design options instead.
- Without **engineering evaluation** — community complaints alone are insufficient without supporting data.

Recommended Steps for a Public Works Board

1. **Initiate a Traffic Engineering Study**
    - Collect data: vehicle volumes, crash history, sight distance, speed studies.
    - Evaluate per MUTCD criteria.
    - Use INDOT or a licensed traffic engineer if your jurisdiction lacks staff.
2. **Public Communication**
    - Engage residents on the process and findings.
    - Explain the rationale for or against installation.
3. **Resolution and Documentation**
    - Approve or deny stop sign installation via formal board action.
    - Document the decision and supporting data for liability protection.

INDIANA MUTCD text

Section 2B.07 Multi-Way Stop Applications

Support:

01 Multi-way stop control can be useful as a safety measure at intersections if certain traffic conditions exist. Safety concerns associated with multi-way stops include pedestrians, bicyclists, and all road users expecting other road users to stop. Multi-way stop control is used where the volume of traffic on the intersecting roads is approximately equal.

02 The restrictions on the use of STOP signs described in Section 2B.04 also apply to multi-way stop applications.

Guidance:

03 *The decision to install multi-way stop control should be based on an engineering study.*

04 *The following criteria should be considered in the engineering study for a multi-way STOP sign installation:*

A. Where traffic control signals are justified, the multi-way stop is an interim measure that can be installed quickly to control traffic while arrangements are being made for the installation of the traffic control signal.

B. Five or more reported crashes in a 12-month period that are susceptible to correction by a multi-way stop installation. Such crashes include right-turn and left-turn collisions as well as right-angle collisions.

C. Minimum volumes:

1. The vehicular volume entering the intersection from the major street approaches (total of both approaches) averages at least 300 vehicles per hour for any 8 hours of an average day; and

2. The combined vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle volume entering the intersection from the minor street approaches (total of both approaches) averages at least 200 units per hour for the same 8 hours, with an average delay to minor-street vehicular traffic of at least 30 seconds per vehicle during the highest hour; but

3. If the 85th-percentile approach speed of the major-street traffic exceeds 40 mph, the minimum vehicular volume warrants are 70 percent of the values provided in Items 1 and 2.

D. Where no single criterion is satisfied, but where Criteria B, C.1, and C.2 are all satisfied to 80 percent of the minimum values. Criterion C.3 is excluded from this condition.

Option:

05 Other criteria that may be considered in an engineering study include:

A. The need to control left-turn conflicts;

B. The need to control vehicle/pedestrian conflicts near locations that generate high pedestrian volumes;

C. Locations where a road user, after stopping, cannot see conflicting traffic and is not able to negotiate the intersection unless conflicting cross traffic is also required to stop; and

D. An intersection of two residential neighborhood collector (through) streets of similar design and operating characteristics where multi-way stop control would improve traffic operational characteristics of the intersection.

Stop Sign Evaluation Checklist

Use this before deciding to install a stop sign on a local road.

Basic Information

- ☐ Intersection location: _____
- ☐ Current traffic control: _____
- ☐ Nearby land uses (school, park, etc.): _____

Traffic Volumes (for Multi-Way Stop)

- ☐ Major street: ≥300 vehicles/hour (both directions) for 8 peak hours?
- ☐ Minor street: ≥200 vehicles/hour (approach) for 8 peak hours?

Crash Data

- ☐ ≥5 correctable crashes (angle, left-turn, pedestrian) in last 12 months?

Sight Distance & Visibility

- ☐ Limited sight distance present at uncontrolled approaches?
- ☐ Geometry or obstructions create unsafe conditions?

Pedestrian Safety

- ☐ High foot traffic crossing uncontrolled approaches?
- ☐ Nearby school or playground with poor crossing visibility?

Engineering Study

- ☐ Data collected: speed, volume, crash reports, sight lines

- ☐ Study performed by: _____
- ☐ MUTCD Section(s) referenced: _____

Public Input

- ☐ Community feedback received?
- ☐ Speeding concerns evaluated separately?

Recommendation

- ☐ Stop sign warranted?
- ☐ Type: ☐ Two-way stop ☐ Four-way stop ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Additional signs/markings needed? (e.g., advance warning)