All Way Stop Control can be utilized at intersections, primarily to provide orderly movement of traffic through the intersection. “Warrants” for installation of all way stop control exist in the “Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices” (MUTCD).

For all way stop control to be beneficial, volumes on the main street and on the cross street should be similar. One warrant requires 200 of the 500 minimum vehicles per hour to be on the lower volume street.

All way stop control is often used to provide opportunities for cross street traffic to enter or cross the main street. It has also been used to help pedestrians cross the main street. Installations for these types of uses are not always successful.

When all way stop control is used, 100% of traffic is required to stop. If the volumes are unbalanced or the cross street volume is low, main street traffic is delayed unnecessarily. This frequently leads to stop sign violations by repeat traffic. This in turn puts pedestrians and cross street traffic at risk.

A disadvantage of all way stop control is that while gaps are theoretically created at one intersection (with the all way stop), traffic is “metered” from the intersection and there are few gaps at intersections for several blocks in any direction.

Pedestrians crossing at an all way stop controlled intersection should be safe, as all traffic is stopped. In reality, when there is heavy traffic, they are at risk. The theory of traffic flow (and the law) at all way stops is to take turns generally in the order of arrival. Motorists often are focused on their turn and don’t want to miss it. A pedestrian may not be noticed, especially by left turning vehicles. Observations at intersections show that motorists will cut in front of pedestrians rather than “miss their turn”.

The only intersection along Cascade Ave that could be considered for all way stop control is 2nd Street, based on volumes and the warrants in the MUTCD.

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