



Traffic Guidelines Manual

ORIGINATOR State Traffic Engineer	13-1-1
CHAPTER 13	Traffic Regulations
SECTION 1	Through Highway Declarations
SUBJECT 1	Statutory Authority

The fundamental principle of the Through Highway Declarations is that no STOP sign **shall** be erected facing traffic on a state trunk highway nor **shall** traffic on any non-state trunk highway be permitted to enter a state trunk highway without stopping, unless specifically provided for in the Declarations.

AUTHORITY

[Section 349.07](#), Wis. Stats., provides the Department with the authority to "...declare any state trunk highway or connecting highway or portion thereof to be a through highway."

A "through highway" is defined in s. [340.01\(67\)](#), Wis. Stats., as:

"...every highway or portion thereof which has been declared by the state or local authorities pursuant to s.. 349.07 to be a through highway and at the entrances to which vehicular traffic from intersecting highways is required by traffic control signals or stop signs to stop."

On November 30, 1950, the Highway Commission took action pursuant to then existing statutory authority and implemented a systematic method for establishing and documenting all of its declared through highways. This action was as follow:

"The Commission took up for consideration the matter of declaring all state trunk highways to be arteries for through traffic. Attention was directed to the fact that many state trunk highways are now arterials, that it will be necessary to coordinate the old and new arterial declarations, and that all highways cannot immediately be signed as arterials."

"It was moved, seconded, and carried that all state trunk highways and the urban extensions thereof (designated by the statutes as 'connecting streets') be declared arteries for through traffic pursuant to Section 85.68, Wisconsin Statutes, and that arterial STOP signs be erected stopping traffic on all county

trunk highways, town roads, and local city and village street entering said state trunk highway routes unless specifically excepted in this or subsequent actions of the Commission."

"It was further moved, seconded, and carried that traffic on any state trunk highway (and connecting street) **shall** not be required to stop at the intersection with any other state trunk highway (or connecting street), or at the intersection with a county trunk highway, town road, or local city or village street unless specifically required to stop at such intersection by this or subsequent actions of the Commission..."

Following these brief introductory paragraphs was the listing of the highways declared as arteries for through traffic and the descriptive paragraphs delineating the exceptions to each. These descriptive paragraphs (the exceptions) defined all instances where traffic on a state trunk highway was required to stop and where traffic on other streets/highways was permitted to enter a state trunk highway without stopping.

On November 13, 1962, the Highway Commission delegated its statutory authority to declare and regulate through highways to the Chief Traffic Engineer, and established the Chief Traffic Engineer as being responsible for maintaining the official records.

Since that time, the title of Chief Traffic Engineer has been changed to Director, Office of Traffic. The Director has notified the Regions that, as of October 16, 1995, the approval authority for Through Highway Declarations is delegated to the Regions. The Regional Transportation Directors were requested to appoint an approval authority and inform the Director of Traffic as to the appointment.