



SUBJECT: Amendment to Traffic By-Law 86-2007 - Blocking Intersections

TO: Planning and Development Committee

FROM: Transportation Services

Report Number: TS-02-18

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 750-04-01

Date to Committee: June 5, 2018

Date to Council: June 18, 2018

Recommendation:

Approve the amendment to Traffic By-Law 86-2007, as amended, as indicated in Appendix "A" to transportation services report TS-02-18 to prohibit vehicles blocking intersections within the City of Burlington; and

Direct the City Solicitor to submit an application to the Regional Senior Justice for approval of the set fine of \$100 for a violation of the amendment to Traffic By-Law 86-2007.

Purpose:

A City that Moves

- Increased Transportation Flows and Connectivity

Background and Discussion:

Burlington roads experience congestion, especially during peak hours. In addition to the traffic generated by local trips, congestion on the highways can result in traffic diverting onto Burlington roads as motorists look to save time. A collision on the highway can result in significant delays for motorists and further increase the amount of traffic on local roads. Incidences where a full closure of the highway has the likelihood of causing gridlock traffic conditions on local roads.

Gridlock refers to a traffic condition where vehicles in one direction enter the intersection and are unable to proceed through it resulting in blocking the path of traffic in the opposing direction when they receive the green signal. The impacts of gridlock include an increase to the area impacted by congestion, driver frustration, and potential delays to Police, Fire, EMS, Transit and other service vehicles. In addition, gridlock also has an impact on bike lanes and pedestrian crosswalks.

The Ministry of Transportation Ontario Driver's Handbook teaches drivers to "stop before entering the intersection and wait until the traffic ahead moves on" if you approach an intersection on a main road and the intersection is blocked with traffic.

Strategy/process

The *Highway Traffic Act* gives authority to municipalities to pass a by-law prohibiting the blocking of intersections. Implementing a by-law to prohibit blocking intersections is common amongst municipalities with urban area as a means to prevent gridlock and excessive delays.

The by-law amendment proposes that if a driver moves into a signalized intersection already blocked with traffic ahead and he or she has become stuck in the middle unable to move their vehicle when the traffic lights facing the driver of the motor vehicle change to red, he or she has committed an offence.

It applies to all signalized intersections within the city's jurisdiction. Signs to this effect are not required but can be installed at problematic locations to remind drivers.

It is felt this by-law, combined with public education and police enforcement will help to minimize occurrences of blocked intersections.

Financial Matters:

All educational communications and any new signage will be funded through operating budget for Traffic Operations, 533010.

Total Financial Impact

Not applicable

Source of Funding

Not applicable

Other Resource Impacts

Not applicable

Connections:

Not applicable

Public Engagement Matters:

The public will be informed of this change to the City's by-law through the Halton Regional Police Services conducting warning offences in the first 6 months. City staff will post the amendment to the by-law on the City's website.

Conclusion:

Staff recommend amending the Traffic By-Law 86-2007 to prohibit vehicles to block intersections within the City of Burlington. This amendment combined with public education and police enforcement will help to minimize occurrences of blocked intersections and increase the operations and safety of the city's road network.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenny Setterfield

Supervisor, Traffic Operations

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Appendices: (if none delete section)

- A. Traffic By-Law Amendments, Part 2 – General Regulations, Operation of Vehicles

Notifications:

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Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, Director of Finance and Director of Legal. Final approval is by the City Manager.

Appendix “A”
TRAFFIC BY-LAW 86-2007 AMENDMENTS

PART 2
GENERAL REGULATIONS

ADD:

5. OPERATION OF VEHICLES

j) Blocking Intersection

No driver of a motor vehicle approaching a traffic control signal showing a circular green or a green arrow shall enter the intersection unless traffic in front of the driver is moving in a manner that would reasonably lead the driver of the motor vehicle to believe that he or she can clear the intersection before the signal indication changes to a circular red indication.

This prohibition, however, does not apply to the driver of a motor vehicle who enters an intersection for the purpose of turning to the right or the left onto an intersecting roadway and signals his or her intention to make the turn prior to entering the intersection.