

City of Blaine

Crosswalk Policy

Background

The City of Blaine strives to provide safe and efficient movement of people, goods, and services throughout the city. It shall be the policy of the City of Blaine to provide for safe pedestrian crossings along public streets by installing and maintaining marked crosswalks at all locations where there is substantial conflict between vehicle and pedestrian movements, where significant pedestrian concentrations occur, or where pedestrians would not otherwise recognize the proper place to cross.

A marked crosswalk is any crosswalk that is delineated by markings placed on the pavement for the purpose of directing pedestrians to use a particular location to cross the street.

General

Both pedestrians and motorists in the State of Minnesota have rights and responsibilities when traveling along or across roadways. It is important to recognize that all intersections, by default, are legal crosswalks and thereby drivers are required to yield to pedestrians. Pedestrians are urged to cross with caution in any street crossing, marked or unmarked.

Marked crosswalks are viewed as safety devices and pedestrians have the right of way within them. There is strong evidence that these facts prompt many pedestrians to feel overly secure when using a marked crosswalk. As a result pedestrians will often place themselves in a hazardous position by believing that motorists can and will stop in all cases, even when it may be impossible to do so. In contrast, a pedestrian using an unmarked crosswalk generally feels less secure and less certain that motorists will stop and will thereby exercise more caution before crossing. Marked pedestrian crossings at intersections will have the effect of lowering the effective rate of compliance at similarly marked intersections.

Minnesota Statutes describes responsibilities of motorists approaching crosswalks and pedestrians crossing roadways:

- Where traffic control signals are not in place or operational, the driver of a vehicle shall stop to yield to a pedestrian within a marked crosswalk or at an intersection with no marked crosswalk. The driver must remain stopped until the pedestrian has passed the lane in which the vehicle is stopped.
- A pedestrian must not enter a crosswalk if a vehicle is approaching. There is no defined distance but the pedestrian must use common safety sense. Minnesota Statute states: "No pedestrian shall suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle which is so close that it is impossible for the driver to yield."
- When a vehicle is stopped, at a marked crosswalk or at an intersection with no marked crosswalk, to permit a pedestrian to cross the roadway, the driver of any other vehicle approaching from the rear shall not overtake and pass the stopped vehicle.
- When crossing between intersections, every pedestrian crossing a roadway at a point other than within a marked crosswalk or at an intersection with no marked crosswalk shall yield the right of way to all vehicles on the roadway.
- Pedestrians or persons in a wheelchair using the shoulder of the road shall walk or move along the left side of the roadway facing oncoming traffic. Where sidewalks are provided, and accessible and usable, it shall be unlawful for a pedestrian or person in a wheelchair to use the roadway.

Note: See *Minnesota State Statutes 169.21 Pedestrian* for more information pertaining to the rules of pedestrians and motorists.

Process

Residents of Blaine may make a request pertaining to a pedestrian safety concern to the Engineering Department. A member of the Engineering Department will work with the requestor and gather the pertinent facts, define the problem, and seek a solution. The following policy criteria will be reviewed to make a determination regarding the matter. In all cases, the City Council will make the final decision.

Policy Criteria

1. All crosswalks installed shall conform to the Minnesota Manual on Uniform Traffic Devices (MUTCD).

2. Relevant speed, volumes, accident records, pedestrian counts, sight obstructions, and demographic analysis shall be reviewed when considering pedestrian crosswalk installation.
3. Pedestrian crosswalks shall only be placed in an area that has in excess of five pedestrians per hour crossing during any ten hour period.
4. Mid-block crosswalks shall be avoided whenever possible, because mid-block crossings generally are not expected by motorists. Only special circumstances warrant their creation.
5. All marked crosswalks should extend from one safe landing zone to another. A safe landing zone is as an area where a pedestrian is safe from vehicle conflict while waiting to cross or when finish crossing.
6. Crosswalks shall be placed in areas where there is sufficient stopping sight distance for the posted speed limit and be lighted for nighttime use on higher functional classification streets.
7. Pedestrian crosswalks shall not be located on arterial streets or streets with speeds greater than 30 mph unless in conjunction with signalization.
8. Any of the following conditions may warrant marked pedestrian crosswalks:
 - a. Locations adjacent to schools and up to one block away, to establish walking routes to and from school.
 - b. Locations adjacent to public parks.
 - c. Locations along designated trail systems.
 - d. Locations adjacent to community centers, libraries, and other high use public facilities.
 - e. Locations where traffic volumes, accident records, pedestrian counts, sight obstructions, and demographic analysis warrant the installation.