



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota

Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Sq Dr NE
Blaine MN 55449

Legislation Text

File #: TC 22-01, Version: 1

Declaring a Rural Residential District and Adopting a Statutory 35 MPH Speed Limit on 131st Avenue NE from Approximately 410 Feet West of Legacy Creek Parkway to Lexington Avenue

131st Avenue from Lexington Avenue to approximately 410 feet west of Legacy Creek Parkway is a rural section gravel road. The road is currently signed with a speed limit of 30 miles per hour. The Blaine Police Department has identified issues with being unable to enforce the current 30 mph speed limit as it does not meet the requirements set forth in State Statute 169.14 for speed limits.

State Statute 169.14 identifies specific speed limits in a municipality for various roadway types. A 30 mph speed limit is authorized by statute for streets in an urban district. State Statute defines an urban district as, “the territory contiguous to and including any city street or town road that is built up with structures devoted to business, industry, or dwelling houses situated at intervals of less than 100 feet for a distance of a quarter of a mile or more.” This section of 131st Avenue has large lots with most of the homes being separated by 200 feet or more and thus does not meet the definition of an urban district.

131st Avenue does meet the statutory definition of a rural residential district which is defined as, “the territory contiguous to and including any city street or town road that is built up with visible dwelling houses situated at intervals averaging 300 feet or less for a distance of a quarter of a mile or more.” State Statute identifies a statutory speed limit of 35 mph for rural residential districts.

If a municipality desires to establish a speed limit on a roadway other than the specific limit set forth in statute, the municipality must request the Commissioner of Transportation (MnDOT) to do a speed study to identify and authorize what the reasonable and safe speed limit will be set at. The speed study will involve the removal of any speed limit signs and then monitoring traffic speeds on the unsigned road. The speed data is then used to determine what the 85th percentile speed is, which is defined as the speed that 85% of the vehicles are traveling at or below under free-flowing conditions. This 85th percentile speed is generally what MnDOT will then authorize the road speed limit to be set at.

Staff has researched and found no City Council action or MnDOT speed study declaring a speed limit on 131st Avenue so it is unknown when the 30 mph speed limit signs were installed or who authorized them. Thus, it is staff’s opinion that the 30 mph speed limit sign is not legally enforceable. If the City were to request MnDOT to do a speed study, it is a good possibility that the speed limit would be set at greater than 30 mph. For this reason, it is recommended that 131st Avenue be signed with a speed limit of 35 mph in line with state statutes.

Staff is recommending that the Traffic Commission recommend that the City Council declare 131st

Avenue from Lexington Avenue to approximately 410 feet west of Legacy Creek Parkway a rural residential district and authorize a speed limit of 35 mph in accordance with State Statute 169.14.