



Legislation Text

File #: 22-0735R, **Version:** 1

RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT THE CITY ADMINISTRATION CONDUCT A TRAFFIC ANALYSIS AND ENGINEERING STUDY AND SUBMIT RECOMMENDATIONS ON SPEED LIMIT SAFETY TO THE COUNCIL.

BY COUNCILOR HOBBS, PRESIDENT FORSMAN AND COUNCILOR AWAL :

WHEREAS according to the United States Department of Transportation, 38,824 people died in motor vehicle crashes in 2020, of which 6,516 were pedestrians and since 2015, the annual number of fatalities has exceeded 35,000, with millions more injured, many with life-changing injuries; and

WHEREAS, according to the Vision Zero Network these crashes disproportionately impact pedestrians, cyclists, children, seniors, the BIPOC community and low-income members of the public; and

WHEREAS, speeding is a cause of more than one-third of fatal crashes in the United States; and

WHEREAS, speed plays a critical role in crashes and the severity of outcomes and a 2021 AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety study found the average risk of death for a pedestrian reaches 10 percent at an impact speed of 23 mph, 25 percent at 32 mph, 50 percent at 42 mph, 75 percent at 50 mph, and 90 percent at 58 mph; and

WHEREAS, the current speed limit in residential areas of Duluth is 30 mph, with speed limits commonly viewed as the operating speed rather than the maximum speed, creating an environment where small levels (1-5 mph) of speeding over 30mph are considered acceptable despite the significant increase in risk to pedestrians; and

WHEREAS, higher speeds increase a driver's reaction time and braking distance while decreasing field of vision; and

WHEREAS, changes like safe street design and safe speed limits are strategies proven to decrease speeds and lessen the likelihood and forcefulness of crashes; and

WHEREAS, the city of Duluth has implemented safe street design as we construct and re-construct streets throughout the community; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes, section 169.14 allows for a city to set speed limits in urban areas lower than the statutory maximum of 30 mph; and

WHEREAS, the city council wishes to consider lowering city speed limits to make city streets safer.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the city council requests that the administration conduct a traffic analysis and engineering study on safer streets and lower speed limits within the city limits.

FURTHER RESOLVED, the council requests that the administration report to the council on the results of the traffic analysis and engineering study and make recommendations on the following: safe speed limits, associated costs, traffic enforcement, impact on long-term planning, and potential challenges, along with a summary of the feasibility of pursuing Vision Zero recognition.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: This resolution is a request that city administration conduct a traffic analysis and engineering study to better understand the options for making city streets safer by reducing speed limits, along with associated costs and impacts, and bring back recommendations to the city council for making city streets safer.