



# Trail System Coordination Agency-Council Workgroup Update

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# Trail System Coordination Workgroup



## Purpose and Background

- Convenes planners from 10 implementing agencies and representatives from related organizations (DNR, MnDOT) to identify coordination opportunities for regional trails.
- Created during Imagine 2050 planning process to assess existing policies and actions and consider new actions and guidance for regional trails
- Agencies expressed interest in continuing workgroup after policy planning process.
  - Continued trail coordination, implement work plan items.

# Trail System Coordination Workgroup



## Imagine 2050 and Policy Plan Connections

- **Related Imagine 2050 Regional Goals:**
  - Our region is equitable and inclusive
  - Our communities are healthy and safe
  - Our region is dynamic and resilient
- **Related 2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan Objectives:**
  - Foster equity and belonging: Connect people with nature, community, and cultural landscapes to better support their physical, mental, and emotional well-being.
  - Take care of what we have: Reinvest in existing regional parks and trails to maintain and enhance visitor experiences.
  - Meet future needs: Meet the growing demand for regional parks and trails through strategic and timely land acquisition and development.
- **Related 2050 Policy Plan Policies:**
  - Planning: The Met Council will promote enhanced multimodal access to regional parks, regional trails, and the transit system
  - Recreation, Facilities, and Programming: Bicycle and pedestrian facilities will be coordinated between the Regional Parks and Trails System and the transportation system

# Trail System Coordination Workgroup



## Policy Plan Workplan Connections

- Continue to convene a trail coordination workgroup, supporting the development of a more coordinated, integrated, and connected regional trails system and Regional Bicycle Transportation Network.
- Create regional guidelines for e-bike use on regional trails
- Explore systemwide wayfinding and signage minimum requirements.

# 2026 Workgroup Priorities



## Workgroup Priorities

- Workgroup topics gathered from 2050 policy plan, 2025 topics, and agency feedback.

## Future Priorities

- Develop a name and brand for the regional trail system
- Create best practices documents to guide all agencies (e-bike regulation, wayfinding, design)
- Share lessons learned/project case studies
- Explore better connections between transit and regional trails
- Create better print/online maps of the system

# Regional Trail System Name and Brand



Naming and branding the system is a tool for creating a more cohesive and well-known system, securing more funding, and better marketing the system.

# How a Name/Brand Could Strengthen the System

## Benefits

### Recognition



- More recognition of the regional system
- Easier to talk about
- System name = signature trail idea, could bring in more funding

### Collaboration



- Partner with nonprofits to lead some of the work
- Partner with corporate partners for additional funding

### Unified System



- Smaller agency workload
  - System-wide wayfinding guidance
  - System-wide design guidelines
  - Outside vendor could host website
    - Interactive map
    - List of events
    - System History (Grounded & Growing)
    - E-newsletter

# Example Regional Trail Systems

## Circuit Trails

- Location: Philadelphia region
- Counties: Nine
- Planned Mileage: 860+
- Website: <https://circuittrails.org/>



# Example Regional Trail Systems

## Carolina Thread

- Location: Western NC and Northwest SC
- Counties: 15 counties
- Mileage: 425 existing, 1,157+ planned
- Website: <https://www.carolinathreadtrail.org/>



# Example Regional Trail Systems

## Singing River Trail

- Location: Northern Alabama
- Counties: Six
- Mileage: 200+ miles planned
- Website: <https://singingrivertrail.com/>



# How Do We Accomplish This?

- **Name:** Get outreach teams involved to explore launching a region-wide “Name the Regional Trail System” competition
- **Branding:** Work with a consultant or internally to develop a visual identity/logo for the named Regional Trail System
- **Website:** Develop a website that contains information about all of the trails, trail maps, upcoming events, links to each agency’s website, etc.
- **Signage:** Identify where signs will be placed. Potential for Met Council to fund the material cost of the signs if agencies are willing to install them.

# Next Steps + Timeline



## Spring 2026

- Work with Committee members and the Council's Art+Policy/Outreach team to create a plan for community workshops
- Council staff will coordinate with each agency and their outreach team to set up/advertise community workshops

## Summer 2026

- Host community workshops throughout the summer
- Select name by end of summer

## Fall/Winter 2026/27

- Work with designer to develop logo/other branding materials/website throughout the winter

## End of Spring 2027

- Tentatively print signage + launch rebrand

# E-Bike Regulation Best Practices



Twin Cities Metropolitan Area Regional Trail

## E-Bike Regulation Best Practices

Metropolitan Council

2026

## Background and Context

- E-bikes have become a challenge to regulate on trails
- Not many regulatory language examples to pull from
- Not all agencies are ready to update their ordinances



# Contents

E-Bike Regulation Best Practices Introduction

Related Minnesota State Statutes

What Is an E-Bike?

Additional Micromobility Devices Allowed on Trails

Micromobility Devices Not Allowed on Trails

E-Bike User Requirements

E-Bike Etiquette

E-Bike Speed

Where E-Bikes Can Ride

Guidance for Reporting a Problem

Language to Avoid

Met Council Recommended E-Bike Regulatory Language

# What Is an E-Bike?

## Background

Ensuring a consistent e-bike definition is adopted will make clear what micromobility devices are considered e-bikes, and therefore will make people more aware of what regulations apply to them while using an e-bike on the trail.

## Example Regulatory Language

### State of Minnesota

“Electric-assisted bicycle” means a bicycle with two or three wheels that:

1. has a saddle and fully operable pedals for human propulsion;
2. meets the requirements for bicycles under Code of Federal Regulations, title 16, part 1512, or successor requirements;
3. is equipped with an electric motor that has a power output of not more than 750 watts;
4. meets the requirements of a class 1, class 2, class 3, or multiple mode electric-assisted bicycle; and
5. has a battery or electric drive system that has been tested to an applicable safety standard by a third-party testing laboratory.

### Colorado Springs, CO

A vehicle having two or three wheels, fully operable pedals, and an electric motor not exceeding seven hundred fifty watts of power.

### Albuquerque, NM

E-bikes or electric-assisted bicycle” means a vehicle having two or three wheels, fully operable pedals and an electric motor. E-bikes are defined by class (1, 2, and 3) and have an electric motor less than 750 watts.

### Chula Vista, CA

An “electric bicycle” or “e-bike” is a bicycle equipped with fully operable pedals and a battery-powered motor that does not exceed 750 watts of power.

### Virginia Beach, VA

E-bikes are vehicles that travel on not more than three wheels and are equipped with pedals that allow for propulsion by human power, a seat for a rider, and an electric motor with an input of no more than 750 watts.

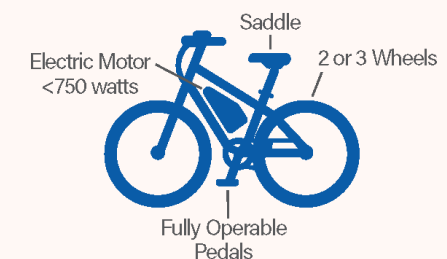
## Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

The general consensus of the workgroup was that the State definition of an e-bike makes sense and should be primarily followed for consistency. Council staff agreed, but felt the simplicity of the sentence format used in other examples would be easier for most to interpret. Staff recommended simplifying the State definition into sentence format, but still including a reference to the full definition through a link to the statute.

## Met Council Recommendation

An e-bike is a bicycle with two or three wheels, a saddle, and fully operable human-propelled pedals. E-bikes are defined by class (1, 2, and 3) and have an electric motor less than 750 watts.

[\(Minnesota Statutes 169.011 Definitions, Subdivision 27\)](#)



# Document Format

- Regulation Category + Background
- Example Regulatory Language
- Summary of Trail System Coordination Workgroup and Met Council Staff discussion
- Met Council Recommendation

# Outcome

## Metropolitan Council Recommended E-Bike Regulatory Language

### What Is An E-Bike?

An e-bike is a bicycle with two or three wheels, a saddle, and fully operable human-propelled pedals. E-bikes are defined by class (1, 2, and 3) and have an electric motor less than 750 watts. ([Minnesota Statutes 169.011, Subdivision 27](#))



### Additional Micromobility Devices Allowed on Trails

#### Motorized Foot Scooters

Motorized foot scooters are allowed on the same trails as bicycles, and operators have the same rights and responsibilities as the operator of a bicycle. The following laws are specific to motorized foot scooters:

- No one under age 12 may operate a motorized foot scooter, and those under 18 who are using a motorized foot scooter must wear a helmet.
- A motorized foot scooter may not carry any additional passengers besides the operator.
- Foot scooters with gasoline or other liquid fuel-propelled motors are prohibited from regional trails.

#### Segways and Other Self-Balancing Motorized Devices

Segways, motorized skateboards, hoverboards and other self-balancing motorized devices, defined as “electric personal assistive mobility devices” are allowed on paved trails, or wherever pedestrians are allowed. They must be operated at a speed that is reasonable for the riding conditions.

#### Other Mobility Devices

Motorized Wheelchairs or Mobility Scooters: Wheelchairs and mobility scooters can be used on regional trails. Special use passes are not required for these devices.

Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices (OPDMDs): Some agencies require an OPDMD tag (available at no charge) in order to provide credible assurance of need for an OPDMD. Check with the agency operating the regional trail you would like to explore before getting out on the trail.

### Micromobility Devices Not Allowed on Trails



#### Modified E-Bikes

A device is not an e-bike if it is made by the manufacturer/seller to be modified to not meet the requirements for an e-bike. Modifications include a mechanical switch or button, a change to the electric motor or the electric drive system, the use of an application to increase or override the electric drive system, or through any other means that makes the device no longer meet the requirements or classification of an e-bike.

## Metropolitan Council Recommended E-Bike Regulatory Language (cont.)

### E-Motos

A micromobility device exceeding the definition of an e-bike (e.g., motor over 750 watts, exceeding class speed limits, without human-operated pedals, etc.) is not considered an e-bike and should not be operated on trails. These devices often fall into the category of e-moto. E-motos, or electric-powered two-wheeled off-highway vehicles (OHVs), often resemble dirt bikes, though they might also appear similar to an e-bike. They typically lack human-propelled pedals, rely solely on a throttle for acceleration, and can reach speeds greater than 28 mph. The table below (originally created by People for Bikes) clearly delineates the difference between the different classes of e-bikes and e-motos.

	 Class 1/2/3 E-Bike	 E-Moto
<b>Operable Pedals</b>	Required	Not required (often fake)
<b>Motor Power</b>	750W	Often 1,000W-6,000W+
<b>Top Speed</b>	20-28 mph	30-65+ mph
<b>Throttle</b>	Class 2 only (20 mph)	Usually throttle-only
<b>Licensing/Registration</b>	No	Required (in most states)

### E-Bike User Requirements

#### Age

No person under the age of 15 may operate an e-bike.

#### Helmet

All e-bike riders and/or passengers under the age of 18 must wear a helmet.

### E-Bike Etiquette and Speed

E-bike users must operate all bicycles in a safe manner and cannot operate at speeds faster than are reasonably safe with regard to the operator, trail conditions, and other trail users.

Passing another trail user should always be done on the left, and an audible signal should be used when passing. Those on bikes, e-bikes, or other micromobility devices must yield to pedestrians and slower trail users.

### Where E-Bikes Can Ride

E-bikes (classes one, two, and three) can be used wherever traditional bicycles are allowed, including on both paved and unpaved regional trails.

### Guidance for Reporting a Problem

If there is a persistent problem with unsafe or poor behavior exhibited by someone operating an e-bike, e-moto, or other mobility device in a particular area, please contact [varies by agency].

# Discussion



## Discussion Questions

- What are your thoughts on naming and branding the regional trail system?
- What other strategies would be helpful in guiding good behavior on regional trails?
- What other topics do you think the Trail System Coordination Workgroup could focus on this year?



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