



Twin Cities Metropolitan Area Regional Trail

E-Bike Regulation Best Practices

Contents

E-Bike Regulation Best Practices Introduction 1

Related Minnesota State Statutes 2

What Is an E-Bike? 4

Additional Micromobility Devices Allowed on Trails..... 5

Micromobility Devices Not Allowed on Trails..... 7

E-Bike User Requirements..... 9

E-Bike Etiquette 10

E-Bike Speed..... 11

Where E-Bikes Can Ride..... 12

Guidance for Reporting a Problem 13

Language to Avoid 14

Metropolitan Council Recommended E-Bike Regulatory Language 15

Acknowledgments

The recommendations made in this document are the product of discussions and ideas from individuals involved in the Agency-Council Trail System Coordination Workgroup, including Regional Park Implementing Agency partners (Anoka County, City of Bloomington, Carver County, Dakota County, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB), Ramsey County, City of Saint Paul, Scott County, Three Rivers Park District, and Washington County), partner agencies including the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and Commissioner Anthony Taylor from the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. Metropolitan Council Regional Parks and Trails and Metropolitan Transportation Services staff were also involved in these meetings and contributed to the review and refinement of these recommendations.

E-Bike Regulation Best Practices Introduction

Background

Regulating e-bike use on trails is a new challenge with regulatory language variations at each level of government nationwide. Because e-bikes are a more recent category of micromobility device (defined as a small personal device that is propelled by human power or an electric motor and meant to carry one or two passengers. This term is used throughout the document to refer to devices that are allowed on trails. It has been simplified from Minnesota State statute's term "electric personal assistive mobility devices") that are becoming increasingly popular, it is hard to keep up with new product developments and establish regulations that keep trail users safe. This guide aims to review regulations from around the nation that have recently been adopted and determine what regulatory language makes sense for the Metropolitan Council Regional Parks and Trails system to put forward.

As a starting point, the State of Minnesota has adopted a broad e-bike policy (included in full on pages 2-3) that many agencies currently embrace in their own regulatory language. However, local agencies can add additional regulatory language beyond state law. Having these more specific regulations around e-bike (and other micromobility device) use on regional trails can help make the user experience safer and more comfortable for all trail users.

To take state e-bike regulations a step further, the following best practice language has been pulled together to serve as guidance for Met Council Regional Parks and Trails Implementing Agencies as they update ordinances related to trails, develop etiquette signage and related educational materials, embark on trail safety campaigns, and take related actions. This language is based on a careful review of current Met Council Regional Parks and Trails Implementing Agency adopted regulations and regulatory language used in other cities, counties, and regions, and is also based on Met Council Parks and Trails staff internal work as well as Trail System Coordination Workgroup discussions that were held as part of a bimonthly meeting series held between July 2025 and February 2026.

How to Use This Document

This document is divided into different facets of e-bike regulation, including the definition of an e-bike, who can use an e-bike on trails, trail riding etiquette, and more. Each category is laid out with the following elements:

1. Regulation Category + Background
2. Example Regulatory Language
3. Summary of Trail System Coordination Workgroup and Met Council Staff discussion
4. Met Council Recommendation

Each section starts with a brief summary of what the regulation category aims to accomplish. It then includes several examples of regulatory language from various agencies around the country. Following the examples, a brief summary of what has been discussed during Trail System Coordination Workgroup meetings and Met Council Staff meetings is included to justify the Council's recommended language. Finally, the Met Council's recommendation, which is a culmination of the example language and discussions held during workgroup and staff meetings, is included at the end of each section.

The final pages of the document lay out the full Met Council recommended e-bike regulation language to be adopted by each Regional Park and Trail Implementing Agency as ordinances are updated, or safety/etiquette campaigns are organized.

Related Minnesota State Statutes

2024 Minnesota Statutes. Transportation. Chapter 169. Section 169.222

Subd. 6a. Electric-assisted bicycle; riding rules.

- (a) A person may operate an electric-assisted bicycle in the same manner as provided for operation of other bicycles, including but not limited to operation on the shoulder of a roadway, a bicycle lane, and a bicycle route, and operation without the motor engaged on a bikeway or bicycle trail.
- (b) A person may operate a class 1 or class 2 electric-assisted bicycle with the motor engaged on a bicycle path, bicycle trail, or shared use path unless prohibited under section [85.015](#), subdivision 1d; [85.018](#), subdivision 2, paragraph (d); or [160.263](#), subdivision 2, paragraph (b), as applicable.
- (c) A person may operate a class 3 electric-assisted bicycle or multiple mode electric-assisted bicycle with the motor engaged on a bicycle path, bicycle trail, or shared use path unless the local authority or state agency having jurisdiction over the bicycle path or trail prohibits the operation.
- (d) The local authority or state agency having jurisdiction over a trail or over a bike park that is designated as nonmotorized and that has a natural surface tread made by clearing and grading the native soil with no added surfacing materials may regulate the operation of an electric-assisted bicycle.
- (e) A person under the age of 15 must not operate an electric-assisted bicycle.

Subd. 6b. Electric-assisted bicycle; equipment.

- (a) The manufacturer or distributor of an electric-assisted bicycle must apply a label to the bicycle that is permanently affixed in a prominent location. The label must contain the class number, top assisted speed, and motor wattage of the electric-assisted bicycle, and must be printed in a legible font with at least 9-point type. A multiple mode electric-assisted bicycle must have labeling that identifies the highest class or each of the electric-assisted bicycle classes in which it is capable of operating.
- (b) A person must not modify an electric-assisted bicycle to change the motor-powered speed capability or motor engagement so that the bicycle no longer meets the requirements for the applicable class, unless:
 - 1. the person replaces the label required in paragraph (a) with revised information; or
 - 2. for a vehicle that no longer meets the requirements for any electric-assisted bicycle class, the person removes the labeling as an electric-assisted bicycle.
- (c) An electric-assisted bicycle must operate in a manner so that the electric motor is disengaged or ceases to function: (1) when the brakes are applied; or (2) except for a class 2 electric-assisted bicycle or a multiple mode electric-assisted bicycle operating in class 2 mode, when the rider stops pedaling.
- (d) A class 3 electric-assisted bicycle or multiple mode electric-assisted bicycle must be equipped with a speedometer that displays the speed at which the bicycle is traveling in miles per hour.
- (e) A multiple mode electric-assisted bicycle equipped with a throttle must not be capable of exceeding 20 miles per hour on motorized propulsion alone in any mode when the throttle is engaged.

Related Minnesota State Statutes (cont.)

Minnesota Statutes 2021, section 169.011

E-Bike Definitions:

Subd. 15a. Class 1 electric-assisted bicycle.

"Class 1 electric-assisted bicycle" means an electric-assisted bicycle equipped with an electric motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour.

Subd. 15b. Class 2 electric-assisted bicycle.

"Class 2 electric-assisted bicycle" means an electric-assisted bicycle equipped with an electric motor that is capable of propelling the bicycle without the rider pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour.

Subd. 15c. Class 3 electric-assisted bicycle.

"Class 3 electric-assisted bicycle" means an electric-assisted bicycle equipped with an electric motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 28 miles per hour.

Subd. 27. Electric-assisted bicycle.

"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; and
- (4) meets the requirements of a class 1, class 2, or class 3 electric-assisted bicycle.

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.

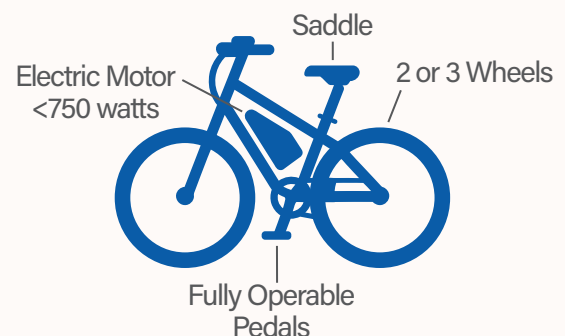
Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

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.

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



Additional Micromobility Devices Allowed on Trails

Background

While these best practices pertain primarily to e-bikes, it is important to acknowledge that micromobility devices that are capable of similar power/speed as e-bikes are often used on trails. Therefore, they should be acknowledged in regulatory language.

Example Regulatory Language

Motorized Foot Scooters Three Rivers Park District

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, according to state law. The following Minnesota laws are specific to motorized foot scooters:

- 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 Three Rivers trails.
- No one under age 12 may operate a motorized foot scooter.
- People under 18 who are using a motorized foot scooter must wear a helmet.

Scottsdale, AZ

[Scooters] are allowed on public shared-use paths and sidewalks if the scooters are operated with care and at a safe speed to avoid colliding with pedestrians and objects.

Tulsa, OK River Parks Authority

E-Scooters (such as Lime and Bird and OneWheels) are regulated the same as bicycles.

Segways and Other Self-Balancing Motorized Devices Three Rivers Park District

Segways, motorized skateboards, hoverboards and other self-balancing motorized devices are defined in Minnesota law as “electric personal assistive mobility devices.” They are allowed on paved trails, or wherever pedestrians are allowed. They must be operated at a speed that is reasonable and prudent under the conditions. These devices are defined in Minnesota Statutes 169.011, Subdivision 26. For more information on operation of these devices, see Minnesota Statutes 169.212.

Other Mobility Devices Three Rivers Park District

The Park District will allow other appropriate power-driven mobility devices to assist persons with mobility disabilities to more fully enjoy park areas, facilities and trails. Please refer to the Park District’s policy on using motorized wheelchairs, mobility scooters and other power-driven mobility devices in the parks. If you wish to obtain a device permit please call XXX.

Albuquerque, NM

Powered micromobility devices, which includes devices such as e-skateboards, e-scooters, one wheel hover boards, e-skates, etc. are defined by curb weight, top speed, and type of motor are only allowed on paved trails within Open Space.

Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

Electric micromobility devices beyond just e-bikes were discussed during several Trail System Coordination meetings. Discussion mainly revolved around the challenges associated with e-motos riding on the trails. It was noted that the majority of complaints around e-bike usage on the trails were actually complaints about e-moto riders.

Additional Micromobility Devices Allowed on Trails (cont.)

✓ Met Council Recommendation

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 regulations apply 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

Background

Having a clear description of which micromobility devices are not allowed on trails is a helpful complement to the previous section. This section is critical as it clarifies that e-motos are not the same as e-bikes, and therefore are not allowed on regional trails.

Example Regulatory Language

State of Minnesota

A vehicle is not an electric-assisted bicycle if it is designed, manufactured, or intended by the manufacturer or seller to be configured or modified to not meet the requirements for an electric-assisted bicycle or operate within the requirements for an electric-assisted bicycle class.

For purposes of this subdivision, “configured or modified” includes any of the following changes:

1. a mechanical switch or button;
2. a modification or change to the electric motor or the electric drive system;
3. the use of an application to increase or override the electric drive system; or
4. through any other means represented or intended by the manufacturer or seller to modify the vehicle to no longer meet the requirements or classification of an electric-assisted bicycle.

Tulsa, OK River Parks Authority

Only pedal-assist e-bikes that meet Class 1 and 2 standards are allowed on Tulsa’s multi-use, natural surface and paved trails. E-motos and any bike without functional cranks and pedals are not permitted.

Virginia Beach, VA

Any e-bike exceeding the above definitions (e.g., motor over 750 watts, or exceeding class speed limits with or without pedaling/throttle) may be considered a different type of wheeled device and subject to stricter regulations, potentially as a: [Electric moped, Off-road motorcycle, Motorcycle].

Three Rivers Park District

E-motos are not e-bikes.

Operating e-motos on any Park District trail is prohibited. This includes both paved and unpaved regional trails as well as singletrack mountain bike trails.

E-motos are electric-powered two-wheeled off-highway vehicles (OHVs) that resemble dirt bikes. They often lack pedals, rely on a throttle for acceleration and can reach speeds greater than 28 mph.

Some e-motos may include pedals and look similar to e-bikes but they travel at much higher speeds, often include an optional throttle and are not classified as e-bikes.

Other e-motos are designed for road or paved use and are considered electric mopeds or electric motorcycles. These vehicles are subject to state motor vehicle laws and restrictions and are not permitted on any Park District trails.

PeopleForBikes

While PeopleForBikes does not have a clear definition for “What is not an e-bike,” they are very clear about differentiating between e-bikes and e-motos. This organization developed a [table](#) that (included in the Met Council Recommendations section below with minor tweaks) that clearly breaks down the differences between the two devices.

Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

The workgroup discussed that there is often confusion about the difference between e-bikes and e-motos since e-motos are often seen on sidewalks/trails. The use of e-motos on trails seems to be the biggest challenge that each agency is facing, so sharing clear differentiation language and visuals depicting which devices are and are not allowed on trails is critical.

Micromobility

Devices Not Allowed on Trails (cont.)

✓ Met Council Recommendation

Modified E-Bikes

A device is not an e-bike if it is made by the manufacturer/seller to be intentionally modified to not meet the e-bike requirements.

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.

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

E-Bike User Requirements

Background

Classifying who should operate e-bikes, as well as what requirements apply at certain ages, can make riding on the trails more comfortable for all. It is important that those riding e-bikes have full control and knowledge of how their e-bike works and are aware of local regulations. Therefore, certain age minimums should be applied.

Example Regulatory Language

State of Minnesota

Age: A person under the age of 15 must not operate an electric-assisted bicycle.

Rancho Cucamonga, CA

Age: No minimum age to ride a Class 1 or 2, must be 16 years or older to ride Class 3.

Helmet: Required for all riders under 18 on Class 1 or 2, required for all Class 3 riders.

Chula Vista, CA

Age: No person under 12 years of age may operate or ride a Class 1 or Class 2 electric bicycle within the City. No operator under 18 years of age may transport any passengers on any electric micromobility vehicle.

Helmet: No person under 18 years of age may operate any electric micromobility vehicle unless that person is wearing a properly fitted and fastened bicycle helmet.

Virginia Beach, VA

Age: There is no minimum age of operation, except for a Class 3 e-bike, where the minimum age of operation is 14 years of age.

Helmet: All e-bike riders 14 years old or younger must always wear a helmet. State Code requires that each rider and passenger of a Class 3 e-bike must always wear a helmet, regardless of age.

Albuquerque, NM

Age: Prohibits anyone under the age of 16 from riding a Class 3 e-bike unless as a passenger.

Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

The workgroup acknowledged that according to State regulation, those under the age of 15 are not allowed to operate an e-bike, but noted that this is not widely known or practiced. The group also acknowledged that some communities have helmet regulations, though this is inconsistent from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. As seen in the example language above, age minimums vary between 12-18 for different limitations. The group felt that following state statute for age makes sense. The addition of helmet regulations would be different from current State regulation, but agencies were supportive. Helmet requirements as well as the need for a driver's license or motorized bicycle operator's permit to operate an e-bike were brought up as potential language additions to state statute based on discussions at the city level in several jurisdictions in the region.

Met Council Recommendation

Age: No person under the age of 15 is allowed to operate an e-bike.

Helmet: All e-bike riders and/or passengers under the age of 18 are strongly encouraged to wear a helmet.

E-Bike Etiquette

Background

While it might be easy to assume that speed limits will curb unsafe e-bike behavior on trails, speed limits are difficult to enforce and do not apply well in all areas. For example, a speed limit of 10mph makes sense on a popular trail in a densely populated area, but a speed limit of 20mph can be safe on a more remote, less populated trail. Additionally, not all e-bikes (or bikes generally) have speedometers, so many users are unaware of their riding speed. Finally, there is limited ability to track and enforce speed on trails. Given these limitations, using regulatory language that centers on e-bike user behavior rather than specific speeds makes sense.

Example Regulatory Language

Three Rivers Park District

All trail users, regardless of which type of bicycle used, must operate their bicycle in a safe manner and cannot operate at speeds faster than are reasonably safe with regard to the operator and other trail users.

Passing should always be done on the left, and riders should give an audible signal when passing. When riding on regional and in-park trails, riders must yield to pedestrians and slower trail users.

Colorado Springs, CO

Trail Users shall operate all bicycles in a safe manner which is reasonable and prudent under the conditions with due regard to the width, grade, curves, corners, traffic, and all other attendant circumstances [...] shall at all times yield the right-of way to pedestrians, equestrians, wildlife and uphill traffic.

Albuquerque, NM

Every person riding a bicycle upon a roadway shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle, except as to the special regulations within Sections 66-3-701 through 66-3-707 NMSA 1978.

Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

E-bike etiquette was a major topic of discussion during Trail System Coordination Workgroup meetings. It was acknowledged that given the difficulty of enforcing speed limits and the variation in trail types within the system, it makes sense to use etiquette requirements instead of a general trail speed limit.

Met Council Recommendation

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.

E-Bike Speed

Background

While tracking and enforcing e-bike speeds on trails can prove challenging (see “E-Bike Etiquette”), some communities do prefer to set a trail speed limit. Setting a limit, while often not fully enforceable, can be a good reminder for e-bike riders to ride at reasonable speeds, especially when other trail users are present.

Example Regulatory Language

Three Rivers Park District

All trail users, regardless of which type of bicycle used, must operate their bicycle in a safe manner and cannot operate at speeds faster than are reasonably safe with regard to the operator and other trail users.

Colorado Springs, CO

The trail speed limit is 20 miles per hour.

Albuquerque, NM

Maximum speed limit on City of Albuquerque trails of 20 mph [...] Allows Parks and Recreation Department to set lower speed limits where appropriate, such as in congested areas.

King County, WA

The speed limit for trails is 15mph along the entire corridor for all bikes.

Virginia Beach, VA

At this time, City and State code have not established speed limits for e-bikes, however, Virginia Beach City Code requires all cyclists to operate safely and responsibly, including maintaining a reasonable speed.

Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

The Trail System Coordination Workgroup went back and forth on this topic, debating the value of including a speed limit to keep riders in check versus eliminating a speed limit altogether and relying solely on etiquette language to encourage safe speeds. It was acknowledged during meetings that despite posted speed limits (ex. 10mph on Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) trails), speed limits are rarely followed and are also rarely enforced since by the time a rider traveling over the speed limit moves through an area, they are already too far away to be given a ticket.

Met Council Recommendation

The workgroup felt that emphasizing user behavior language would make the most sense rather than selecting specific speed limits. Therefore, there is no speed limit recommended by the Council. The “E-Bike Etiquette” section above is adjusted in the “Metropolitan Council Recommended E-Bike Regulatory Language” section to include language that alludes to proper speeds.

Where E-Bikes Can Ride

Background

Some communities limit which types of e-bikes can ride on their trails and in their parks. But with the difficulty in spotting a Class One versus a Class Three e-bike at a quick glance, regulation is challenging. Focusing on regulating behavior and educating the public on what is and is not considered an e-bike will keep the right devices riding safely on trails.

Example Regulatory Language

Three Rivers Park District

E-bikes (electric-assist or pedal-assist bicycles) can be used wherever traditional bicycles are allowed, including regional trails, paved in-park trails and singletrack trails.

Colorado Springs, CO

The Park Manager hereby authorizes for use by Class 1 Electrical Assisted Bicycles, all designated trails, having no additional restrictions prohibiting their use, as listed and mapped [...] Use of a Class 2 or 3 Electrical Assisted Bicycle on park property is prohibited.

Albuquerque, NM

Allows Class 1 e-bikes on a bicycle or pedestrian path where bicycles are allowed, while also allowing local jurisdictions to prohibit them. Prohibits Class 2 and Class 3 on a bicycle or pedestrian path unless the path is within a street or highway or if a political subdivision within the state allows them. [...] Prohibits e-bikes on natural surface trails that are strictly non-motorized.

Chula Vista, CA

Class 1 and Class 2 e-bikes are prohibited on sidewalks in all business districts and in any area where signage restricts use. Class 3 e-bikes and motorized scooters are prohibited on any sidewalk in the city.

Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

The Trail System Coordination Workgroup focused on which e-bike classes and other mobility devices the State and specific agencies are allowing. However, allowing all classes of e-bikes to be consistent with state statute and to avoid unnecessary confusion for regulation was preferred during the discussion.

Met Council Recommendation

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

Background

Having a clear source to contact if e-bikes are presenting problems on a trail guarantees that those reporting issues feel confident in getting their concerns addressed. This also reduces work for departments that should not be the first point of contact for issues but that community members might reach out to first.

Example Regulatory Language

Scottsdale, AZ

If the rider is moving through the area, there is little the city can do. If there is a persistent problem with riding in a particular area, please call the police non-emergency line at 480-312-5000 and the call will be prioritized for response by the police department.

Chula Vista, CA

To report incidents involving e-bikes, e-motorcycles, or other electric rideables, please contact the Chula Vista Police Department by using the [link](#) below to file a report.

Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

Reporting a problem came up briefly during discussions, but the main takeaway is that it is challenging to report someone behaving inappropriately with an e-bike on the trail since they are often speeding off immediately following the incident, unless the same person is frequently exhibiting the same behavior. This is why enforcing speed limits is so challenging. The group leaned more toward consistent language being shared and campaigns developed around e-bike etiquette to make sure the general public is aware of how they should be operating on trails.

Met Council Recommendation

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].

Language to Avoid

Background

In reviewing numerous community and organization's e-bike regulation language and policy positions, it is recommended that the following language be avoided in e-bike regulation and when referring to e-bikes generally.

Example Regulatory Language

Rails to Trails Conservancy

Avoid classifying e-bikes as "motorized vehicles." This can lead people to assume that e-bikes should not be permitted on trails since typically motorized vehicles (other than motorized wheelchairs and snowmobiles (on certain trails)) are not allowed on trails. More information [here](#).

Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

No discussion was held around this concept.

Met Council Recommendation

The text in this section does not need to be included in updated ordinances or safety campaigns, but it is good to keep in mind when developing regulatory language in order to avoid confusion.

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
Operable Pedals	Required	Not required (often fake)
Motor Power	750W	Often 1,000W-6,000W+
Top Speed	20-28 mph	30-65+ mph
Throttle	Class 2 only (20 mph)	Usually throttle-only
Licensing/Registration	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].

DRAFT



Twin Cities Metropolitan Area Regional Trail

E-Bike Regulation Best Practices

Contents

E-Bike Regulation Best Practices Introduction 1

Related Minnesota State Statutes 2

What Is an E-Bike? 4

Additional Micromobility Devices Allowed on Trails..... 5

Micromobility Devices Not Allowed on Trails..... 7

E-Bike User Requirements..... 9

E-Bike Etiquette 10

E-Bike Speed..... 11

Where E-Bikes Can Ride..... 12

Guidance for Reporting a Problem 13

Language to Avoid 14

Metropolitan Council Recommended E-Bike Regulatory Language 15

Acknowledgments

The recommendations made in this document are the product of discussions and ideas from individuals involved in the Agency-Council Trail System Coordination Workgroup, including Regional Park Implementing Agency partners (Anoka County, City of Bloomington, Carver County, Dakota County, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB), Ramsey County, City of Saint Paul, Scott County, Three Rivers Park District, and Washington County), partner agencies including the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and Commissioner Anthony Taylor from the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. Metropolitan Council Regional Parks and Trails and Metropolitan Transportation Services staff were also involved in these meetings and contributed to the review and refinement of these recommendations.

E-Bike Regulation Best Practices Introduction

Background

Regulating e-bike use on trails is a new challenge with regulatory language variations at each level of government nationwide. Because e-bikes are a more recent category of micromobility device (defined as a small personal device that is propelled by human power or an electric motor and meant to carry one or two passengers. This term is used throughout the document to refer to devices that are allowed on trails. It has been simplified from Minnesota State statute's term "electric personal assistive mobility devices") that are becoming increasingly popular, it is hard to keep up with new product developments and establish regulations that keep trail users safe. This guide aims to review regulations from around the nation that have recently been adopted and determine what regulatory language makes sense for the Metropolitan Council Regional Parks and Trails system to put forward.

As a starting point, the State of Minnesota has adopted a broad e-bike policy (included in full on pages 2-3) that many agencies currently embrace in their own regulatory language. However, local agencies can add additional regulatory language beyond state law. Having these more specific regulations around e-bike (and other micromobility device) use on regional trails can help make the user experience safer and more comfortable for all trail users.

To take state e-bike regulations a step further, the following best practice language has been pulled together to serve as guidance for Met Council Regional Parks and Trails Implementing Agencies as they update ordinances related to trails, develop etiquette signage and related educational materials, embark on trail safety campaigns, and take related actions. This language is based on a careful review of current Met Council Regional Parks and Trails Implementing Agency adopted regulations and regulatory language used in other cities, counties, and regions, and is also based on Met Council Parks and Trails staff internal work as well as Trail System Coordination Workgroup discussions that were held as part of a bimonthly meeting series held between July 2025 and February 2026.

How to Use This Document

This document is divided into different facets of e-bike regulation, including the definition of an e-bike, who can use an e-bike on trails, trail riding etiquette, and more. Each category is laid out with the following elements:

1. Regulation Category + Background
2. Example Regulatory Language
3. Summary of Trail System Coordination Workgroup and Met Council Staff discussion
4. Met Council Recommendation

Each section starts with a brief summary of what the regulation category aims to accomplish. It then includes several examples of regulatory language from various agencies around the country. Following the examples, a brief summary of what has been discussed during Trail System Coordination Workgroup meetings and Met Council Staff meetings is included to justify the Council's recommended language. Finally, the Met Council's recommendation, which is a culmination of the example language and discussions held during workgroup and staff meetings, is included at the end of each section.

The final pages of the document lay out the full Met Council recommended e-bike regulation language to be adopted by each Regional Park and Trail Implementing Agency as ordinances are updated, or safety/etiquette campaigns are organized.

Related Minnesota State Statutes

2024 Minnesota Statutes. Transportation. Chapter 169. Section 169.222

Subd. 6a. Electric-assisted bicycle; riding rules.

- (a) A person may operate an electric-assisted bicycle in the same manner as provided for operation of other bicycles, including but not limited to operation on the shoulder of a roadway, a bicycle lane, and a bicycle route, and operation without the motor engaged on a bikeway or bicycle trail.
- (b) A person may operate a class 1 or class 2 electric-assisted bicycle with the motor engaged on a bicycle path, bicycle trail, or shared use path unless prohibited under section [85.015](#), subdivision 1d; [85.018](#), subdivision 2, paragraph (d); or [160.263](#), subdivision 2, paragraph (b), as applicable.
- (c) A person may operate a class 3 electric-assisted bicycle or multiple mode electric-assisted bicycle with the motor engaged on a bicycle path, bicycle trail, or shared use path unless the local authority or state agency having jurisdiction over the bicycle path or trail prohibits the operation.
- (d) The local authority or state agency having jurisdiction over a trail or over a bike park that is designated as nonmotorized and that has a natural surface tread made by clearing and grading the native soil with no added surfacing materials may regulate the operation of an electric-assisted bicycle.
- (e) A person under the age of 15 must not operate an electric-assisted bicycle.

Subd. 6b. Electric-assisted bicycle; equipment.

- (a) The manufacturer or distributor of an electric-assisted bicycle must apply a label to the bicycle that is permanently affixed in a prominent location. The label must contain the class number, top assisted speed, and motor wattage of the electric-assisted bicycle, and must be printed in a legible font with at least 9-point type. A multiple mode electric-assisted bicycle must have labeling that identifies the highest class or each of the electric-assisted bicycle classes in which it is capable of operating.
- (b) A person must not modify an electric-assisted bicycle to change the motor-powered speed capability or motor engagement so that the bicycle no longer meets the requirements for the applicable class, unless:
 - 1. the person replaces the label required in paragraph (a) with revised information; or
 - 2. for a vehicle that no longer meets the requirements for any electric-assisted bicycle class, the person removes the labeling as an electric-assisted bicycle.
- (c) An electric-assisted bicycle must operate in a manner so that the electric motor is disengaged or ceases to function: (1) when the brakes are applied; or (2) except for a class 2 electric-assisted bicycle or a multiple mode electric-assisted bicycle operating in class 2 mode, when the rider stops pedaling.
- (d) A class 3 electric-assisted bicycle or multiple mode electric-assisted bicycle must be equipped with a speedometer that displays the speed at which the bicycle is traveling in miles per hour.
- (e) A multiple mode electric-assisted bicycle equipped with a throttle must not be capable of exceeding 20 miles per hour on motorized propulsion alone in any mode when the throttle is engaged.

Related Minnesota State Statutes (cont.)

Minnesota Statutes 2021, section 169.011

E-Bike Definitions:

Subd. 15a. Class 1 electric-assisted bicycle.

"Class 1 electric-assisted bicycle" means an electric-assisted bicycle equipped with an electric motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour.

Subd. 15b. Class 2 electric-assisted bicycle.

"Class 2 electric-assisted bicycle" means an electric-assisted bicycle equipped with an electric motor that is capable of propelling the bicycle without the rider pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour.

Subd. 15c. Class 3 electric-assisted bicycle.

"Class 3 electric-assisted bicycle" means an electric-assisted bicycle equipped with an electric motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 28 miles per hour.

Subd. 27. Electric-assisted bicycle.

"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; and
- (4) meets the requirements of a class 1, class 2, or class 3 electric-assisted bicycle.

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.

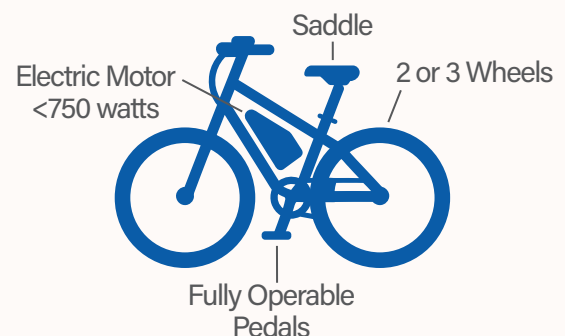
Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

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.

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



Additional Micromobility Devices Allowed on Trails

Background

While these best practices pertain primarily to e-bikes, it is important to acknowledge that micromobility devices that are capable of similar power/speed as e-bikes are often used on trails. Therefore, they should be acknowledged in regulatory language.

Example Regulatory Language

Motorized Foot Scooters Three Rivers Park District

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, according to state law. The following Minnesota laws are specific to motorized foot scooters:

- 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 Three Rivers trails.
- No one under age 12 may operate a motorized foot scooter.
- People under 18 who are using a motorized foot scooter must wear a helmet.

Scottsdale, AZ

[Scooters] are allowed on public shared-use paths and sidewalks if the scooters are operated with care and at a safe speed to avoid colliding with pedestrians and objects.

Tulsa, OK River Parks Authority

E-Scooters (such as Lime and Bird and OneWheels) are regulated the same as bicycles.

Segways and Other Self-Balancing Motorized Devices Three Rivers Park District

Segways, motorized skateboards, hoverboards and other self-balancing motorized devices are defined in Minnesota law as “electric personal assistive mobility devices.” They are allowed on paved trails, or wherever pedestrians are allowed. They must be operated at a speed that is reasonable and prudent under the conditions. These devices are defined in Minnesota Statutes 169.011, Subdivision 26. For more information on operation of these devices, see Minnesota Statutes 169.212.

Other Mobility Devices Three Rivers Park District

The Park District will allow other appropriate power-driven mobility devices to assist persons with mobility disabilities to more fully enjoy park areas, facilities and trails. Please refer to the Park District’s policy on using motorized wheelchairs, mobility scooters and other power-driven mobility devices in the parks. If you wish to obtain a device permit please call XXX.

Albuquerque, NM

Powered micromobility devices, which includes devices such as e-skateboards, e-scooters, one wheel hover boards, e-skates, etc. are defined by curb weight, top speed, and type of motor are only allowed on paved trails within Open Space.

Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

Electric micromobility devices beyond just e-bikes were discussed during several Trail System Coordination meetings. Discussion mainly revolved around the challenges associated with e-motos riding on the trails. It was noted that the majority of complaints around e-bike usage on the trails were actually complaints about e-moto riders.

Additional Micromobility Devices Allowed on Trails (cont.)

✓ Met Council Recommendation

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 regulations apply 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

Background

Having a clear description of which micromobility devices are not allowed on trails is a helpful complement to the previous section. This section is critical as it clarifies that e-motos are not the same as e-bikes, and therefore are not allowed on regional trails.

Example Regulatory Language

State of Minnesota

A vehicle is not an electric-assisted bicycle if it is designed, manufactured, or intended by the manufacturer or seller to be configured or modified to not meet the requirements for an electric-assisted bicycle or operate within the requirements for an electric-assisted bicycle class.

For purposes of this subdivision, “configured or modified” includes any of the following changes:

1. a mechanical switch or button;
2. a modification or change to the electric motor or the electric drive system;
3. the use of an application to increase or override the electric drive system; or
4. through any other means represented or intended by the manufacturer or seller to modify the vehicle to no longer meet the requirements or classification of an electric-assisted bicycle.

Tulsa, OK River Parks Authority

Only pedal-assist e-bikes that meet Class 1 and 2 standards are allowed on Tulsa’s multi-use, natural surface and paved trails. E-motos and any bike without functional cranks and pedals are not permitted.

Virginia Beach, VA

Any e-bike exceeding the above definitions (e.g., motor over 750 watts, or exceeding class speed limits with or without pedaling/throttle) may be considered a different type of wheeled device and subject to stricter regulations, potentially as a: [Electric moped, Off-road motorcycle, Motorcycle].

Three Rivers Park District

E-motos are not e-bikes.

Operating e-motos on any Park District trail is prohibited. This includes both paved and unpaved regional trails as well as singletrack mountain bike trails.

E-motos are electric-powered two-wheeled off-highway vehicles (OHVs) that resemble dirt bikes. They often lack pedals, rely on a throttle for acceleration and can reach speeds greater than 28 mph.

Some e-motos may include pedals and look similar to e-bikes but they travel at much higher speeds, often include an optional throttle and are not classified as e-bikes.

Other e-motos are designed for road or paved use and are considered electric mopeds or electric motorcycles. These vehicles are subject to state motor vehicle laws and restrictions and are not permitted on any Park District trails.

PeopleForBikes

While PeopleForBikes does not have a clear definition for “What is not an e-bike,” they are very clear about differentiating between e-bikes and e-motos. This organization developed a [table](#) that (included in the Met Council Recommendations section below with minor tweaks) that clearly breaks down the differences between the two devices.

Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

The workgroup discussed that there is often confusion about the difference between e-bikes and e-motos since e-motos are often seen on sidewalks/trails. The use of e-motos on trails seems to be the biggest challenge that each agency is facing, so sharing clear differentiation language and visuals depicting which devices are and are not allowed on trails is critical.

Micromobility

Devices Not Allowed on Trails (cont.)

✓ Met Council Recommendation

Modified E-Bikes

A device is not an e-bike if it is made by the manufacturer/seller to be intentionally modified to not meet the e-bike requirements.

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.

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

E-Bike User Requirements

Background

Classifying who should operate e-bikes, as well as what requirements apply at certain ages, can make riding on the trails more comfortable for all. It is important that those riding e-bikes have full control and knowledge of how their e-bike works and are aware of local regulations. Therefore, certain age minimums should be applied.

Example Regulatory Language

State of Minnesota

Age: A person under the age of 15 must not operate an electric-assisted bicycle.

Rancho Cucamonga, CA

Age: No minimum age to ride a Class 1 or 2, must be 16 years or older to ride Class 3.

Helmet: Required for all riders under 18 on Class 1 or 2, required for all Class 3 riders.

Chula Vista, CA

Age: No person under 12 years of age may operate or ride a Class 1 or Class 2 electric bicycle within the City. No operator under 18 years of age may transport any passengers on any electric micromobility vehicle.

Helmet: No person under 18 years of age may operate any electric micromobility vehicle unless that person is wearing a properly fitted and fastened bicycle helmet.

Virginia Beach, VA

Age: There is no minimum age of operation, except for a Class 3 e-bike, where the minimum age of operation is 14 years of age.

Helmet: All e-bike riders 14 years old or younger must always wear a helmet. State Code requires that each rider and passenger of a Class 3 e-bike must always wear a helmet, regardless of age.

Albuquerque, NM

Age: Prohibits anyone under the age of 16 from riding a Class 3 e-bike unless as a passenger.

Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

The workgroup acknowledged that according to State regulation, those under the age of 15 are not allowed to operate an e-bike, but noted that this is not widely known or practiced. The group felt that following state statute for age makes sense. The group also acknowledged that some communities have helmet regulations, though this is inconsistent from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. As seen in the example language above, age minimums vary between 12-18 for different limitations. The workgroup heard that including rules related to the need for a driver's license or motorized bicycle operator's permit to operate an e-bike and requiring helmets were brought up at the city level in several jurisdictions in the region. However, after discussions about the equity concerns associated with these requirements, the decision to move forward with a helmet recommendation, not requirement, was made.

Met Council Recommendation

Age: No person under the age of 15 is allowed to operate an e-bike.

Helmet: All e-bike riders and/or passengers under the age of 18 are strongly encouraged to wear a helmet.

E-Bike Etiquette

Background

While it might be easy to assume that speed limits will curb unsafe e-bike behavior on trails, speed limits are difficult to enforce and do not apply well in all areas. For example, a speed limit of 10mph makes sense on a popular trail in a densely populated area, but a speed limit of 20mph can be safe on a more remote, less populated trail. Additionally, not all e-bikes (or bikes generally) have speedometers, so many users are unaware of their riding speed. Finally, there is limited ability to track and enforce speed on trails. Given these limitations, using regulatory language that centers on e-bike user behavior rather than specific speeds makes sense.

Example Regulatory Language

Three Rivers Park District

All trail users, regardless of which type of bicycle used, must operate their bicycle in a safe manner and cannot operate at speeds faster than are reasonably safe with regard to the operator and other trail users.

Passing should always be done on the left, and riders should give an audible signal when passing. When riding on regional and in-park trails, riders must yield to pedestrians and slower trail users.

Colorado Springs, CO

Trail Users shall operate all bicycles in a safe manner which is reasonable and prudent under the conditions with due regard to the width, grade, curves, corners, traffic, and all other attendant circumstances [...] shall at all times yield the right-of way to pedestrians, equestrians, wildlife and uphill traffic.

Albuquerque, NM

Every person riding a bicycle upon a roadway shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle, except as to the special regulations within Sections 66-3-701 through 66-3-707 NMSA 1978.

Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

E-bike etiquette was a major topic of discussion during Trail System Coordination Workgroup meetings. It was acknowledged that given the difficulty of enforcing speed limits and the variation in trail types within the system, it makes sense to use etiquette requirements instead of a general trail speed limit.

Met Council Recommendation

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.

E-Bike Speed

Background

While tracking and enforcing e-bike speeds on trails can prove challenging (see “E-Bike Etiquette”), some communities do prefer to set a trail speed limit. Setting a limit, while often not fully enforceable, can be a good reminder for e-bike riders to ride at reasonable speeds, especially when other trail users are present.

Example Regulatory Language

Three Rivers Park District

All trail users, regardless of which type of bicycle used, must operate their bicycle in a safe manner and cannot operate at speeds faster than are reasonably safe with regard to the operator and other trail users.

Colorado Springs, CO

The trail speed limit is 20 miles per hour.

Albuquerque, NM

Maximum speed limit on City of Albuquerque trails of 20 mph [...] Allows Parks and Recreation Department to set lower speed limits where appropriate, such as in congested areas.

King County, WA

The speed limit for trails is 15mph along the entire corridor for all bikes.

Virginia Beach, VA

At this time, City and State code have not established speed limits for e-bikes, however, Virginia Beach City Code requires all cyclists to operate safely and responsibly, including maintaining a reasonable speed.

Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

The Trail System Coordination Workgroup went back and forth on this topic, debating the value of including a speed limit to keep riders in check versus eliminating a speed limit altogether and relying solely on etiquette language to encourage safe speeds. It was acknowledged during meetings that despite posted speed limits (ex. 10mph on Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) trails), speed limits are rarely followed and are also rarely enforced since by the time a rider traveling over the speed limit moves through an area, they are already too far away to be given a ticket.

Met Council Recommendation

The workgroup felt that emphasizing user behavior language would make the most sense rather than selecting specific speed limits. Therefore, there is no speed limit recommended by the Council. The “E-Bike Etiquette” section above is adjusted in the “Metropolitan Council Recommended E-Bike Regulatory Language” section to include language that alludes to proper speeds.

Where E-Bikes Can Ride

Background

Some communities limit which types of e-bikes can ride on their trails and in their parks. But with the difficulty in spotting a Class One versus a Class Three e-bike at a quick glance, regulation is challenging. Focusing on regulating behavior and educating the public on what is and is not considered an e-bike will keep the right devices riding safely on trails.

Example Regulatory Language

Three Rivers Park District

E-bikes (electric-assist or pedal-assist bicycles) can be used wherever traditional bicycles are allowed, including regional trails, paved in-park trails and singletrack trails.

Colorado Springs, CO

The Park Manager hereby authorizes for use by Class 1 Electrical Assisted Bicycles, all designated trails, having no additional restrictions prohibiting their use, as listed and mapped [...] Use of a Class 2 or 3 Electrical Assisted Bicycle on park property is prohibited.

Albuquerque, NM

Allows Class 1 e-bikes on a bicycle or pedestrian path where bicycles are allowed, while also allowing local jurisdictions to prohibit them. Prohibits Class 2 and Class 3 on a bicycle or pedestrian path unless the path is within a street or highway or if a political subdivision within the state allows them. [...] Prohibits e-bikes on natural surface trails that are strictly non-motorized.

Chula Vista, CA

Class 1 and Class 2 e-bikes are prohibited on sidewalks in all business districts and in any area where signage restricts use. Class 3 e-bikes and motorized scooters are prohibited on any sidewalk in the city.

Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

The Trail System Coordination Workgroup focused on which e-bike classes and other mobility devices the State and specific agencies are allowing. However, allowing all classes of e-bikes to be consistent with state statute and to avoid unnecessary confusion for regulation was preferred during the discussion.

Met Council Recommendation

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

Background

Having a clear source to contact if e-bikes are presenting problems on a trail guarantees that those reporting issues feel confident in getting their concerns addressed. This also reduces work for departments that should not be the first point of contact for issues but that community members might reach out to first.

Example Regulatory Language

Scottsdale, AZ

If the rider is moving through the area, there is little the city can do. If there is a persistent problem with riding in a particular area, please call the police non-emergency line at 480-312-5000 and the call will be prioritized for response by the police department.

Chula Vista, CA

To report incidents involving e-bikes, e-motorcycles, or other electric rideables, please contact the Chula Vista Police Department by using the [link](#) below to file a report.

Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

Reporting a problem came up briefly during discussions, but the main takeaway is that it is challenging to report someone behaving inappropriately with an e-bike on the trail since they are often speeding off immediately following the incident, unless the same person is frequently exhibiting the same behavior. This is why enforcing speed limits is so challenging. The group leaned more toward consistent language being shared and campaigns developed around e-bike etiquette to make sure the general public is aware of how they should be operating on trails.

Met Council Recommendation

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].

Language to Avoid

Background

In reviewing numerous community and organization's e-bike regulation language and policy positions, it is recommended that the following language be avoided in e-bike regulation and when referring to e-bikes generally.

Example Regulatory Language

Rails to Trails Conservancy

Avoid classifying e-bikes as “motorized vehicles.” This can lead people to assume that e-bikes should not be permitted on trails since typically motorized vehicles (other than motorized wheelchairs and snowmobiles (on certain trails)) are not allowed on trails. More information [here](#).

Workgroup + Met Council Staff Discussion

No discussion was held around this concept.

Met Council Recommendation

The text in this section does not need to be included in updated ordinances or safety campaigns, but it is good to keep in mind when developing regulatory language in order to avoid confusion.

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
Operable Pedals	Required	Not required (often fake)
Motor Power	750W	Often 1,000W-6,000W+
Top Speed	20-28 mph	30-65+ mph
Throttle	Class 2 only (20 mph)	Usually throttle-only
Licensing/Registration	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 are strongly encouraged to 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].