



DATE: December 4, 2023

MEMO TO: Jessica Vealitzek, Chair
Operations Committee

FROM: John E. Nelson
Chief Operations Officer

REQUEST: Provide policy direction regarding Ebike Rules.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION SUPPORTED: Public Access and Connections

FINANCIAL DATA: No financial impact at this time.

BACKGROUND: At its November 6, 2023 meeting, the Operations Committee reviewed and discussed District regulation of Ebikes under the General Use Ordinance. Currently, the General Use Ordinance allows Class 1 Ebikes, but not Class 2 or Class 3 Ebikes. Following discussion, the Committee requested staff to present to the Committee a policy direction request regarding the use of Class 2 and Class 3 Ebikes; however, there was some concern regarding Class 3 Ebikes. Specifically, the concern was whether Class 3 Ebikes, when using motor-assistance at speeds up to 28 mph, could be controlled or limited in some manner.

Further research indicates that, under the Illinois Vehicle Code (625 ILCS 5/11-1517):

“Each Class 3 low-speed electric bicycle shall be equipped with a speedometer that displays the speed the bicycle is traveling in miles per hour.”

As such, riders of Class 3 Ebikes have a means of limiting their speed as may be required by the General Use Ordinance (i.e. to 20 mph or less).

In addition, the General Use Ordinance provides the following rules that guide bicycle or Ebike use:

SECTION V USES PROHIBITED

E. Regulation Of Vehicles, Traffic, Bicycles, And Parking. No person shall commit any of the following acts on District Property:

(xiii) operate any bicycle or Ebike (i) in any manner that endangers the safety of other persons or property, including, without limitation, other trail users, and taking into consideration, without limitation, weather and trail conditions, (ii) in the absence of a posted speed limit, at a speed in excess of 20 m.p.h., or (iii) at a speed in excess of that which is reasonable and proper

for the safe operation of such bicycle or Ebike, with regard to existing conditions, including but not limited to trail or road surface, hills, curves, intersections and other bicycle, pedestrian, or equestrian traffic;

(xiv) ride a bicycle or Ebike on any District Property other than a Bicycle Trail or public right of way where bicycles and Ebikes are permitted;

(xv) ride a bicycle or Ebike on any Bicycle Trail more than two abreast or on any public right of way in any manner other than single file;

(xvi) when riding a bicycle or Ebike on a Bicycle Trail, fail to ride the bicycle or Ebike (a) within the lane designated for travel by signs or District Rules; or (b) if no specific lane is designated for travel, on the right side of the Bicycle Trail;

(xvii) when riding a bicycle or Ebike on a Bicycle Trail, fail to ride the bicycle or Ebike single file when overtaking or approaching another bicycle, Ebike, pedestrian, or equestrian;

(xviii) when riding a bicycle or Ebike on a Bicycle Trail, fail to yield to a pedestrian or equestrian; or

Staff seeks policy direction whether to prepare specific revisions to the General Use Ordinance to allow use of Class 2 and Class 3 Ebikes, for further consideration by the Committee and Board.

Staff is continuing to gather further information on considerations for other types of electrical vehicles (e.g., e-scooters, e-skateboards) to present for further future policy direction.

REVIEW BY OTHERS: Manager of Board Operations and Corporate Counsel