



CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH

City Council Meeting – Council Member Items Report

To: City Council
From: Gracey Van Der Mark, Council Woman
Casey McKeon, Mayor Pro Tem
Date: September 16, 2025
Subject: **AMENDING HBMC §10.84.160: RIDING ON SIDEWALKS (EBIKES)**

ISSUE STATEMENT

The rise in electric bicycle (e-bike) use has created new public safety challenges in our community. E-bikes, often ridden by minors without driver training, are capable of speeds exceeding 28 mph—and even higher when modified. Their use on sidewalks and other pedestrian areas creates a safety risk for pedestrians in our city. Since May 2023, HBPD has documented more than 1,300 micromobility-related nuisance calls, highlighting the community-wide impact.

While most reported collisions have occurred on roadways, the same risk factors—high speeds and untrained riders—make sidewalks increasingly unsafe. Huntington Beach has seen e-Bike crashes more than double since 2022, with 2025 projections exceeding 160 crashes. According to CHOC, youth e-bike trauma admissions have risen over 1,500% since 2019, with Huntington Beach leading Orange County in emergency department cases. These statistics highlight the need to act now, proactively addressing sidewalk risks before injuries increase.

The Municipal Code already restricts bicycles on sidewalks in certain areas, but it predates widespread e-bike use. Updating the ordinance will strengthen these rules by explicitly including e-bikes and other electric conveyances, while also establishing enforceable standards for speed, right-of-way, and pedestrian safety. Updating the ordinance will provide clear rules, stronger enforcement tools, and safer sidewalks for the community.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Direct the City Manager and City Attorney to prepare an ordinance amending Huntington Beach Municipal Code § 10.84.160 (Riding on Sidewalks) to read as follows:

- A. No person shall ride a bicycle, electric bicycle, or any other electric conveyance:
 1. Upon a sidewalk within any business district, unless explicitly allowed by signage.
 2. Upon any sidewalk located within 100 feet of the property line of a public school building, church, recreation center, or playground.
 3. Upon any pedestrian overcrossing or within any crosswalk.
 4. Upon a sidewalk against the normal flow of traffic.

- B. Where sidewalk riding is permitted, operators shall:
 - 1. Yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and exercise due care to avoid collisions.
 - 2. Provide an audible signal prior to overtaking and passing pedestrians.
 - 3. Operate at a speed not exceeding ten (10) miles per hour, and at a speed not exceeding five (5) miles per hour when pedestrians are present.
- C. Nothing in this section shall prohibit the use of a wheelchair, mobility scooter, or other assistive device by a person with a disability, whether manually operated or motorized, when used for mobility assistance.

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS

This action is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL

Non Applicable - Administrative Item