



Agenda Item: 16.B
Date of Meeting: July 28, 2025
Department: Police

STAFF REPORT

To: City Council
From: Nate Derr
Subject: **ORDINANCE - First Reading and Introduction of an Ordinance Adding Chapter 6-4, Article 5 to the Bishop Municipal Code Regulating Electric Mobility Devices**
Prepared On: July 3, 2025
Attachments: E Mobility Device Ordinance

Background/History:

Electric mobility devices—including electric bicycles, electric scooters, and electrically motorized boards/skateboards—have become increasingly popular in Bishop as environmentally responsible transportation alternatives for residents and visitors. However, with this popularity comes public safety concerns, as operators of these devices face higher injury risks than traditional riders, and accidents involving motor vehicles result in more serious injuries and greater property damage.

Analysis/Discussion:

The proposed ordinance establishes a comprehensive regulatory framework for electric mobility devices while respecting the boundaries of state law. California has created distinct regulatory schemes for different types of devices, and cities must navigate these requirements carefully.

State Law Preemption and Local Authority

The California Vehicle Code comprehensively regulates electric bicycles, significantly limiting local authority. Cities cannot impose different helmet requirements or age restrictions than those mandated by state law. Electric scooters and electrically motorized boards, however, are subject to different state regulations, providing cities with more flexibility to establish local rules for these devices. The ordinance addresses each device category consistent with state law.

Electric Bicycles: Follows state-mandated helmet and age requirements, while exercising local authority to regulate sidewalk use (prohibiting Class 3 e-bikes on sidewalks entirely) and establishing speed limits in areas under city jurisdiction.

Electric Scooters: Incorporates state requirements (helmets for under 18, driver's license requirement, 15 mph speed limit) while adding local regulations for sidewalk use and operational safety standards.

Electrically Motorized Boards: Establishes helmet requirements for all operators, age restrictions, and operational limitations.

Common Rules for All Devices

The ordinance prohibits all electric mobility devices on sidewalks in high-pedestrian areas including commercial districts, school zones during school hours, and near active recreational facilities. These restrictions address documented safety concerns while maintaining transportation accessibility on other sidewalks at reduced speeds (5 mph limit). It also sets general operational safety standards for operating all mobility devices.

Disability Accommodation

The ordinance explicitly excludes mobility devices used by persons with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. This ensures that wheelchairs and other power-driven mobility devices used by individuals with mobility disabilities remain unrestricted, recognizing their essential role in providing accessibility rather than recreational or general transportation use.

Economic Impacts:

There are no significant economic impacts.

Budget Impacts:

Minimal fiscal impact is anticipated. Some costs may be incurred for new signage in restricted areas, which can be absorbed within existing departmental budgets.

Legal Review:

City Attorney Pucci has reviewed this ordinance and finds it complies with the law.

Recommended Action:

Council consideration to approve the first reading and introduction of the proposed ordinance relating to regulating electric mobility devices by title only.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BISHOP, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AMENDING TITLE 10, VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC, OF THE BISHOP MUNICIPAL CODE TO ADD CHAPTER 10.53 REGULATING ELECTRIC MOBILITY

DEVICES

Approved By: Ethan Aukee 7/7/2025

Approved By: Robin Picken 7/7/2025

Approved By: Dean Pucci 7/7/25

Approved By: Deston Dishion 7/18/2025