

CITY OF BELLE SLE, FLORIDA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: March 18, 2025
To: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
From: Travis Grimm - Chief of Police
Subject: Subject: Update to the Golf Cart Ordinance

Background:

The purpose of this ordinance update is to align the city's golf cart regulations with state law and to introduce new provisions to enhance safety and clarity regarding the operation of golf carts and low-speed vehicles within the city limits. The proposed changes ensure consistency with state regulations and establish clear guidelines for golf cart and low-speed vehicle operation.

PROPOSED CHANGES:

1. Definitions Update:

- **Golf Cart:** A motor vehicle designed and manufactured for operation on a golf course for sporting or recreational purposes, not capable of exceeding speeds of 20 miles per hour. Golf carts operating within the city must meet minimum equipment standards as required by law and shall not be modified to increase power, wheelbase, or tire specifications beyond the standard manufactured gas or electric golf cart.
- **Low-Speed Vehicle:** Any four-wheeled vehicle with a top speed greater than 20 mph but not exceeding 25 mph, including neighborhood electric vehicles. Low-speed vehicles must comply with federal safety standards outlined in 49 C.F.R. s. 571.500 and Florida Statute 316.2122.

2. Operational Restrictions:

- Golf carts may only be operated on sidewalks that are at least eight feet wide and designated paths authorized by the city.
- The number of occupants in a golf cart shall be limited to the number of available seats. Standing while the golf cart is in motion is prohibited.
- Golf carts are prohibited from towing any scooter, bicycle, skateboard, wagon, or other conveyance.

3. Enforcement and Liability:

- The absence of posted signage shall not serve as a defense against violations of the ordinance. Failure to post signage does not create liability against the city or its officials.
- Golf cart owners are responsible for payment of any fines associated with ordinance violations unless they provide clear and convincing evidence that another person had control of the vehicle at the time of the violation.
- In such cases, the owner must submit an affidavit identifying the individual who was in control of the golf cart, including their name, address, and driver's license number. The affidavit is admissible in legal proceedings and creates a rebuttable presumption that the identified individual is responsible for the fine.
- Owners are exempt from liability only in cases where the golf cart was stolen at the time of the violation.

Staff Recommendation and Council Discussion Points:

Staff recommends approval of the updated Golf Cart Ordinance to align with state law and enhance safety regulations. Approval will ensure consistency in enforcement and provide clear guidelines for golf cart operation within the city.

Discussion Points: N/A

Suggested Motion: “I move to approve the updated Golf Cart Ordinance as presented, aligning city regulations with state law and enhancing operational and enforcement provisions.”

Alternatives: N/A

Fiscal Impact: N/A

Attachments:

- Updated Golf Cart Ordinance Draft
- State Law References