

TOWN COUNCIL

STAFF REPORT

Department of Administration



MEETING DATE:	August 26, 2025
PROJECT:	Input and Discussion on Proposed Amendments to Chapter 26 Traffic and Motor Vehicles Ordinance Related to Golf Carts Hours and Locations, Requiring Seat Belts for Certain Passengers and Other Matters Related Thereto
PROJECT MANAGER:	Kevin Icard, Director of Growth Management

REQUEST: Request public input and comments on proposed amendments to the Town's Code of Ordinances, Chapter 26 – *Traffic and Motor Vehicles*, in response to recent changes to Section 56-2-90 of the South Carolina Code of Laws. The amended law allows local jurisdictions to adopt ordinances regulating the operation of golf carts and other specialized vehicles, including restrictions on hours and locations of use, safety belt requirements for certain passengers, and other related matters.

BACKGROUND: On May 22, 2025, Governor Henry McMaster signed Act 64 of the 126th Session of the South Carolina General Assembly. This legislation includes provisions allowing local jurisdictions to regulate the operation of Specialized Vehicles. These provisions address hours of operation, restrictions on specific roadways, and safety requirements, such as mandatory seat belt use for certain passengers.

The intent of the new law is to enhance community engagement, improve mobility and accessibility, and contribute to the overall quality of life for residents and visitors.

Attached is the proposed ordinance, which includes definitions for *Specialized Vehicles*, registration and insurance requirements, mandatory equipment, limitations on use, and operational guidelines for public roadways.

Key Highlights:

- Children under the age of twelve (12) must wear a seatbelt at all times while riding in a specialized vehicle.
- The ordinance limits the use of specialized vehicles on certain high-traffic roadways and in roundabouts for safety reasons.
- Any Specialized Vehicle operating on a public roadway shall have proof of liability insurance in conformance with S.C. Code Ann. Sec. 38-77-40.

At the August 12th Town Council meeting, Town Council discussed this item as a workshop agenda item. They directed staff to proceed with a public workshop prior to the regularly scheduled October Town Council workshop.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- To date, Beaufort County Council has not adopted a similar ordinance for areas immediately outside the Town limits.

Is there a public interest to request that Town Council allow golf carts to be operated at night?

Is there public interest to require safety measures on golf carts, such as lights, seat belts or child restraints?

NEXT STEPS: If Town Council would like to move forward with the adoption of this Ordinance, Town Staff will place this item on the September Town Council meeting as a first reading with a second reading in October.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Ordinance
2. South Carolina Act 64