



Staff Report

June 15, 2026 Council Workshop Meeting

E-Bikes in Parks

Presenter: Chris Witkowski, Parks & Recreation Director

Time Estimate: 15 minutes

Phone	Email
360.817.7037	cwitkowski@cityofcamas.us

BACKGROUND: Electric bikes and motorcycles, more commonly referred to as e-bikes and e-motorcycles, are a growing trend in parks & recreation as well as alternative transportation programs. These motorized devices are used by residents of all ages and skill sets and are fast becoming an alternate means of recreational travel. In the State of Washington, e-bikes are classified into three categories, as per RCW 46.04.169:

- **Class 1:** electric-assisted bicycle in which the motor provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of twenty miles per hour.
- **Class 2:** electric-assisted bicycle in which the motor may be used exclusively to propel the bicycle and is not capable of providing assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of twenty miles per hour
- **Class 3:** electric-assisted bicycle in which the motor provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of twenty-eight miles per hour and is equipped with a speedometer.

In addition to defining various classes of e-bikes, the State also restricts some use of class 3 e-bikes. Per RCW 46.61.710, class 3 e-bikes are not allowed on shared-use paths unless a local jurisdiction otherwise permits.

Currently, there is no standard definition for an e-motorcycle but motorcycle is deemed to be powered by a motor, regardless of whether the motor is battery powered or powered by fuel. Also, a motorcycle does not have pedals and is equipped instead with foot pegs. In the last state legislative session, the legislature directed the Department of Licensing to form a work group to return with an interim report related to rules of the road and other enforcement measures for electric motorcycle use.

In Camas, certain prohibitions already exist in the Camas Municipal Code (CMC) for use of motorized foot scooters and motor driven vehicles in parks. However, the code does not encompass the use and operation of any electric-assisted bicycle or electric motorcycle. CMC Section 12.32.110G currently states that it is unlawful for any person to

“Operate any vehicle in any manner in any park property which results in excessive noise or disturbs the peace of other persons using the area.”

SUMMARY: With the proliferation of e-bike and e-motorcycle use in our community, particularly in city parks, there have been elevated safety concerns voiced by residents. These bikes and motorcycles that are travelling at high speeds through the parks are creating an increased risk of higher-speed bicycle and pedestrian collisions. The City of Camas, particularly Police Department and Parks & Recreation Department, has received multiple statements of concern related to electric-assisted bicycle and electric motorcycle use in parks and trails.

To align the CMC with state statutes and further clarify allowable and prohibited uses in city parks, staff proposes to amend CMC Section 12.32.110. The proposed changes are:

- **Amend section 12.32.110G** to state that it is unlawful for any person to “Operate any vehicle, including any motor or electric driven vehicle or personal transportation device of any type, in a manner within any park which results in excessive noise, disturbs the peace of other persons using the area, or which endangers, or is likely to endanger, property or another person.”
- **Add subsection 12.32.110H** to read, “For purposes of this Section 12.32.110, ‘motor driven vehicle’ shall include class 3 electric-assisted bicycles as defined under RCW 46.04.169(3).”

Although e-motorcycles aren’t specifically addressed in the ordinance amendment, they are already classified as motor driven vehicles and subsequently prohibited in parks. Amending Section 12.32.110G with “electric driven vehicle” further clarifies this point.

Upon completion of the State Department of Licensing’s report on electric motorcycle use, the City may seek to further amend the CMC to be in alignment with any new state statutes regarding this issue, if applicable.

BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY: This proposed code change clarifies the use of the various classes of e-bikes in City parks and trails, as well as providing more leverage for Camas Police Department to enforce the prohibition of class 3 e-bikes and e-motorcycles. With a better understanding of allowed and prohibited uses, along with enhanced enforcement mechanisms, the risk of higher-speed collisions between e-bikes and pedestrians is reduced.

STRATEGIC PLAN: This proposed ordinance aligns with the strategic goal of Safe & Accessible Community. It aims to foster a safer space for park patrons and increase educational awareness for e-bike and e-motorcycle users.

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES: The primary challenge to implementation of this ordinance is enforcement. Residents will expect most, if not all, infractions to be ticketed. However, Camas Police Department needs to see the violation occur in order to enforce. Though patrols have recently increased their focus on e-bike and e-motorcycle enforcement, it is unreasonable to expect every infraction to be caught across our multiple parks and trails.

Another challenge will be educational messaging. Signs will be placed in parks and trails to explain e-bike classifications and rules. However, the various classes of e-bikes aren't widely known and some users may not be aware of the class they are using. The City will also have to communicate that some areas, such as Lacamas Regional Park and school grounds, are not City parks. Consequently, this ordinance will not pertain to those locations.

BUDGET IMPACT: There is no impact to Operating or Capital budgets for this ordinance.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends this Ordinance be placed on the July 6, 2026 Council Regular Meeting Agenda for Council's consideration.