



DRAFT Model E-Bike Ordinance

For Adoption by Municipalities within the Wausau Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Region

This ordinance is intended to serve as a model ordinance that individual jurisdictions may adopt and modify to meet local needs.

This model ordinance was developed with input from the Wausau MPO Bike/Pedestrian Sub-Committee members to promote regional consistency while allowing local flexibility.

Section 1. Purpose and Intent

The purpose of this ordinance is to establish clear, consistent, and enforceable regulations for the use of electric bicycles (e-bikes) within the Wausau MPO region in order to:

- Promote the safety of all trail, sidewalk, and roadway users;
 - Provide clarity and consistency across jurisdictions;
 - Encourage responsible use of emerging micromobility technologies; and
 - Align local regulations with applicable Wisconsin State Statutes.
-

Section 2. Definitions

For the purposes of this ordinance, the following definitions apply:

Bicycle

A vehicle propelled solely by human power through pedals and having one or more wheels.

Electric Bicycle (E-Bicycle)

A bicycle equipped with fully operable pedals and an electric motor with a maximum continuous rated power output of 750 watts (1 horsepower), meeting the requirements of Wis. Stat. § 340.01(15ph), and classified as Class 1, Class 2, or Class 3.

Class 1 E-Bicycle

An e-bicycle that provides electric assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches a speed of 20 miles per hour.

Class 2 E-Bicycle

An e-bicycle equipped with a motor that may be used exclusively to propel the bicycle and is not capable of providing assistance when the bicycle reaches a speed of 20 miles per hour.

Class 3 E-Bicycle

An e-bicycle that provides electric assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches a speed of 28 miles per hour, and is equipped with a speedometer.

E-Moto / Electric Motorized Device

Any electric-powered device designed for transportation without fully operable pedals, including electric dirt bikes, electric motorcycles, or similar devices. E-Motos are not considered e-bicycles under this ordinance.

Multi-Use Path / Trail

Any paved or unpaved off-street path intended for shared use by pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized users.

Section 3. Applicability and State Law Adoption

1. This ordinance adopts by reference all applicable provisions of Wisconsin State Statutes governing bicycles and electric bicycles, including but not limited to; 2019 Wisconsin Act 34, Wis. Stat. § 340.01, 346.02, 346.806, and 349.18.
2. Where this ordinance is more restrictive than state law, the provisions of this ordinance shall apply.

Section 4. Permitted Use and Areas of Operation

A. Roadways

1. E-bicycles may be operated on public roadways wherever conventional bicycles are permitted.
2. E-bicycles shall be operated in a careful and prudent manner and in accordance with all traffic laws and regulations.

B. Sidewalks

1. E-bicycles may be operated on sidewalks only where local ordinance permits bicycling on sidewalks.
2. When operated on a sidewalk, an e-bicycle shall be operated at pedestrian-compatible speeds when pedestrians are present and shall yield the right-of-way to pedestrians.
3. E-Motos are prohibited from operating on sidewalks.

C. Multi-Use Paths and Trails

1. Class 1, Class 2, and Class 3 e-bicycles are permitted on multi-use paths and trails unless otherwise posted.
 2. E-Motos are prohibited from operating on any multi-use path or trail.
-

Section 5. Speed Regulations

1. No e-bicycle shall be operated at a speed greater than:
 - o The posted speed limit of a roadway;
 - o 15 miles per hour on multi-use paths and trails, unless a lower speed is posted;
 2. Municipalities are encouraged to post speed limits at trailheads and key access points.
-

Section 6. Operating Conduct and Etiquette

1. When approaching pedestrians or slower users, e-bicycle operators shall:
 - o Reduce speed to a safe and courteous level;
 - o Provide an audible warning by bell or verbal signal (e.g., “on your left”);
 - o Yield to pedestrians at all times.
 2. E-bicycles shall be operated single-file on trails and sidewalks, except when safely passing another user.
 3. No person shall operate an e-bicycle in a manner that endangers the safety of others.
-

Section 7. Age Restrictions

1. Operators of Class 3 e-bicycles must be at least 16 years of age.
 2. There is no minimum age requirement for Class 1 or Class 2 e-bicycles.
-

Section 8. Equipment Requirements

1. All e-bicycles shall be equipped with:
 - o Fully operable pedals;
 - o A permanent manufacturer’s label indicating the e-bicycle class, top assisted speed, and motor wattage.
 2. Class 3 e-bicycles must be equipped with a speedometer.
 3. Required lighting and reflector equipment shall comply with Wis. Stat. § 347.489.
-

Section 9. Registration and Licensing

1. No registration or licensing shall be required for e-bicycles but is encouraged in the event of an e-bicycle being lost or stolen. For e-bicycle registration, contact [REDACTED] Police Department if applicable.
 2. A driver's license is not required to operate an e-bicycle of any Class.
-

Section 10. Prohibited Devices

1. E-Motos and other electric motorized devices without pedals are prohibited from operating on:
 - o Sidewalks;
 - o Multi-use paths;
 - o Trails; and
 - o Parks, unless permitted by local ordinance.
-

Section 11. Penalties

Any person violating this ordinance shall be subject to the general penalty provisions set forth in Section [REDACTED] of the Municipal Code.
