



## Legislation Text

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Ordinance 25-30 amending Article 1 of Chapter 4, of the Chapter 4 of the Code of Colorado Springs 2001, as Amended, Pertaining to Electrical Assisted Bicycles

### **Presenter:**

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### **Summary:**

The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services (PRCS) Department is working to adopt a policy for the use of electrical assisted bicycles (“e-bikes”) across the park system. E-bikes and motorized uses are prohibited on many regional park properties and open spaces. However, as the popularity of e-bikes continues to grow, PRCS receives more and more requests to allow e-bikes in more places. In February of 2024, PRCS convened an E-bike Task Force. An e-bike survey was available for community members to take from June 14 through August 4 of 2024. This presentation will recommend an e-bike policy which allows Class 1 e-bikes on all trails (including regional park and open space trails) and allows Class 1 and 2 e-bikes on urban/regional trails within the PRCS system.

### **Background:**

In February and March of 2024, nine community stakeholders and five PRCS staff engaged with a facilitator to provide concrete and specific guidance to the PRCS staff for what should be included in a modern trail policy inclusive of e-bikes. The following task force recommendations were determined:

- Create clear, user-friendly definitions to inform policy
- Design a robust stakeholder engagement process
- Develop successful implementation ideas
- Identify what changes are needed and make a proposal

From June 14 through August 4 of 2024, staff administered a thirteen-question survey to determine support or opposition for two alternative options for e-bikes.

- Alternative 1 - Class 1 e-bikes allowed on all trails in open spaces and Class 1 and 2 e-bikes allowed on urban/regional trails within the PRCS system.
- Alternative 2 - Class 1 and 2 e-bikes allowed only on urban/regional trails within the PRCS system.

3,804 responses were received with 3,535 responses from valid zip codes within El Paso County. The survey had less than a 2% margin of error and a 95% confidence level. The survey results determined nearly 60% support for Alternative 1 and just over 35% support for Alternative 2.

The reasons for support for both alternatives included:

- Inclusion of varying ability levels
- Accessibility for aging/disabled
- Already on trails
- Better for environment
- Less road congestion

The reasons for opposition for both alternatives included:

- Speed/safety issues
- User conflicts/etiquette
- Trail and experience degradation
- Lack of enforcement
- Don't like them

The survey results included representation from multi-user (both mounted and pedestrian activities), biker, pedestrian, other and equestrian user types with 1,599 respondents identifying as multi-users. Responses were received from all areas of the city and county with the most responses (1,071) received from the northeast part of Colorado Springs.

The survey results were provided to the TOPS Working Committee and Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board members in September of 2024.

Staff recommends Alternative I become the policy for e-bikes. Alternative I is supported by the survey results, aligns well with El Paso County and Colorado Parks and Wildlife allowances for e-bikes, is supported by City leadership and provides a policy to address the rapidly increasing use of e-bikes.

To implement the e-bike policy to allow Class 1 e-bikes on all trails (including regional park and open space trails) and Class 1 and 2 e-bikes allowed on urban/regional trails within the PRCS system, City Staff has prepared an ordinance update to Chapter 4, Article 1, Section 101 of City Code to include the definitions of Electrical Assisted Bicycle, Class 1 Electrical Assisted Bicycle, Class 2 Electrical Assisted Bicycle, Class 3 Electrical Assisted Bicycle, and Nonmotorized Use. If the ordinance is approved it will provide definitions of e-bikes and nonmotorized use. Then the PRCS Director will adopt rules and regulations to specify where e-bikes are allowed that align with the e-bike policy. The proposed ordinance has been included in the packet for review.

This memo and presentation at the October and action item at the November TOPS Working Committee and Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board focused on the direction of the e-bike policy and action on the proposed ordinance. In future meetings, staff will bring forward the rules and regulations that will implement the e-bike policy. Enforcement, education and additional policy considerations to include conservation easement requirements and other deed restrictions will be included when developed and will align with the overall e-bike policy direction.

**Previous Council Action:**

N/A

**Financial Implications:**

N/A

**City Council Appointed Board/Commission/Committee Recommendation:**

At its November 6, 2024, meeting the TOPS Working Committee voted to amend the original motion to remove the definition of nonmotorized use, effectively limiting the ability of the definitions within the ordinance. The vote passed 7-0 with 2 committee members excused. At its November 14, 2024 meeting, the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board voted to amend the original motion to include Class 3 e-bikes as nonmotorized use. The vote passed 4-3 with one board member recused and one excused.

**Stakeholder Process:**

A nine-person task force was created in February of 2024 to gain recommendations on the e-bike process. From June 14 through August 4, 2024 a thirteen question survey was made available to the public to gain input on two e-bike alternatives. Public meetings of the TOPS Working Committee and the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Advisory Board offered the opportunity for public comment. The Regular Session meetings of City Council also offer this opportunity.

**Alternatives:**

City Council may disapprove the proposed ordinance, request additional information or suggest an alternative approach.

**Proposed Motion:**

A motion to approve Ordinance No. 25-30 amending Article 1 of Chapter 4, of Chapter 4 of the Code of Colorado Springs 2001, as amended, pertaining to electrical assisted bicycles.

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