

**SUBJECT: ORDINANCE NO. 1899, SERIES 2025 – AN ORDINANCE
AMENDING TITLES 4 AND 14 OF THE LOUISVILLE MUNICIPAL
CODE TO ESTABLISH A MAXIMUM SPEED LIMIT FOR BICYCLES
ON BIKEPATHS AND TRAILS WITHIN THE CITY**

DATE: JULY 8, 2025

PREPARED BY: RAFAEL GUTIERREZ, CHIEF OF POLICE

PRESENTED BY: RAFAEL GUTIERREZ, CHIEF OF POLICE

SUMMARY:

As a means to promote safe and responsible riding, the proposed ordinance amendment seeks to establish a maximum speed limit of 15 miles per hour for bicycles or electric bicycles (a.k.a. E-bikes) on bike paths and trails within the City. The proposed amendment would prohibit riders from operating a bicycle or electric bicycle on City owned and officially designated bike paths and trails at speeds in excess of 15 miles per hour. The proposed amendment also aligns speed limits on the City of Louisville bike paths and trails with speed limits that have been imposed in neighboring jurisdictions.

BACKGROUND / PRIOR DISCUSSIONS:

Bicycle, Electric Bicycle, and Pedestrian safety is a topic of concern and the Police Department, Parks and Recreation/Open Space, and Public Works Department participated in City Council special meetings on [May 28, 2024](#) and [August 27, 2024](#) to discuss development of a strategy to address these concerns. During those meetings several possible options were discussed specific to bicycle safety, including imposing speed limits on paths and trails, creation of additional dismount zones, requiring e-bike rider licensing, prohibiting bicycles and electric bicycles from being on sidewalks, and developing a more robust educational campaign.

After those initial discussions, staff created a safety campaign that engaged multiple stakeholders including local bicycle vendors, community and student groups, the Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) schools, and various City departments. Focused police education and enforcement efforts were also increased to encourage responsible and safe riding habits for all. No additional sidewalk dismount zones were recommended beyond what currently exists in designated business districts due to concerns of moving child aged riders to the roadways. Licensing and age restrictions was also found to be impractical to implement for our municipality and perhaps should occur at the State level through revision of the State Traffic Code.

ANALYSIS:

The proposed ordinance amendment will establish a maximum speed limit of 15 miles per hour for bicycles or electric bicycles (E-bikes) on bike paths and trails within the City.

Council should consider the enforceability of this amendment, alignment with neighboring jurisdictions, the potential costs and staff time associated with posting of new signage and markings, staff time spent on the development of a public education campaign to inform riders of the speed limit, and the relatively low percentage (approximately 3%) of current incidents involving roadway conflict/crashes encountered within our community involving bicycles. There is no available data on pedestrian and bicycle crashes or conflicts within our parks systems or trails because the State does not require reporting of those incidents occurring in those areas.

2025 COUNCIL WORK PLAN:

This proposed amendment to Titles 4 and 14 of the Louisville Municipal Code aligns with the 2025 Council Work Plan - Safety/Traffic Safety priority. It also supports the City's Environmental Sustainability lens by encouraging multimodal forms of transportation and offering safeguards for both bicyclists and pedestrians who utilize parks, paths, and trails in our City.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Budgeted?: **Yes**

The implementation of this ordinance will, at minimum, require the posting of signs, path and trail markings, and perhaps acquiring some speed detection equipment. There is no current cost estimate available and that would have to be determined upon passage of this amendment by Parks and Public Works. The potential costs also have not been assigned to specific departments but may come from either the Police, Parks-Recreation and Open Space, Public Works budgets, or some combination of the three.

ALTERNATIVE(S):

Alternatives to the passage of this amendment could include allowing staff to continue with the current safety campaign and focused education on safe riding habits and additional collaborative work with stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is uncertain of the benefits gained through the passage of this amendment, however, it does align with other neighboring communities who have adopted path and trail speed limits and as such, staff does support the approval of the ordinance amending Titles 4 and 14 of the Louisville Municipal Code to Establish a Maximum Speed Limit for Bicycles and Electrical Assisted Bikes on Bike paths and Trails within the City.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Ordinance No. 1899, Series 2025
2. August 2024 Traffic Safety: Bicycles and E-Bikes Update

**ORDINANCE NO. 1899
SERIES 2025**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING TITLES 4 AND 14 OF THE LOUISVILLE MUNICIPAL
CODE TO ESTABLISH A MAXIMUM SPEED LIMIT FOR BICYCLES ON BIKEPATHS
AND TRAILS WITHIN THE CITY**

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that bicycles, and in particular electrical assisted bikes “(e-bikes)”, promote physical activity while reducing travel time and cost and offer other numerous benefits, including environmentally friendly transportation with lower emissions, increased accessibility for riders of varying fitness levels, and enhanced convenience for commuting and recreational activities; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that setting a maximum speed limit for bicycles, including e-bikes, being operated or ridden on the City’s bikepaths and trails will support safe riding habits throughout the City and facilitate the use of the City’s bikepaths and trails by a wide range of users.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY
OF LOUISVILLE, COLORADO:**

Section 1. Section 4.04.010.D.3 of the Louisville Municipal Code (Use Regulations – City Open Space – Compliance Required) is hereby amended to read as follows (words to be deleted ~~stricken~~; words to be added underlined):

Sec. 4.04.010 Compliance required.

Except as otherwise indicated, this Chapter shall apply to open space lands, whether owned solely or jointly by the City, and to all public lakes, ponds, streams, reservoirs, or other bodies of water within or bordering such lands. In the use of such lands or bodies of water, it shall be unlawful for any person to:

D. *Vehicles and bicycles.*

3. Operate or ride a bicycle or electrical assisted bicycle (e-bike), except on officially designated roads, bikepaths, and trails, or to operate or ride a bicycle or e-bike on such officially designated bikepaths and trails in excess of fifteen miles per hour (15 MPH).

Section 2. Section 14.12.010.D.3 of the Louisville Municipal Code (Parks and Recreation – Use Regulations – City-owned Lands and Bodies of Water – Compliance Required) is hereby amended to read as follows (words to be deleted ~~stricken~~; words to be added underlined):

Sec. 14.12.010 Compliance required.

Except as otherwise indicated, this Section shall apply to all City-owned lands including but not limited to parks, City-owned paths or trails, and the Louisville Cemetery, and all buildings, recreation facilities, and lakes, reservoirs, or other bodies of water within the City; except that, this Section shall not apply to lands or bodies of water regulated under Chapter 4.04 of the Code. In the use of such lands, buildings, facilities, paths, trails, or bodies of water it shall be unlawful for any person to:

D. *Vehicles and bicycles.*

3. Operate or ride a bicycle or electrical assisted bicycle (e-bike), except on officially designated roads, bikepaths, and trails, or to operate or ride a bicycle or e-bike on such officially designated bikepaths and trails in excess of fifteen miles per hour (15 MPH).

Section 3. If any portion of this ordinance is held to be invalid for any reason, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance. The City Council hereby declares it would have passed and approved this ordinance and each part hereof irrespective of the fact that any one part be declared invalid.

Section 4. The repeal or modification of any provision of the Municipal Code of the City of Louisville by this ordinance shall not release, extinguish, alter, modify, or change in whole or in part any penalty, forfeiture, or liability, either civil or criminal, which shall have been incurred under such provision, and each provision shall be treated and held as still remaining in force for the purpose of sustaining any and all proper actions, suits, proceedings, and prosecutions for the enforcement of the penalty, forfeiture, or liability, as well as for the purpose of sustaining any judgment, decree, or order which can or may be rendered, entered, or made in such actions, suits, proceedings, or prosecutions.

Section 5. All other ordinances or portions thereof inconsistent or conflicting with this ordinance or any portion hereof are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency or conflict.

Section 6. Except as otherwise set forth herein, any person convicted of violating this ordinance may be punished as set forth in 1.28.010 of the Louisville Municipal Code, as may be amended but which currently provides violations shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$2,650.00, as shall be adjusted for inflation on January 1, 2014 and on January 1 of each year thereafter, or by imprisonment not to exceed 364 days, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

**INTRODUCED, READ, PASSED ON FIRST READING, AND ORDERED
PUBLISHED** this ____ day of _____, 2025.

Christopher M. Leh, Mayor

ATTEST:

Genny Kline, Interim City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
Kelly PC

Kathleen Kelly, City Attorney

**PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND READING WILL BE THE ____ DAY OF
_____, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M. AT LOUISVILLE CITY HALL, 749 MAIN STREET,
LOUISVILLE, CO 80027.**

**PASSED AND ADOPTED ON SECOND AND FINAL READING, this ____ day of
_____, 2025.**

Christopher M. Leh, Mayor

ATTEST:

Genny Kline, Interim City Clerk

Traffic Safety: Bicycles and E-Bikes Update

August 27, 2024

In response to questions relayed to staff during a previously held special meeting in May 2024, related to traffic safety and bicycles/ E-bikes, the follow up and action item responses are below:

Accident Report Data on age or injury: 1485 traffic accidents that occurred between May 2019 and May 2024 were reviewed. Of the 1485 accidents 41 (2.7%) accidents involved a bicycle and 26 (1.7%) accidents involved a pedestrian. Of those accidents 18 bicyclists were under the age of 18 and 3 pedestrians were under the age of 18. Five of the bicyclists sustained serious bodily injury (1 under the age of 18) and there were no fatalities. Six pedestrians sustained serious bodily injury (1 under the age of 18) and there were two fatalities involving pedestrians (none involving people under age 18).

Seek feedback from other cities about ordinances/approach/licensing/code language: Neighboring police jurisdictions were contacted and asked about E-bike specific municipal ordinances or codes. These cities included Broomfield, Boulder, Erie, and Lafayette. As is done in Louisville, most of these jurisdictions primarily utilize the state model traffic code for how they address E-bikes and bicycles in general. Boulder and Lafayette have some additional provisions in their code that relate to dismount zones and speed limits (with signage) on their paths and trails. In our region we found no additional requirements for helmets or licensing outside of what the state traffic code requires. We also reached out to agencies outside of our region and found Steamboat Springs does have a helmet requirement for anyone 15 years of age or younger operating or riding on a bicycle or E-bike.

Enforcement contact/citation process for juveniles: The police department process already includes notification of parent/guardian when a juvenile is issued a summons for a violation. In the event a verbal warning or educational contact is initiated we are, at minimum, required to provide the person with the officer's business card. This process would continue to be followed during a verbal warning or educational contact with adding a request to have the parent or guardian contact the officer. In addition, we do have the capability of issuing a formal written warning to the juvenile operating the bicycle/ E-bike and can require follow up on the parent's part. As mentioned in the special meeting, priority will be made on education rather than the issuance of a citation in most cases.

Community Outreach to Rider groups: Parks, Recreation, and Open Space have several initiatives already in place. Over the summer, the Rangers completed a total of 13 Trail Etiquette Booths and provided educational materials and stickers to nearly 500 community members. Booths were located near school zones and high volume user areas. Rangers and the Police Department Crime Prevention Specialist, together with local Girl Scouts attended the Touch-a-truck event to support the Girl Scout's bike safety peer contract and provide Trail Etiquette Campaign and E-Bike safety educational materials. The Rangers and PD also participated in the Bike to Work Day event and provided the same safety material. Local bicycle vendors continue to support the City's bicycle and E-bike safety campaign and received Trail Etiquette materials to distribute to their customers. More materials can be provided as needed.

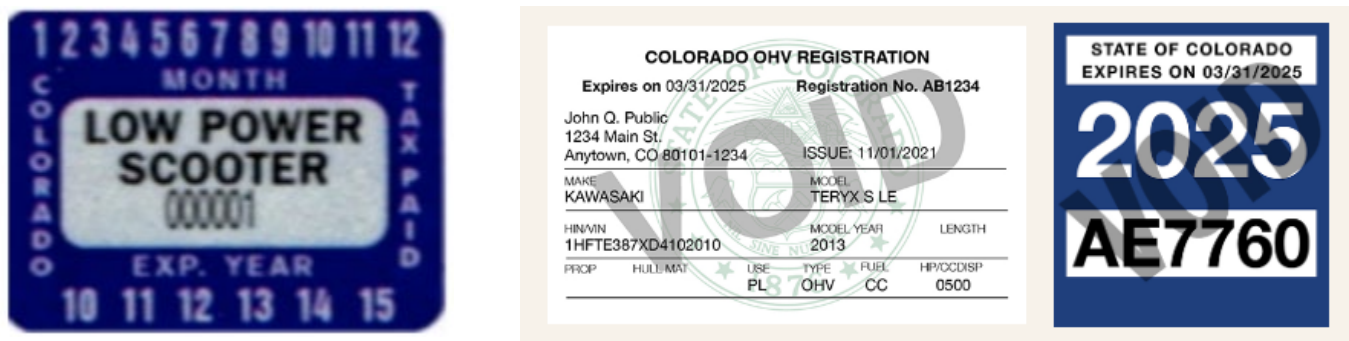
E-bike of Colorado and Louisville Cyclery received E-bike bookmarks (with trail etiquette tips), the E-biker "I share the trail" stickers, and other informational items. They will include those items with the information they provide with each E-bike they sell and have placed these items for customers near the front of the business. Customers have already provided positive feedback about the materials.

Community messaging: Materials have been and continue to be developed to use on social media channels and the City website, City correspondence to residents, and community newsletters.

Bike Safety events: Police and Open Space Rangers will collaborate on bike safety events/bike rodeo event(s). Additional planning to occur with more specific information on when and where. In the past, we have participated in HOA bike safety events in the Coal Creek Ranch subdivision and will be seeking those opportunities again moving forward. We will also engage the schools and the BVSD in planning and supporting events for young riders.

Online Bike Sales: We have learned there are other outlets, such as through online sales, where certain electric powered bikes with capabilities that exceed or fall outside the classifications established by the state for E-bikes, are being purchased. Per the Colorado Revised Statutes definition, these bicycles are not considered E-bikes and have a different classification with additional requirements. They are classified as either low power scooters, off-highway vehicles/bikes (OHV), or motor vehicles depending on capabilities, engine wattage or size. Low power scooters and motor vehicles are allowed on roadways and both have driver’s licensing, registration, and insurance requirements. Low Power Scooter registration is required through the State of Colorado and is valid for a 3-year period. OHV registration is required annually. Motorcycles must follow the Colorado Department of Revenue registration regulations to be plated for use on highways or roadways. Violating any of these provisions may result in a summons for offenses ranging from a Traffic Misdemeanor to a Class B Traffic Infraction

See example of State of CO Low Power Scooter and Off-Highway Vehicle registration:



BVSD engagement: Staff met with BVSD Safety and Security personnel and asked to partner with them in distributing safety information to schools in our city to enhance awareness of this issue and to help educate riders, staff, and students about responsible use of E-bikes and other vehicles. City Communications Staff created material that was included in back to school information packets distributed to students. Staff will continue to work with BVSD and other local schools to reinforce safety messaging and look for opportunities to collaborate on events such as bike rodeos and safety events.

Engineering- Protected Bike lanes/signage/lane markings: As with any roadway safety initiative, Engineering plays a large role. Depending on what course of action the City Council deems is appropriate the possibility of installing signage on paths and trails or creating other engineered solutions can be further explored if appropriate.

Council may consider development of municipal codes or ordinances related to wearing of helmets, speed limits, dismount zones, increasing signage, seeking roadway engineering options, or taking no action. Staff seeks additional direction and is also available to clarify or engage in additional research if need be.