Rolling Meadows

Presentation to Committee of the Whole - Low-Speed Electric Bicycles ("e-bikes")

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Low-Speed Electric Bicycles-Introduction

- **Since January of 2018, the State of Illinois has had a statute in place defining and regulating low-speed electric bicycles (aka "E-Bikes").**
- **E-Bikes and other similar devices have become an increasingly popular mode of alternative transportation, with millions in use across the United States.**
- **The e-bike/e-scooter industry is growing quickly, and municipalities are enacting regulations in many forms.**
- **An ordinance has been drafted for your consideration, which would enact local regulations for the use of E-bikes.**

Low-Speed Electric Bicycles- Statuatory Definitions

625 ILCS 5/1-140.10. Low-speed electric bicycle. A bicycle equipped with fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than 750 watts that meets the requirements of one of the following classes:

(a) "Class 1 low-speed electric bicycle" means a low-speed electric bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches a speed of 20 miles per hour.

(b) "Class 2 low-speed electric bicycle" means a low-speed electric bicycle equipped with a motor that may be used exclusively to propel the bicycle and that is not capable of providing assistance when the bicycle reaches a speed of 20 miles per hour.

(c) "Class 3 low-speed electric bicycle" means a low-speed electric bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches a speed of 28 miles per hour.

A "low-speed electric bicycle" is not a moped or a motor driven cycle.

(Source: P.A. 100-209, eff. 1-1-18.)

What is a Moped?

A moped is a motor-driven cycle, with or without optional power derived from manually operated pedals, whose speed attainable in one mile is at least 20 mph but not greater than 30 mph, and is equipped with a motor that produces 2 brake horsepower or less. If an internal combustion engine is used, the displacement shall not exceed 50 cubic centimeter displacement and the power drive system shall not require the operator to shift gears.

What is a Motor Driven Cycle?

Every motorcycle and every motor scooter with less than 150 cubic centimeter piston displacement including motorized pedalcycles.

What are Minibike and Pocket Bikes?

Small motorized cycles which are not licensed or permitted on public ways.

Low-Speed Electric Bicycles- IL Statute/Proposed RM Ordinance

- **Class 1, 2, and 3 as defined in Illinois Statute**
- **A person may operate a low-speed electric bicycle upon any highway, street, or roadway in the City authorized for use by bicycles, including, but not limited to, bicycle lanes.**
- **A person may operate a low-speed electric bicycle upon any bicycle path in the City.**
- **A person may NOT operate a low-speed electric bicycle on a sidewalk in the City.**
- **Class 1 – electric motor disengages when rider stops pedaling**
- **Class 2 – electric motor disengages when brakes are applied**
- **Class 3 –**
  - **Operator must be 16 years of age or older**
  - **Passenger (if device accommodates) can be under 16**
  - **Electric motor disengages when rider stops pedaling**
  - **Must be equipped with speedometer displaying speed in mph**

Low-Speed Electric Bicycles-Classifications

	CLASS 1	CLASS 2	CLASS 3
Pedal Assist	✓	✓	✓
Throttle		✓	
Max Speed	20 mph	20 mph	28 mph

Image credit: urbanbikesdirect.com

“E-Motos”-NOT AN E-BIKE!

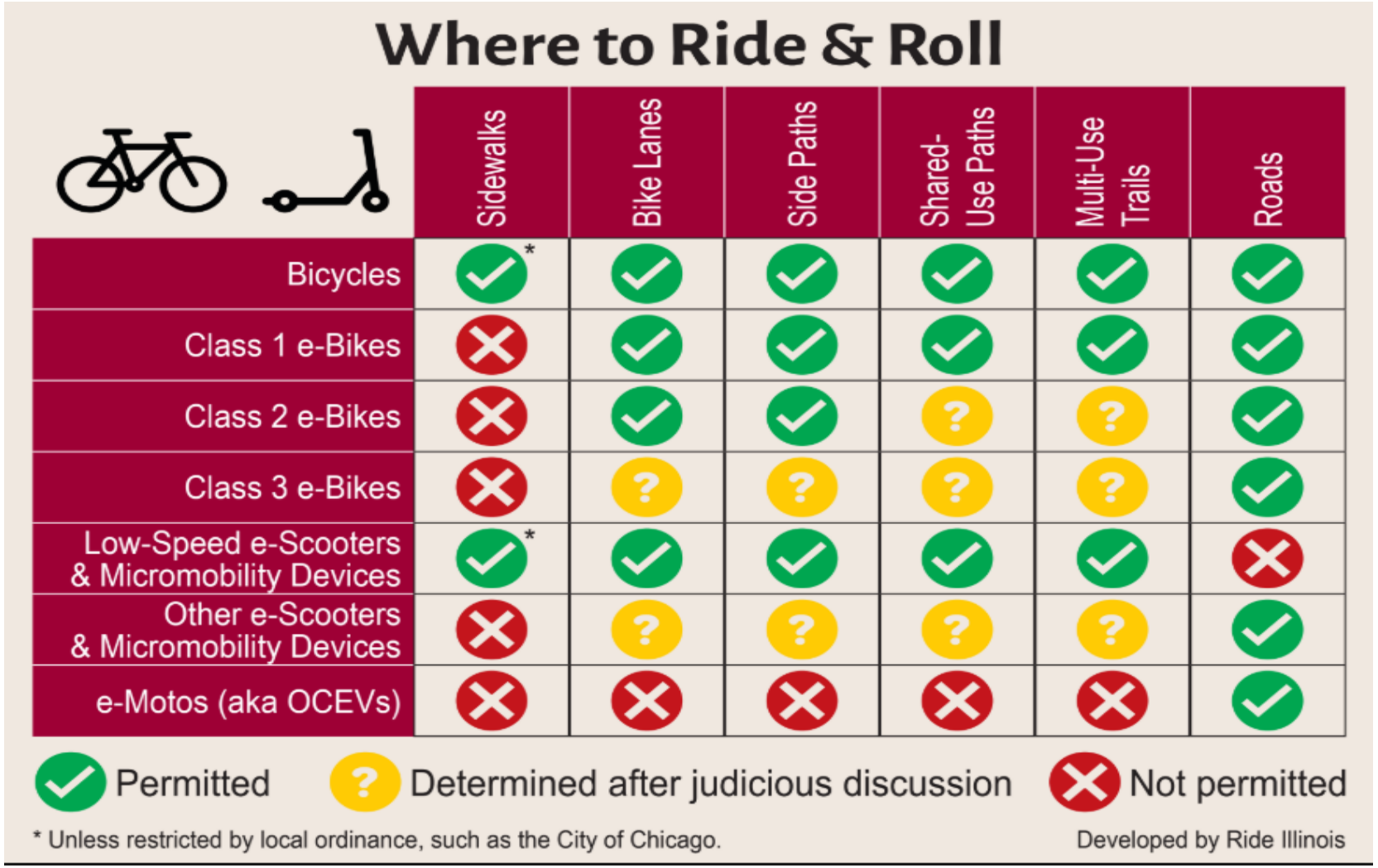
Image credit: Walmart (L), MotoTec USA (C and R)

What is an E-Moto?

E-Motos (aka Out of Class Electric Vehicles/electric motorcycles/electric dirtbikes) are not currently defined in the Illinois Vehicle Code, but are equipped with electric motors exceeding 750 watts and are capable of exceeding 20 mph (some greater than 40-50mph). They are often considered e-bikes, but do not fit the classifications noted earlier in this presentation. They are not equipped with pedal assistance, and generally have "pegs" as foot rests.

Therefore, they would not be permitted or regulated by the proposed ordinance.

E-Bikes-Guidelines



E-Bikes/RM Crash Data

Rolling Meadows Police Department call for service statistics do not currently capture specific incidents involving e-bikes, but comparative statistics to consider would include vehicle crashes involving bicyclists.

2023-Three total incidents

- One incident involving property damage/no injury
- Two incidents involving minor injuries

2024-Four total incidents

- One incident involving a fatality
- One incident involving a minor injury
- Two incidents involving property damage/no injury

2025-Two total incidents

- One incident involving an injury
- One incident involving property damage/no injury

E-bikes/Outside Jurisdiction Current Regulations

Jurisdiction	Current Regulation
Arlington Heights (proposed)	Must be 16 years of age or older to operate on any public property. Not permitted on streets with speed limits over 25 mph. Provision prohibiting reckless operation.
Elk Grove Village	E-bike riders on streets required to have driver's license. E-bikes only permitted on roadways with speed limits under 35mph.
Palatine	Regulated in the same manner as bicycles
Schaumburg	E-bike riders must be 16 years of age or older. E-bikes not permitted on sidewalks. Class 1/Class 2 permitted on paths and street, Class 3 street only.

E-Bikes-Discussion Points

Points to consider:

- **The new regulations are consistent with Illinois statute.**
- **E-bikes would be permitted on streets and paths (like bicycles), but NOT on sidewalks.**
- **Prohibition of reckless operation within city ordinance.**
- **Legislation defining “E-Motos” in the State of Illinois is anticipated, potentially in 2026.**

Questions?