CITY OF LONG BEACH

E-Bike Safety Initiative

May 12, 2026



OVERVIEW

- Background
- Enforcement Strategy
- Public Education Program
- Legislative Advocacy
- Municipal Code Amendments
- Recommendations



BACKGROUND



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Background

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City Council Directive

- **October 21, 2025** — City Council directed the City Manager to coordinate an interdepartmental and regional effort to develop a public safety initiative and proposed Municipal Code amendments related to e-bike use in the public right-of-way and along the LA County river paths.
- **December 19, 2025** — Staff issued an interim status memo summarizing early legal review, research on other jurisdictions, regional coordination, and initial education and outreach efforts
- **April 7, 2026** — Final memo released with completed analysis, recommended Municipal Code amendments, enforcement strategy, public education program, relevant state legislation, and next steps for coordinated implementation.

Background



Background

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Community Safety Concerns and Usage Patterns

- Increase in unsafe or unpredictable riding behaviors across the city
- High-speed riding on sidewalks and shared paths, especially near seniors and pedestrians
- “Flocking” or group riding that obstructs traffic and creates unpredictable movements
- Youth riding high-powered devices without helmets or adequate experience
- Illegal modifications that increase speed/power beyond manufacturer limits
- Use of uncertified lithium batteries posing unique fire risks; other fire hazards
- Trends mirror statewide increases in youth injuries, collisions, and device confusion

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State Law, Local Authority, and Enforcement Considerations

State Framework

- CVC §312.5 defines e-bike classes and labeling requirements
- Helmet and age rules set at the state level
- Recent legislation (e.g., SB 586) continues to refine definitions and standards
- State regulatory environment is evolving rapidly

Local Authority

- Cities may adopt additional rules for streets, sidewalks, trails, and rights-of-way
- Local regulations must align with state definitions to avoid conflicts

Enforcement Realities

- Many unsafe behaviors already citable under existing bicycle/traffic laws
- Officers must distinguish between devices that look similar but fall under different legal categories
- Riders and parents often misunderstand what devices are legal and where they may operate
- Widespread modifications complicate enforcement even when violations are clear

☑ **Clear regulations paired with education are essential for voluntary compliance**

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Distinguishing E-Bikes from Other Electric Devices

Device classifications determines where they may operate, required safety equipment, and enforcement tools. Distinctions are not widely understood by riders or parents, contributing to compliance challenges.

E-Bike Classes Under California Law

- **Class 1:** Pedal-assist only; up to 20 mph; helmets required under 18
- **Class 2:** Throttle-assist; up to 20 mph; helmets required under 18
- **Class 3:** Pedal-assist; up to 28 mph; minimum age 16; helmets required for all

Devices Often Misidentified as E-Bikes

- Motorized bicycles/mopeds (license required; limited to 30 mph)
- Pocket bikes/mini-motorcycles (prohibited on streets, sidewalks, bikeways)
- Off-highway electric motorcycles ("e-motos") not designed for public roads or paths

Modification Issues

- Legal e-bikes are often illegally modified by removing speed governors
- Tampered devices can reach 30–40 mph and no longer qualify as e-bikes under state law

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Approaches Used in Other Agencies

Regulatory Approaches

- **Marin County**: Minimum riding age 16; helmets required for Class 2 & 3
- **San Diego County**: Minimum riding age 13; aligns with CPSC guidance

These jurisdictions operate under state-authorized pilot programs (AB 1778 & AB 2234)

School-Based Education

- **Palos Verdes USD**: Required e-bike course for on-campus parking
- **Redondo Beach USD**: Required safety course for students without a driver's license
- **SANDAG**: CMAQ-funded in-person safety classes for K–12 and community groups

Targeted Enforcement Pilots

- **Ventura PD**: OTS-funded operation targeting reckless riding and illegal devices; resulted in citations and impoundments

Diversion Programs

- **Gilroy:** Youth + parent safety class; $10 materials fee; citation dismissed after completion
- **Santa Barbara**: Free bilingual diversion course through local nonprofit

Transportation Agency Initiatives

- **OCTA:** Comprehensive e-bike safety plan including infrastructure, education, and retail partnerships

ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY



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ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY

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Enforcement Approach

- Applies existing state law through routine LBPD traffic enforcement
- Paired with education and outreach to support voluntary compliance
- Recognizes enforcement alone cannot resolve confusion about device types
- Requires coordination across departments and partner agencies
- Youth-focused strategies are essential due to high ridership near schools

ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY

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Applicable State Laws

- **CVC 312.5:** Defines e-bike classes; sets speed/wattage thresholds
- **CVC 436.1:** Defines e-Motos as off-highway motor vehicles
- **CVC 21200:** E-bike riders must follow same rules as motor vehicle operators
- **CVC 21212**: Helmets required for riders under 18
- **CVC 21204**: No passengers allows on e-bikes
- **CVC 24016(d):** Prohibits tampering with speed governors or motor power
- **CVC 21200.5:** Prohibits riding while impaired
- **CVC 27400:** Prohibits wearing headphones/earbuds in both ears

There are also applicable Long Beach municipal code sections to be discussed in later section

ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY

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What LBPD Can Do

- Cite riders for traffic violations and unsafe behaviors
- Arrest riders when legally justified
- Seize or impound devices when:
  - They do not qualify as e-bikes (illegally modified or e-Motos)
  - Powered by an electric motor capable of over 20 MPH on a highway
  - Operated by an unlicensed operator

    OR
  - Class 3 e-bike operated by someone under 16
- Apply existing CVC provisions related to helmets, impairment, and prohibited equipment

ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY

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What LBPD Cannot Do

- Confiscate e-bikes (they are personal property, not motor vehicles)
    - Exception – can remove Class 3 e-bike operated by someone under 16 (CVC 22651.08.)
- Impound devices based on suspicion alone — modifications must be confirmed
- Conduct e-bike-only checkpoints (not authorized under state law)
- Conduct broad checkpoints for all vehicles solely to inspect e-bikes (operationally impractical and legally questionable)

ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY

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Extreme-Risk Cases (Child Endangerment Statue)

- Use of Penal Code § 273a (a)
  - Applies when a minor is placed in conditions likely to cause great bodily harm
  - Used in cases where parents assist minors in removing speed limiters, modifying devices
  - Recent cases (e.g., Huntington Beach, Yorba Linda) involved devices reaching ~60 mph

- Use of CVC §§ 14604 (a) and 14607
  - Loaning a motor vehicle to an unlicensed driver
  - Knowingly permitting a minor child to operate a motor vehicle on a highway
  - Apply to e-motos, but not e-bikes

- Additional Pathways
  - Serious injury incidents may be referred through hospitals or social services
  - Child welfare protocols may trigger review of device legality and riding conditions

ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY

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Potential Diversion Program

- Juvenile Diversion (Future Option)
- LBPD could issue diversion notices for youth violations
- Health Department could provide education component
- Would require new funding, staffing, and interdepartmental coordination
- Not currently in place but a possible future strategy

ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY

City-School Coordination

LBUSD Personal Transport Vehicle Guidelines

- Align with CVC classifications
- Require:
  - CHP online safety course
  - Proof of properly fitting helmet
  - Device registration for campus parking permits

City–School Coordination

- Public Works provides technical expertise on device classifications
- Supports administrators in distinguishing legal e-bikes from prohibited devices
- Complements Health Department's school-based education programs
  - Lunchtime outreach
  - Assemblies
  - Walk and Roll Long Beach

LBPD Expertise

- LBPD officers completed E-Bike Instructor Course (Nov 2025)
- Community E-Bike Safety Course in development for broader partners (potentially Jan. 2027)
- Supports consistent education and potential future diversion program

PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAM



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PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAM

Why Education Matters

- Enforcement alone cannot address unsafe behaviors or device misuse
- Many challenges stem from rider decision-making and confusion about what's legal
- Sustainable safety improvements require behavior change, not just citations

Citywide Education Approach

- Coordinated effort across Health, Public Works, and LBPD
- Focus on clarifying device types, safe riding practices, and helmet use
- Emphasis on reaching youth, parents, and high-ridership areas




My E-Bike Goes:
20mph
20mph


SAFE STREETS 4 YOUTH


WALK & ROLL
ong Beach
LONG BEACH
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES


What safety gear do you wear when you ride?
What are the most important safety rules for riders?
WALK & ROLL LONG BEACH

PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAM

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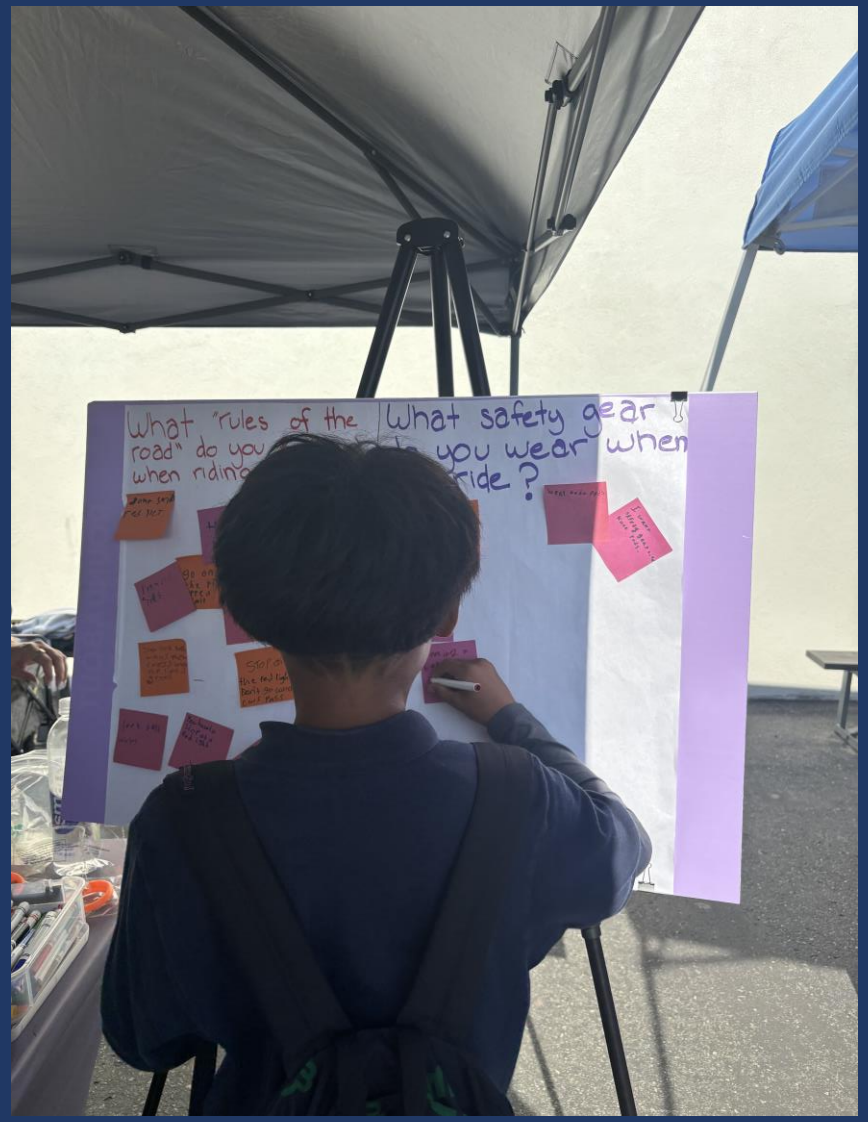
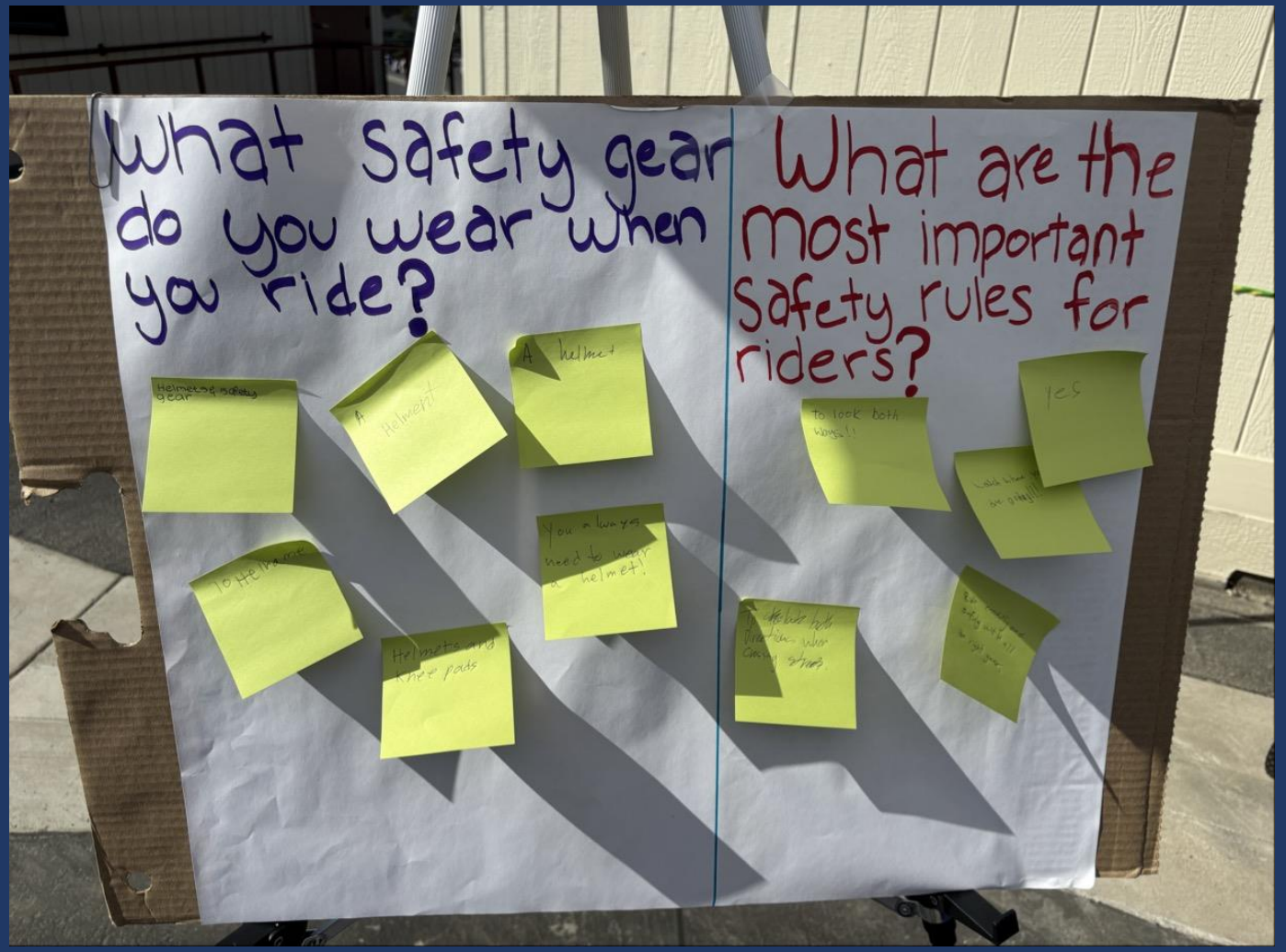
School-Based Outreach

- **Strengthen LBUSD Partnership**
- **Student & Campus Engagement**
  - Expanded traffic safety campaigns now include e-bike safety and injury prevention
  - Safe Streets for YOUth Week: parent engagement, assemblies, classroom activities
- **Training for School Staff**
  - HHHS coordinating with LBUSD Campus Security on e-bike vs. e-moto distinctions
  - Reinforces consistent messaging across school sites


What "rules of the road" do you
What safety gear
you wear when
ride ?


What safety gear do you wear when you ride?
What are the most important safety rules for riders?
Helmets & safety gear
A helmet
A Helmet
To Helmet
You always need to wear a helmet!
Helmets and knee pads
to look both ways!!
yes

PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAM

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Public Campaign and Digital Resources

- **Unified Public Education Campaign**
- **Cross-department PIO coordination for consistent messaging**
- **Focus areas include:**
  - E-bike classes vs. e-motos
  - Dangers of tampering (misdemeanor)
  - Safe charging + certified equipment
  - Where e-bikes can ride + speed rules
  - Helmet requirements + safe riding practices
  - Infrastructure designed for all users
- **Data-Driven Outreach**
  - LBFD + Long Beach Memorial updated injury-tracking forms (2026)
  - Enables better data on e-bike-related 911 calls and targeted prevention

PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAM

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Community Programming and Media

- **National Bike Month (May)**
  - City-sponsored rides, events, and education
  - **E-Bike Demo Day**: helmet fittings, test rides, rules of the road (first one May 30th, 2026)
- **Walk and Roll Long Beach (WRLB)**
  - Expanded curriculum includes e-bike safety
  - Grant applications submitted to support e-bike education
- **LBTV Educational Content**
  - Existing active transportation videos
  - Exploring new content on maintenance, safe operation, charging/storage
  - Potential to expand using state/federal safety funds



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PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAM

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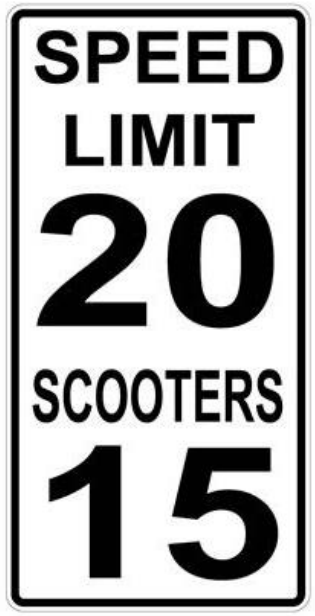
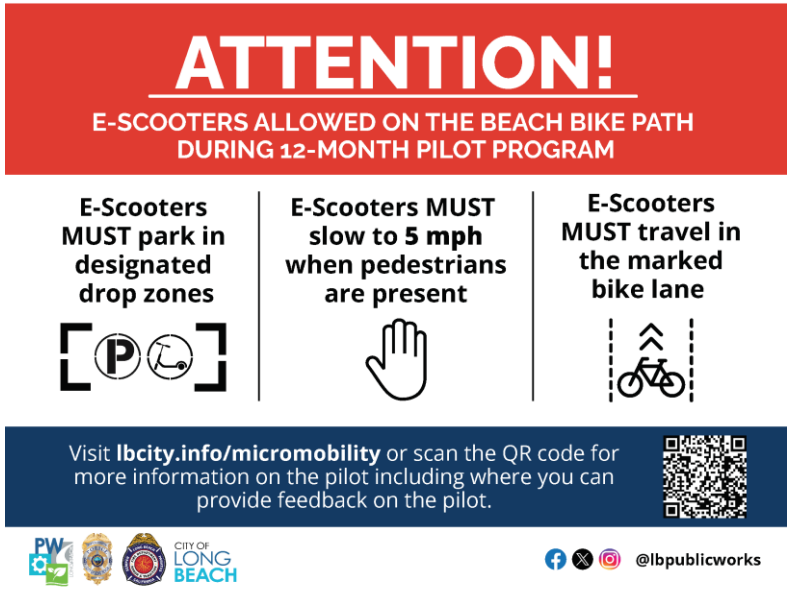
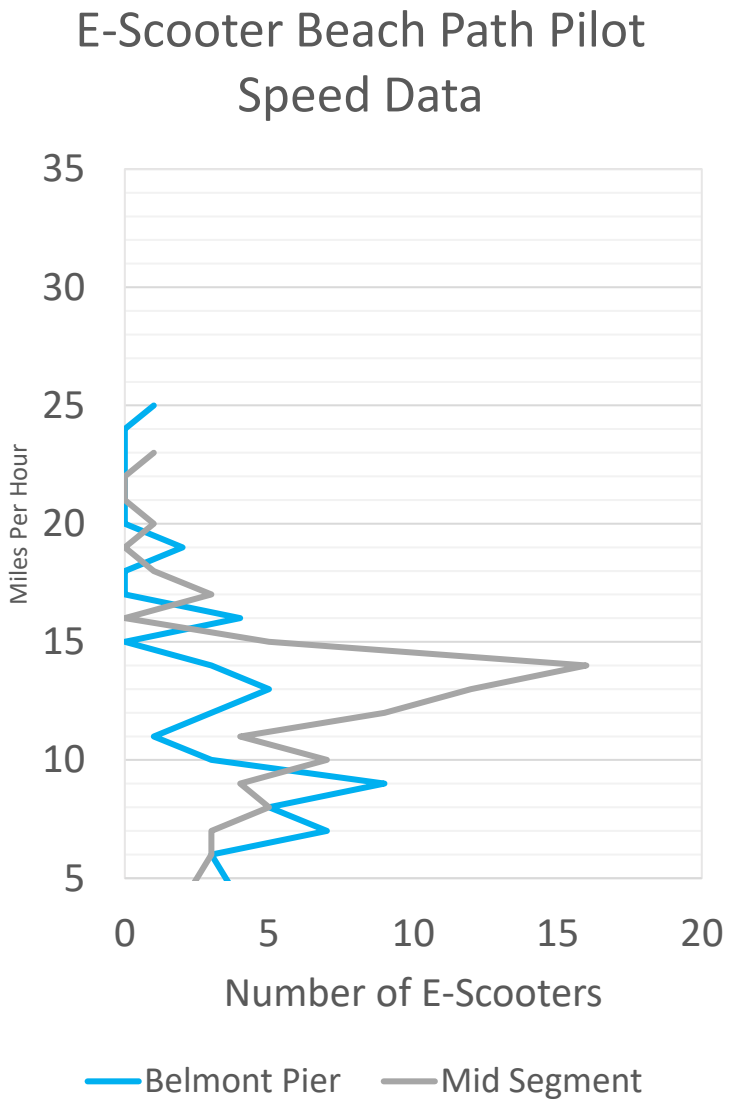
Signage and Long-Term Coordination

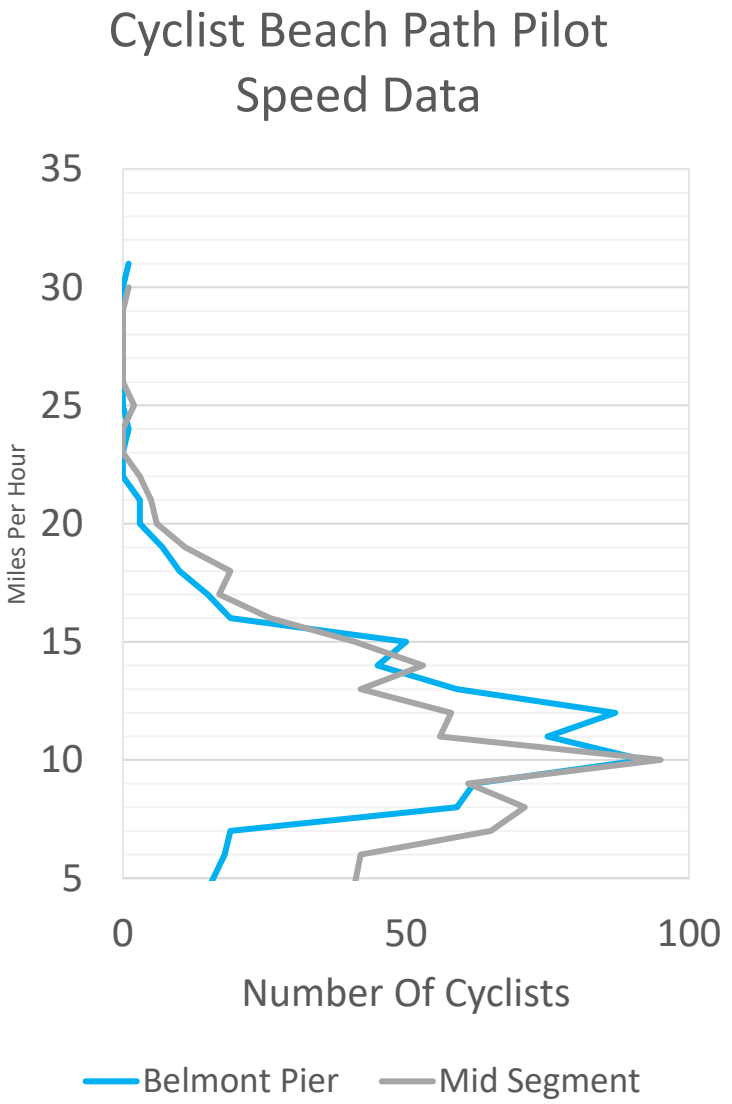
- **Speed & Educational Signage**
  - E-Scooter Beach Path pilot showed strong speed compliance with clear signage for e-scooters and bicycles
  - Potential for speed-governing tools on shared e-bikes through micromobility permits





PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAM





LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY



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Legislative Advocacy

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Key State Actions (2015 – 2024)

- **AB 1096 (2015):** Established the 3-class e-bike system and equipment/operation rules
- **AB 1909 (2022):** Updated safe-passing rules, signal rules, and local authority on sensitive trails
- **AB 1946 (2022):** Directed CHP to create an online e-bike safety course
- **SB 1271 (2024):** Requires certified safety standards for e-bikes, batteries, and chargers (effective 2026)
- **AB 1774 (2024):** Prohibits aftermarket devices that increase e-bike speeds beyond legal limits

Legislative Advocacy

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Bills Under Consideration

- **AB 1942:** Would require DMV registration + special plates for Class 2 & 3 e-bikes
- **AB 1557:** Proposes redefining Class 1 & 2 e-bikes (lowering assisted speed to 16 mph) and prohibiting motors >750 watts
- **SB 1167:** Strengthens restrictions on marketing/selling high-powered devices as "e-bikes"
- **AB 2595:** San Mateo pilot — allows local age minimums (prohibit under-12 on Class 1 & 2)
- **AB 1569:** Requires students to complete CHP e-bike safety training to park e-bikes on school campuses
- **AB 2284:** Requires CHP to publish a list of non-compliant e-bikes and products
- **AB 1614:** Extends passenger-seat requirements to Class I bikeways
- **AB 2346:** Requires speedometers on all Class 1 & 2 e-bikes manufactured after 2029
- **SB 956:** Would expand local authority to regulate e-bike speed limits, age requirements, and equipment standards

Timing: *House of origin deadline – May 29; Bills signed by 9/30/26 take effect 1/1/27 unless otherwise specified*

MUNICIPAL CODE AMENDMENTS



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MUNICIPAL CODE AMENDMENTS

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Context

- State e-bike regulations are evolving rapidly; local rules must stay aligned
- Cities have limited authority — cannot change device classes, speed/wattage limits, or licensing rules
- Local authority focuses on definitions and regulating use on local streets, sidewalks, and paths
- For e-Motos and Class 3 e-bikes seized per CVC 22651.08, local authorities may:
  - Pass rules imposing charges equal to removal, seizure, and storage costs
  - For Class 3 e-bikes, condition release on proof violator has taken e-bike safety course

Narrow Focus

- Many safety issues stem from rider behavior, device misuse, and confusion
- Clear definitions and targeted rules improve enforcement clarity
- Education and behavior-change strategies will have greater long-term impact
- Additional code updates may be needed if a diversion program is pursued

MUNICIPAL CODE AMENDMENTS

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Update Definition of "Bicycle" (LBMC 10.48.010)

- Explicitly include e-bikes as defined in the California Vehicle Code
- Ensures e-bikes are covered by existing bicycle regulations
- Improves enforcement clarity (e.g., two-abreast rule applies to e-bikes)
- Helps address unsafe group riding behaviors ("flocking")

MUNICIPAL CODE AMENDMENTS

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Prohibit Class 3 E-Bikes on Sidewalks and Multi-Use Paths (LBMC 10.48.070)

- Applies to sidewalks, bike paths, trails, equestrian trails, and the Beach Bike Path
- Class 3 e-bikes reach assisted speeds up to 28 mph
- Higher speeds create elevated risks for pedestrians, joggers, and slower cyclists
- Establishes clear expectations for riders and supports safer shared-use environments

MUNICIPAL CODE AMENDMENTS

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Delete Outdated Provisions (LBMC 10.48.110)

- Removes prohibition on bicycle riding in Lincoln Park and the former Civic Center Plaza
- Section is outdated and no longer reflects current design or future use of these spaces
- Cleans up the code and removes obsolete restrictions

RECOMMENDATIONS



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RECOMMENDATIONS

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Municipal Codes and Operations

- **Clarifying Municipal Code Amendments**
  - Return to Council with targeted LBMC updates and continue tracking state legislation for alignment
- **Targeted Enforcement Operations**
  - Support LBPD in evaluating focused operations addressing reckless riding, illegal modifications, and unsafe e-moto activity.
- **Evaluate potential towing fees and processes as allowed per CVC 22651.08 effective 1/1/26**
- **Centralized E-Bike Safety Website**
  - One unified site for rules, safety guidance, events, and resources
  - Ensures consistent, accessible information across departments

RECOMMENDATIONS

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Education and Outreach

- **Speed & Educational Signage**
  - Explore additional signage on high-use bikeways and shared paths to reinforce speed expectations and safe passing behavior
- **Expand Education & Outreach**
  - Continue school-based programming and LBUSD security training
  - Walk & Roll LB enhancements
  - New LBTV content and coordinated citywide campaigns
- **Long-Term E-Bike Safety Collaborative** (*Implementation dependent on staffing and capacity)*
  - Modeled after Orange County's injury prevention collaborative
  - Could include City departments, LBUSD, LBCC, CSULB, Long Beach Memorial
  - Monitors legislation, reviews injury trends, coordinates citywide responses
  - Creates and works to implement a Citywide Ebike Safety Action Plan

THANK YOU

Grace H. Yoon, Deputy City Manager

Paul Van Dyk, City Traffic Engineer

Richard L. Nunez, Chronic Disease and Injury Officer

Shalena Bensen, Police Commander

Willie Walker, Parking and Mobility Officer