

Planning & Sustainability • City of Northampton

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Northampton Bicycle Pedestrian Subcommittee Agenda

Wednesday Feb 25, 2026

Hybrid- 210 Main St, 2nd Floor

11:30 AM- 12:30 PM

Teleconference [Link](#):

: Zoom.us- Meeting ID: 858 5070 5575

Passcode: 150776

MEMBERS PRESENT

Brett Constantine	Maggie Chan (DPW)
Debin Bruce	Nick Horton
James Lowenthal	Carolyn Misch (Planning & Sustainability)
Sean Condon	Donna LaScaleia (DPW)
FNT	

1. Public Comment- items not otherwise on the agenda- 5 Minutes
2. Presentation & Discussion of E-Bike safety, regulations, options- Ad Hoc work group
 - a. [toolkit](#)
 - b. See attached draft ordinance
3. Clarification of Snow clearing on bicycle facilities- Brett
4. Staff Updates
5. Updates from members
6. Minutes July, August, October 2025



Proposed E-bike Ordinance Revisions
Feb 18, 2026

The current ordinance 312-78 A (1) and (2) are as follows:

[Added 2-17-1983; amended 6-1-2006; 12-7-2017 by Ord. No. 17.399]

A.

No motorized vehicles or horses will be allowed on **Shared Use Paths (SUP)** ~~multiuse trails~~ or bicycle **lanes** ~~paths~~, with the exception of emergency and/or maintenance vehicles belonging to National Grid, the City of Northampton, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or their agents. Notwithstanding the foregoing, low-speed electric bicycles as defined by 15 U.S.C. § **2085** and electrically powered mobility devices for people with disabilities shall be permitted on **Shared Use Paths (SUP)** ~~multiuse trails~~ and bicycle **lanes** ~~paths~~. **Shared Use Paths (SUP)** ~~Multiuse trails~~ include the MassCentral Rail Trail, the New Haven and Northampton Canal Line (Manhan) Rail Trail, the Rocky Hill Greenway, and any other marked **Shared Use Paths (SUP)** ~~multiuse trail~~ and **bicycle lanes** ~~(bicycle path)~~, but not including earthen and walking trails.

[Amended 4-5-2018 by Ord. No. 18.043]

(1)

Under 15 U.S.C. § **2085**, "low-speed electric bicycles " means a two- or three-wheeled vehicle with fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than 750 watts (1 hp), whose maximum speed on a paved, level surface when powered solely by such a motor while ridden by an operator who weighs 170 pounds is less than 20 miles per hour. This section shall supersede any state law or requirement with respect to low-speed electric bicycles to the extent that such state law or requirement is more stringent than the federal law or requirements referred to in 15 U.S.C. § **2085**. This definition does not apply to gasoline-powered motorized bicycles per MGL c. 90, § **1B** or any other motorized scooter per MGL c. 90, § **1E**.

(2)

Low-speed electric bicycles and electric-assist mobility devices shall not exceed a speed of **15** ~~12~~ miles per hour on multi-use trails.

We'd like to consider the following changes (noted in red above):

- Increase the speed limit for para A(2) to 15 MPH
- Apply that speed limit to all vehicles on the shared use paths. (The ordinance would then apply to all three classes of bikes (Class 1 pedal assist powered to 20 mph, Class 2 hand-throttle, Class 3 pedal-assist powered to 28 mph, and other micro mobility devices such as foot scooters, and balance boards.). **Note:** Massachusetts (Chapter 90 para 1) recognizes only Class 1 and 2 (less than 750W) and requires permanent labeling showing class, top speed and wattage. State law also prohibits operation on sidewalks mostly covered in Ch 85, para 11B). Helmets are required for 16 years or younger.
- Include all marked bike lanes in the multi-use trail list in the ordinance.

In addition to these changes to the Ordinance language feedback from the Bike & Ped members on these following issues would be helpful

1. Is 15mph max reasonable or should it be 20mph?
2. Should the language in the 2nd bullet "all vehicles" include all bicycles, not just e-assist bikes ?
3. Should the new regulations apply to just the SUP network & new downtown bike paths or should it cover all current and new bike paths in the city?
4. The notion of adding restrictions to Class 3 bikes for riders (e.g. mandatory helmets, licensing requirements, insurance, 16 or older?)
5. Should Class 3 bikes that can reach a speed of 28mph be disallowed from the SUP and bike lanes?
6. Should [e-motos](#) be explicitly banned from the SUPs and city bike lanes and also require licensing, safety and other features?
7. Would the Bike & Ped sponsor and help plan a community wide forum or panel on the proposed E-bike ordinance changes that would include various stakeholders (bike shops, e-bike users, FNT, etc)?
8. Are any new e-bike regulations misguided? Should our efforts rely solely on education of autoists, pedestrians & new e-bike riders?