

E-bike Safety Task Force

Presentation to City Council

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April 28, 2026



The Mayor of Virginia Beach has appointed the E-bike Safety Task Force to:

- ✓ Review current state and local laws on e-bikes
- ✓ Study public safety and health risks
- ✓ Evaluate best practices from other communities
- ✓ Recommend strategies for education, enforcement, signage, or code changes

Task Force Members

- Co-Chair Chuck Cayton – Resort Advisory Commission
- Co-Chair Jeanne Evans Cox – Central Business District Association
- Bill Gambrell – Atlantic Avenue Association
- Jean Granger – Council of Parent Teacher Association
- Bryan Hickman – Active Transportation Advisory Committee
- Mike Kelly – Croatan Civic League
- Rob Murphy – Hotel Association
- Mike Nerino – Active Transportation Advisory Committee
- Tom Shattuck – Public Schools
- Dan Shuman – Cyclist/Resident
- Mary Werkheiser – Resident
- Rebecca Wood – Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Councilmembers Stacy Cummings and David Hutcheson served as City Council liaisons.

City Staff Supporting the Task Force

Representatives from the City participated as subject matter experts and advisors.

- Amanda Jarratt, Deputy City Manager
- Bill Kelly, CVB
- Deputy Chief Brad Wesseler, VBPD
- Brande Rumpf, CVB
- Pam Matthias, City Manager's Office
- Ali Weatherton, Communications
- Andrew Damon, City Manager's Office
- Brent McKenzie, City Manager's Office
- Brooks Hierstein, CVB
- David Jarman, Public Works
- Donna Hernandez, City Attorney's Office
- Heather Hartle, Public Works
- Capt. James Gordon, VBPD
- Jamik Alexander, Planning
- Joseph Marzitello, VBFD
- Joshua Goyet, VBFD
- Michael Kirshman, Parks and Recreation
- Peter Gaytan, Economic Development
- Ric Lowman, Public Works
- RJ Mattes, City Manager's Office
- Steve Lambert, Parks & Recreation
- Tiffany Russell, Communications
- Tonya Howard, Communications
- Wendell Phillips, CVB

Task Force Support, Process, & Schedule

Fountainworks participated as a neutral facilitator to convene the meetings and provide support to the Task Force in developing recommendations.

The Task Force met four times between November 2025 and March 2026 for a total of 16 hours.

Process

1
Nov 19
Kickoff Meeting

2
Jan 7
Understand Key Topics

3
Feb 12
Clarify Vision

4
March 6
Refine and Vote on Recommendations

VB
April 28
City Council Presentation

Vision

E-bikes provide many recreational, mobility, and environmental benefits. We want to ensure they are integrated into our community in a way that promotes shared responsibility and safety.

Vision for the Task Force

- Forward thinking planning that addresses the needs now and evolving needs in the future
- Clarify what is an e-bike and what is not

Vision for E-bikes in VB

- Improved safety
- Improved infrastructure across the City
- Clear understanding of what is allowed and where it is allowed
- Shared responsibilities for proper use of e-bikes: City, public safety, riders, parents, bike shops, schools
- Ensure a range of alternative transportation options for ADA and commuting purposes

How we might do this:

- Train and educate all riders on safe e-bike usage and battery management practices
- Develop policies that are clear and easy to understand
- Clarify differences between different classes of e-bikes
- Establish and enforce speed limits
- Implement clear, broad communication and outreach, utilizing partners where possible

E-bike Classes

Class One



- Max speed: **20 MPH**
- Pedal assisted
- No assistance beyond max speed

Class Two



- Max speed: **20 MPH**
- Throttle & pedal assisted
- No assistance beyond max speed

Class Three



- Max speed: **28 MPH**
- Pedal assisted
- Helmets and speedometers required
- No assistance beyond max speed

E-motos

The following are examples of e-motos that are **not** classified as e-bikes. E-motos are electric mopeds, electric motorcycles and electric dirt bikes that are typically more powerful and faster than any e-bike.



Pocket bike



Moped



Motorcycle

Recommendations Overview

Our recommendations reflect a broad and unified vision, and we believe they provide a clear and actionable path forward.

After extensive education and support from staff subject matter experts, deliberation, and collaboration amongst the Task Force members, **the Task Force reached unanimous consensus on all recommendations, except “Boardwalk Bike Path” and “Signage and Infrastructure,” which both had eight members in favor and one opposed.**

Recommendations Overview



For City of Virginia Beach

- Advocate for DMV work group representation
- Advocate for State regulation
- Targeted communication and education
- Additional City e-bike signage and infrastructure
- Regulate speed, if empowered
- Restrict operations in high-density areas
- Continue monitoring best practices

For Commonwealth of Virginia

- Code changes
 - Local regulation of e-bike operation and speed
 - Require audible warning devices
 - Add e-bike code to incident reports
 - Require helmets for all e-bike riders
- Require and administer e-bike registration
- Training on e-bike safety and regulations

Virginia DMV Work Group

Advocate for City representation on Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) e-bike work group

- House Bill 1120 (HB 1120) directs the Virginia DMV to create a stakeholder work group to further examine e-bike regulation
- On April 16, Governor Spanberger signed HB 1120 into law



recommendation

Advocate for State Regulation

Advocate for State administered e-bike regulation

- House Bill 269 (HB 269) addresses several Task Force identified concerns, but is tabled until 2027

Task Force suggestions for state regulation:



Standardized training



E-bike licensing, registration, & license plates



Local authority to restrict operations and speed



Age restrictions



Responsibilities for vendors



Enhanced legal classification & clarification of definitions

Education and Communication

Target communication and education to resident and visitors, such as:

- Demographic-specific messaging
 - Parents
 - Youth
 - E-bike vendors
- Coordinate with VB Public Schools to implement an education program for students on safe bicycle and e-bike operations



recommendation

Signage and Infrastructure

Expand and improve City e-bike signage

- Prioritize high-density areas and school zones
- Signage should indicate:
 - Where e-bikes are permitted
 - Safe operating expectations
 - General guidance for riders

Create infrastructure that encourages safe, responsible operation, such as e-bike parking infrastructure



recommendation

Speed Management

If empowered, the City should restrict speed.



recommendation

Location Restrictions

- High-density areas are a priority for e-bike safety
- Maintain current e-bike ban on sidewalks in Town Center and the Resort Area
- Prohibit e-bikes on Resort Area boardwalk
- Prohibit e-motos on shared-use and bike paths
- Seek consistency in regulations between trails and shared-used paths in the City and Region
- Future location restrictions may be warranted



recommendation

Boardwalk Bicycle Path

Amend City Code 7-59.3 to allow e-bikes on the Resort Area bike path

- If allowed, a suggested speed limit should be posted



recommendation

Best Practices and Continued Monitoring

City staff, in cooperation with the Active Transportation Advisory Committee, should continue to monitor e-bike best practices

City staff should continue to monitor:

- Adjacent modes of transportation
- Advancements in transportation technology

If appropriate, reconvene the E-Bike Safety Task Force in a year



recommendation

State Code Changes

State should regulate e-bikes

- HB 269 (with modifications) for example

Authorize localities to regulate e-bike operation and speed

Require audible warning devices on e-bikes

Create e-bike coding for Police, Fire, and EMS incident reports

Require all e-bike riders to wear helmets



recommendation

Registration

Require e-bike registration to assist in enforcement

- Issue a visible decal identifying e-bike class
- Issue a license plate or similar identifier linked to owner information



recommendation

Enforcement and Training

Create training programs on e-bike safety and regulations

- To ensure consistent and effective enforcement
- City staff should receive training
 - Police
 - Schools
 - Parks and Recreation
 - Public Works



recommendation

Recommendation to Council

- Increased e-bike usage in Virginia Beach has created the need for clearer guidelines and safeguards to address safety concerns.
- The E-Bike Safety Task Force recognizes the need to proactively address safety challenges while integrating e-bikes into the City and preserving their benefit as a sustainable transportation option.
- **We urge the Council to adopt our recommendations.**

E-bike Safety Task Force

Questions from City Council



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**VIRGINIA
BEACH**