CITY OF NOVI CITY COUNCIL
NOVEMBER 23, 2026

SUBJECT: Introduction of Ordinance Amendment 2026-1 to the City of Novi Code of Ordinances, Chapter 22, "Offenses," Article VI, "Offenses against Public Safety," to add a new Division 3 "Electric Bicycles, Electric Skateboards/Scooters, and E-motos. FIRST READING

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT: City Attorney, PRCS, and Public Safety

KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Establishes clear rules for where electric mobility devices can operate. Class 1 and Class 2 e-bikes are permitted on sidewalks and paved or improved trails, while Class 3 e-bikes are prohibited on sidewalks and all trails. High-powered e-motos are prohibited on sidewalks and trails. Electric skateboards/scooters are allowed on sidewalks.
- Prioritizes pedestrian safety and responsible operation. Riders must yield to pedestrians, provide audible warnings when passing, operate at safe speeds, and exercise additional caution at roadway intersections.
- Creates enforceable regulations with misdemeanor penalties. Violations of the ordinance constitute misdemeanors, and riders involved in accidents resulting in injury, death, or property damage must report the incident to Novi Police within 24 hours

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On October 16, 2026, City Council directed City staff to develop an ordinance regulating certain motorized bikes and smaller electric motorcycles known as e-motos. Per that direction, the following ordinance is proposed to amend Chapter 22 of the Novi Code of Ordinances and establish regulations governing electric bicycles, electric skateboards, electric scooters, and high-powered electric motorcycles (e-motos). The ordinance clarifies permissible riding locations, promotes pedestrian safety, and provides the Police Department with enforceable standards for increasingly popular electric mobility devices.

Device Type	Sidewalks	Improved Trails*	Natural-Surface Trails
Class 1 E-Bikes	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
Class 2 E-Bikes	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
Class 3 E-Bikes	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited
E-Motos	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited
E-Scooters / Electric Skateboards	Permitted, subject to safety rules	Prohibited	Prohibited

**Improved trails include asphalt, crushed limestone, or similar surfaces. The proposed ordinance preserves accommodations for electric personal mobility devices used in connection with a disability.*

The ordinance classifies violations as **misdemeanor offenses**, providing an enforcement mechanism for prohibited riding locations, unsafe operation, and other violations. As indicated in the October 8, 2026 memo to Council, some violations of the Motor Vehicle Code, a state law, relating to regular bicycles have been made civil infractions. However, when the Legislature added electric bicycles to the state law, it did so in a way that did not make it clear that *electric* bicycle-related violations were also civil infractions. For e-motos and/or things that are not electric bicycles, a violation relating to the use of those appears to be a misdemeanor at the state level. Because there is not a similar provision in the state vehicle code inviting local governments to draft their own ordinances as to e-motos and motorcycles, a local regulation of e-motos would likely need to have the same penalty as the state law.

This draft of the ordinance does not establish different regulations as to adults and minors. Council members noted during the discussion previously that there would need to be an educational program around this ordinance and likely a process within the Police Department for evaluating enforcement actions for minors.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve Introduction and First Reading of Ordinance Amendment 2026-1 to the City of Novi Code of Ordinances, Chapter 22, "Offenses," Article VI, "Offenses against Public Safety," to add a new Division 3 "Electric Bicycles, Electric Skateboards/Scooters, and E-motos, and set the same for public hearing at a future City Council meeting.

STATE OF MICHIGAN
COUNTY OF OAKLAND
CITY OF NOVI

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-1

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CITY OF NOVI CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 22, "OFFENSES," ARTICLE VI, "OFFENSES AGAINST PUBLIC SAFETY," IN ORDER TO ADD A NEW DIVISION 3, "ELECTRIC BICYCLES, ELECTRIC SKATEBOARDS/SCOOTERS, AND E-MOTOS."

THE CITY OF NOVI ORDAINS:

Part I. The City of Novi Code of Ordinances, Chapter 22 "Offenses," Article VI, "Offenses Against Public Safety," shall be amended to add a new Division 3, entitled "Electric Bicycles, Electric Skateboards/Scooters, and E-Motos."

DIVISION 3. – ELECTRIC BICYCLES, ELECTRIC SKATEBOARDS/SCOOTERS, AND E-MOTOS

Sec. 22-134.- Definitions

Bicycle means a device propelled by human power upon which a person may ride, having either 2 or 3 wheels in tandem or tricycle arrangement, all of which are over 14 inches in diameter.

Electric bicycle means a device upon which an individual may ride that satisfies all of the following:

(a) The device is equipped with all of the following:

(i) A seat or saddle for use by the rider.

(ii) Fully operable pedals for human propulsion.

(iii) An electric motor of not greater than 750 watts.

(b) The device falls within Class 1, Class 2, or Class 3 as defined in the Michigan Vehicle Code.

Electric bicycle does not include electric motorcycles, electric mopeds, or E-motos.

E-moto means a high-powered electric moped, motorcycle, dirt bike, or similar device that has an electric motor greater than 750 watts and travels at a maximum speed of 30 or more mph.

Electric personal assistive mobility device means a self-balancing, non-tandem 2-wheeled device, designed to transport only 1 person at a time having an electric propulsion system with average power or 750 watts or 1 horsepower and a maximum speed on a paved surface of not more than 15 miles per hour.

Electric skateboard/electric scooter means a wheeled device that has a floorboard designed to be stood upon when riding that is no more than 60 inches long and 18 inches wide, is designed to transport only 1 person at a time, has an electronic propulsion system with power of no more than 2,500 watts, and has a maximum speed on a paved level surface of no more than 25 miles per hour. An electric skateboard/ electric scooter may have handlebars and, in addition to having an electrical propulsion system with power of no more than 2,500 watts, may be designed to also be powered by human propulsion.

Sec. 22-135 Areas Prohibited from Riding Class 3 Electric Bicycles and E-Motos

(a) Consistent with the Michigan Vehicle Code, motorcycles, mopeds, and E-motos are not permitted to ride on sidewalks.

(b) No person shall ride a Class 3 electric bicycle upon a sidewalk within the City.

(c) Nothing in this article shall prohibit a person from using an electric personal mobility device for a disability on a sidewalk.

Sec. 22-136. - Use of Electric Bicycles or Electric Skateboards/Scooters and Other Wheeled Devices

(a) The rider of an electric bicycle or an electric skateboard/electric scooter shall yield the right of way to all pedestrians.

(b) The rider of an electric bicycle or an electric skateboard/electric scooter shall give an audible warning signal, either verbally, by bell, or by other suitable warning device, when passing pedestrians or another wheeled device operator. Such warning signal shall be given a reasonable distance before overtaking or passing by such pedestrian or other wheeled device operator.

(c) When riding a Class 1 or Class 2 electric bicycle or an electric skateboard/electric scooter upon a sidewalk and approaching an intersecting street or roadway, the rider shall slow down to a speed that will permit stopping before entering the intersection and shall yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and traffic on the intersecting street or roadway before entering the intersecting street or roadway.

(d) No rider shall operate an electric bicycle or an electric skateboard/electric scooter at a speed greater than is reasonable and appropriate under the conditions then existing, or greater than will permit the operator to bring the electric bicycle to a stop within the assured clear distance ahead.

(e) When the rider of an electric bicycle or an electric skateboard/electric scooter within the City is involved in an accident resulting in injury or death to a person or damage to property, the rider, or their parent or guardian if a minor, shall report the accident within twenty-four (24) hours of its occurrence to a police officer, or

personally report the accident to the Novi Police Department at Police Headquarters.

Sec. 22-137. - Trailway regulations and prohibitions

(a) It shall be lawful to operate a Class 1 or Class 2 electric bicycle on a linear trail that has an asphalt, crushed limestone, or similar surface, or on a non-motorized trail that has a natural surface tread made by clearing or grading native soils with no added surfacing materials, within the City. Riders of Class 1 and Class 2 electric bicycles shall yield to the right-of-way to pedestrians, bicycles, and other human-powered conveyances.

(b) It shall be unlawful to operate a Class 3 electric bicycle on a trail within the City.

(c) It shall be unlawful to operate a Class 1 or Class 2 electric bicycle on a trail in a careless or reckless manner.

(d) No person shall operate an E-moto on a trail within the City of Novi.

(e) Nothing in this article shall prohibit a person from using an electric personal mobility device related to a disability on a trail.

Sec. 22-137. - Violations

A person who violates this Division 3 shall be responsible for a misdemeanor.

PART II.

Severability. Should any section, subdivision, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance be declared by the courts to be invalid, the validity of the Ordinance as a whole, or in part, shall not be affected other than the part invalidated.

PART III.

Savings Clause. The amendment of the Novi Code of Ordinances set forth in this Ordinance does not affect or impair any act done, offense committed, or right accruing, accrued, or acquired or liability, penalty, forfeiture or punishment, pending or incurred prior to the amendment of the Novi Code of Ordinances set forth in this Ordinance.

PART IV.

Repealer. All other Ordinance or parts of Ordinance in conflict herewith are hereby repealed only to the extent necessary to give this Ordinance full force and effect.

PART V.

Effective Date. The provisions of this Ordinance are ordered to take effect following publication in the manner prescribed by the Charter of the City of Novi.

PART VI.

Adoption. This ordinance is hereby declared to have been adopted by the Novi City Council in a meeting thereof duly held and called on the ___ day of _____, 2026, in order to be given publication in the manner prescribed by the Charter of the City of Novi.

_____
Justin Fischer, Mayor

_____
Cortney Hanson, City Clerk

Certificate of Adoption

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of the ordinance adopted at the regular meeting of the Novi City Council held on the _____ day of _____, 2026.

_____
Cortney Hanson, City Clerk

Adopted:
Published:
Effective: