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June 18, 2026

Mobility Committee
City of Novi
45175 Ten Mile Road
Novi, Michigan 48375

RE: Operation of Electric Bicycles and Electric Skateboards

Dear Mobility Committee,

You have asked for a brief overview of the City's ability to regulate electric bicycles and electric scooters on sidewalks, pathways and trails.

Electric Bicycles

The Michigan Vehicle Code, Public Act 300 of 1949, MCL 257.1 et. seq, ("MVC") governs the use of bicycles, electric bicycles and other types of mobility devices, in addition to automobiles. Section 257.662a(7) provides that a city may regulate the operation of electric bicycles within its jurisdiction. Before prohibiting, authorizing or regulating the use of electric bicycles, the City is required to hold a public hearing. MCL 257.662a(12). The MVC does not preempt City regulations of electric bicycles, thus allowing local ordinances that do not conflict with state law. The MVC provide the following definitions for bicycles and electric bicycles:

The permissible places for the operation of electric bicycles is addressed in section 662a of the MVC:

(6) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (7), an individual may operate an electric bicycle on any part of a **highway** that is open to a bicycle, including, but not limited to, a lane designated for the exclusive use of bicycles and the shoulder.

(7) An individual shall not operate an electric bicycle within a city that prohibits the use of nonemergency motor vehicles, unless the city council of that city, by majority vote, adopts a resolution allowing the operation of electric bicycles within city limits..... If a city... authorizes the operation of electric bicycles within its jurisdiction, **the city... may regulate the operation of electric bicycles** within its jurisdiction.

Trails

The MVC and the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, Part 721, designates the trails where the different classes of electric bicycles may operate. Class 1 electric bicycles are allowed on bike paths and linear trails unless prohibited, while class 2 or 3 electric bicycles are not allowed, unless the local agency responsible for the trail permits them. An

individual may not operate an electric bicycle on a trail that is designated as nonmotorized and has a natural surface tread. MCL 257.662a (8)-(10). MCL 324.72105(2)

The MVC provides that the state and local authorities shall administer the provisions consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act and persons with disabilities civil rights laws. MCL 257.662a (11) Therefore, individuals who use electronic mobility devices for a disability may require different considerations for where they may operate their devices.

Electric Skateboard

The MVC permits electronic skateboards to be operated on sidewalks unless prohibited by the Municipality in certain areas such as in a downtown central business district or in a historic district.

Under the Michigan Vehicle Code, Public Act 300 of 1949, as amended, an electric skateboard is defined as:

a wheeled device that has a floorboard designed to be stood upon when riding that is no more than 60 inches long and 18 including 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 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. MCL 257.13f.

An electric skateboard is exempt from the definition of "motor vehicle" under the Michigan Vehicle Code. MCL 257.33. An electric skateboard may be operated on a roadway under the requirements of the Michigan Vehicle Code. MCL 257.657. A person may operate an electric skateboard on a sidewalk constructed for pedestrian use, except in areas where the Michigan Vehicle Code allows a municipality to prohibit such use through an adopted ordinance.

The Michigan Vehicle Code authorizes a city to adopt an ordinance to regulate the operation of electric personal assistive mobility devices and electric skateboards or commercial quadricycles on sidewalks, highways, streets or crosswalks. MCL 257.660(12). These public entities may prohibit the operation of electric skateboards in an area open to pedestrian traffic adjacent to a waterfront or on a trail under its jurisdiction, in a downtown central business district or street that includes streetcar tracks. MCL 257.660. Electric skateboards may also be prohibited in a historic district. MCL 257.660(14).

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Please let us know if you have any additional questions.

Very truly yours,

ROSATI SCHULTZ JOPPICH
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cc: Rebecca Runkel, Project Engineer
Thomas Schultz, City Attorney