

MACKINAC ISLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT



Douglas D. Topolski
Chief of Police

Margaret M. Doud
Mayor

May 19, 2023

Mackinac Island visitors, employers, contractors and employees,

Listed below are some frequently-asked questions regarding electric bicycles and their use on Mackinac Island. Please feel free to distribute at your discretion. If you open this document as a Word Document as opposed to using photocopy or a PDF, you'll be able to follow the reference hyperlinks below the answers for additional reference material. Please feel free to call me with any questions.

Regards,

Douglas Topolski
Chief of Police

Q: Can I use an electric bicycle on Mackinac Island?

A: Only if you are a qualified person with a mobility disability and only if the E-Bike is a Class I electric bicycle.

References: [City of Mackinac Island Ordinance 584, Section 66-167 of Code of Ordinances](#)

Q: How do you define a “qualified person with a mobility disability”?

A: According to Section 66-167 of the Mackinac Island Code of Ordinances, a qualified person with a mobility disability is an individual who has a physical impairment that substantially limits the ability of the individual to pedal a bicycle; and despite the person’s physical limitations, he or she is capable of safely operating an electric assist tricycle/bicycle. Section 66-167 Includes some examples of what can constitute a mobility disability.

Reference: [Mobility Disabilities](#)

Q: Are representatives of the City of Mackinac Island allowed to ask me personal questions about my disability?

A: No. However, if you are using an electric bicycle on Mackinac Island, representatives may ask you if you have a mobility disability, without compelling you to answer any specific questions about your disability. According to the Americans With Disabilities Act, they may also ask you to provide “credible assurance” that the mobility device is required because of a mobility disability. Such credible assurance may be provided by either showing a valid, state-issued disability parking placard or card or other state-issued proof of disability, or by verbally stating that the E-Bike is being used because of a mobility disability, unless the person is observed doing something that contradicts the assurance.

Reference: [Credible Assurance of Mobility Disability](#)

Q: What’s an electric bicycle?

A: As used in the City of Mackinac Island’s ordinance, an electric bicycle includes both two-wheeled bicycles and three-wheeled tricycles that satisfy all of the elements of the definition of “Class 1 electric bicycle” contained in Section 13e of the Michigan Vehicle Code, 1949 PA 300, MCL 257.13e. Basically, the Class I electric bicycle is equipped with an electric motor of not more than 750 watts, is limited to a top speed of 20mph, and the electric motor must only engage when the rider is pedaling. If you are able to apply a throttle to engage the motor, or if the bike is capable of speeds of over 20mph, that E-Bike is not allowed on the island. Each electric bicycle must have a label affixed somewhere on the bike that denotes whether it is a Class I, Class II or Class III electric bike. If an E-Bike does not have such a label affixed to it, a person may prove that the E-Bike meets the definition of a Class I electric bike or that it has been modified to meet that definition. Class III E-Bikes or modified Class III ebikes are not allowed on the island under any circumstances.

Reference: [Electric Bicycle: State of Michigan Definition And Classification System](#)

Q: I understand that motor vehicles are banned from Mackinac Island, but my electric bike is not technically a motor vehicle is it?

A: Mackinac Island City Ordinance Section 66-31 provides that an electric bicycle or tricycle is considered a “motor vehicle” unless it meets the definitions and requirements of Mackinac Island City Ordinance 66-167. While Michigan’s Motor Vehicle Code excludes E-Bikes from the definition of “motor vehicles,” (MCL 257.33) the State code also provides that “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.”

Reference: [Motor Vehicles on Mackinac Island: Definitions: 66-31](#)

Q: I have a mobility disability but I have a Class II E-Bike, can I use my E-Bike on Mackinac Island even though only Class I E-Bikes are permitted?

A: Yes, if you bring your E-Bike into compliance with the City’s Ordinance by permanently removing the throttle. Pursuant to Section 66-167(e) if you have a mobility disability and already purchased a Class II E-Bike, you can modify your E-Bike to conform with the definition of an “electric bicycle” that is permitted on Mackinac Island. This can be done by permanently removing the throttle. Contact the manufacturer or a qualified technician for further information.

After your E-Bike is reconfigured, you can take it to the Mackinac Island Police station (located at 7374 Market St, Mackinac Island, MI 49757) to have a sticker applied to note the change in classification, which will certify your modified E-Bike as a Class I bike for use on Mackinac Island.

Reference: [Modifying your non-compliant E-Bike to legal standards \(see section "e"\)](#).

Non-compliant E-Bikes are subject to being impounded and their users and/or owners subject to a \$110.00 civil infraction citation with second and subsequent violations within two years rising to \$210.00 and \$500.00 respectively.