

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments
Joint MTC ABAG Legislation Committee**

April 10, 2026

Agenda Item 3d

Electric Bicycle Legislative Landscape

Subject:

Summary of 2026 legislative activity on bills related to electric bicycles.

Background:

Over the past several years, the use of electric bicycles (e-bikes) has increased significantly, with e-bikes emerging as a popular transportation option in the Bay Area and across California. While e-bikes offer a range of mobility and climate benefits, their growing use has also raised significant safety concerns, with many crashes, serious injuries and fatalities attributed to the device. State legislators are currently considering how to address the dual policy goals of supporting e-bike adoption as a sustainable mode of transportation while addressing safety risks, particularly to children, and local jurisdictions are beginning to consider their own approaches. At the March 13, 2026, MTC Regional Network Management Committee meeting, Commissioners raised the issue and requested an overview of the e-bike legislative landscape. This item responds to that request.

E-Bike Classification Challenges and Policy Options

At the direction of the State Legislature through Senate Bill 318 (Min, 2023), the Mineta Transportation Institute published a research brief in December 2025 examining these issues. Notably, the report highlights that “e-bike” is often used to describe a wide spectrum of devices, contributing to confusion/challenges in both regulation and safety analysis.

Under California law, e-bikes are defined within three classes of pedal-assist or throttle-assisted bicycles with maximum speeds of 20-28 miles per hour (mph). In addition to the speed caps, e-bikes must meet equipment and operational requirements, including fully operable pedals and an electric motor that does not exceed 750 watts of power (approximately one horsepower).

However, higher powered vehicles – including modified e-bikes that exceed legal specifications, electric mopeds (e-mopeds) and electric motorcycles (e-motos) – are capable of significantly higher speeds. These devices can look very similar and are often misidentified as e-bikes,

complicating efforts to accurately assess safety risk, set policies, and enforce current law. The report concluded that the state should consider a suite of policy and regulatory actions, including:

- Revising the California Vehicle Code to update electric bicycle classes and operating rules, including:
 - Redefining electric bicycles into two categories: low-power devices regulated like conventional bicycles and high-power devices regulated like mopeds;
 - Clarify the legal status of the two-wheeled, powered “bicycle-shaped devices” that do not fit into any device category in the California Vehicle Code; and
 - Other revisions to the rules for operating electric bicycles.
- Improving enforcement of rules for operating electric bicycles, including establishing appropriate penalties for illegal operation of electric bicycles;
- Educating all road users about electric bicycle rights and responsibilities;
- Building safe biking infrastructure; and
- Improving data collection and analysis of electric bicycle related incidents to inform policy changes.

2026 Legislative Activity

The report, combined with heightened public attention on e-bike safety, has spurred significant legislative activity this year. Attachment A summarizes key e-bike bills introduced in the 2026 legislative session. Policy committees began hearing these bills in late March, and proposals are expected to be debated, amended, and potentially streamlined over the next few months.

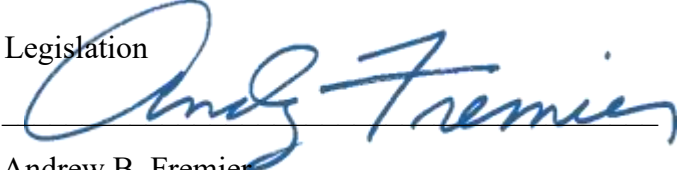
Staff will provide a verbal update at your April committee meeting and may return to the Committee in May or June with recommended positions on any major bills that are advancing.

Recommendation:

Information

Attachments:

- Attachment A: 2026 Electric Bicycle Legislation


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