



City Council Staff Report

Subject: E- Bike Community Survey, Use and Ordinance Discussion
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Department: Trails & Open Space Department
Date: May 23, 2024

Recommendation

Informed by the results of the 2024 E-bike Community survey (Exhibit A), provide direction on the following public policy questions related to electric-assisted bicycles (E-bikes) on multi-use pathways and electric assisted mountain bikes (E-MTB) on natural surface trails, including but not limited to:

- Is the City Council supportive of a 15mph speed limit on multi-use pathways, with the intent to continue pathway safety education and data collection prior to an enforcement resource discussion?
 - Timeline for implementation, specific to signage would be 1-2 months.
- Is the City Council interested in identifying additional public E-MTB trails located within park City in Lower Deer Valley and Deer Crest area as a pilot project?
 - Timeline for implementation would be 1-2 months.
- Is the City Council comfortable with preliminary enhancements to the Rail Trail and Wag 'on Trail outlined below (clearing vegetation along both trail corridors, directional and use signage, off-leash designation of Wag 'on Trail, and continued monitoring) within the report?
 - Enhancements could take place immediately.
- Does the City Council desire to explore additional regulations associated with helmet use in Park City?
 - Timeline to implement would be 3-6 months.
- Does the City Council wish to dedicate resources to exploring additional educational/certification courses aimed at young individuals and e-bike use?
 - Timeline to implement would be 3-6 months.

Executive Summary

This report serves as a follow-up to the May 2, 2024, City Council discussion of the 2024 Community E-bike survey, with the intent of assessing projects and programs and attaining City Council policy direction.

Background

On June 30, 2016, the City Council amended [Municipal Code § 10-1-4.5 Non-Motorized Trail Use](#), which provides the basis of the City's policy associated with E-bikes and E-MTBs.

- The ordinance **prohibits** all E-bikes on 'Natural Surface' trails less than 5' wide.

- Exceptions: mobility disabilities, emergencies, events, and/or maintenance.
- The ordinance **permits** Class I and II E-bikes on 'Multi-Use Pathways' 8' wide or greater but prohibits Class III e-bikes.
 - Exceptions: mobility disabilities, emergencies, events, and/or maintenance.

The State of Utah's laws pertaining to E-bikes, as defined in the [Utah State Code](#), explicitly categorize E-bikes as bicycles and not "motor vehicles." The state law classifies E-bikes into three distinct classes based on their mode of assistance and maximum speeds:

1. Class I E-bikes: These are 'pedal assisted' E-bikes with assistance limited to a top speed of 20 mph.
2. Class II E-bikes: These are 'throttle assist' E-bikes, with assistance also limited to 20 mph, where pedaling is not required for propulsion.
3. Class III E-bikes: These are 'pedal assisted' E-bikes, with assistance limited to a higher limit of 28 mph, equipped with a speedometer.

This definition does not include amendments made during the 2024 Legislative session as identified later in the report.

On August 15, 2019, in response to various public requests and potential State legislation to preempt E-bike regulation, City Council held a work session and directed staff to complete a survey to gauge community sentiment.

- [August 15, 2019, Work Session \(E-Bikes\)](#);
- [August 15 Council Minutes](#)

On August 29, 2019, we returned to City Council with the following policy recommendations:

- Amend Municipal Code § 10-1-4.5, which exempted E-MTB users age 65+ on class I E-bikes from the natural surface prohibition.
 - **Council approved the amendment.**
- Conduct an E-MTB pilot program to collect more data associated with the natural surface discussion.
 - **Council did not approve a pilot program.**
- Survey prior to additional recommendations/changes to the current ordinance.
 - **Council supported a survey.**
- Council also directed the establishment of a community 'task force' to obtain additional input.
 - **A stakeholder' task force' was created to develop and promote the community survey.**
- [August 29, 2019, E-MTB staff report](#)
- [August 29, 2019, Council Minutes](#)

On March 19, 2020, the results of the initial E-MTB community survey (Exhibit A) were provided to City Council.

- [March 19, 2020, E-MTB Survey](#)

Survey results supported the current ordinance and emphasized the importance of additional education and outreach. In response, the Trails & Open Space Department took several measures, including setting up a website dedicated to E-bikes, installing more signage at trailheads and trails, and providing bike shops with up-to-date information on the ordinance. Trail Rangers also initiated the 'Pathway Education Program', which offers in-field information and education. A “courtesy tag” program was established at the request of the Council to allow E-MTB users validated by the Trails & Open Space Department as meeting requirements of the ordinance.

In the summer of 2020 and once again with State legislation threatened, new trails were constructed specifically for E-bike use on the east parcels of Clark Ranch. Since Clark Ranch was outside city limits at that time, it provided a cohesive opportunity to accommodate E-MTBs on trails near Wasatch County trails where E-MTBs are already allowed. There are approximately 5 miles of E-MTB-permitted trails on the Clark Ranch property.

[On April 1, 2021](#), the City Council received a staff communication on the E-MTB courtesy tag program.

On [August 29, 2023](#) the City Council conducted a comprehensive review of the ongoing discourse surrounding E-bikes in Park City, including an examination of relevant state codes, peer cities and speed data collected on the Rail Trail, as well as potential mitigation measures for the paved multi-use system. A link to the meeting [minutes](#) is provided, and the following directives were issued:

- Conduct a Community E-bike Survey, with funding support from the Snyderville Basin Special Recreation District (SBSRD), targeting both Park City and Basin Recreation District boundaries.

On [May 2, 2024](#) the City Council reviewed results from the [2024 Community E-bike survey](#) and took public input. [Media](#) from the meeting is provided as the minutes have not been adopted at the time of writing this report. The City Council requested the Trails and Open Space Team return in the immediate future to continue the discussion as it relates to implementing projects or policies as soon as this spring and summer.

On May 9, 2024, the Snyderville Basin Special Recreation District (SBSRD) Board held its first review of the 2024 Community E-bike survey, with an anticipated return for discussion and action on June 9th.

- A key component of this discussion was an expressed interest in aligning the ordinances and policies of the two jurisdictions.

Final Report and Key Takeaways

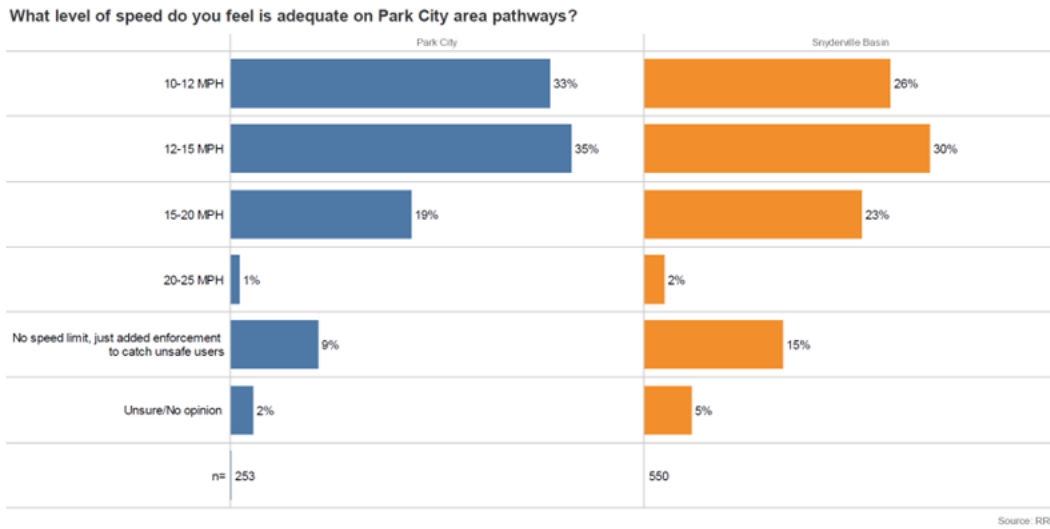
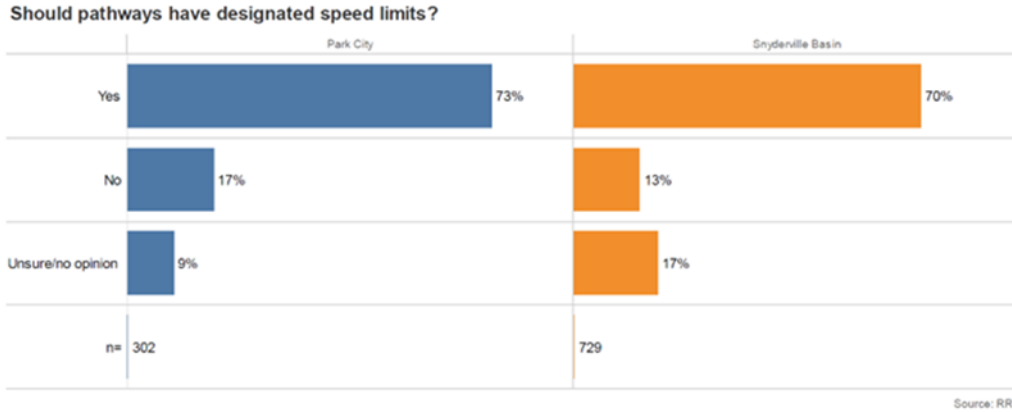
The survey summary report is in Appendix A (Exhibit B) of the final document. Additionally, discrepancies between the invite survey and the open link survey are summarized in Appendix B (Exhibit C).

Multi-Use Pathways:

- Respondents generally acknowledge mixed impacts from e-bikes, with some expressing concerns about crowding, safety, and conflicts on pathways.

However, the positive impacts tend to outweigh the concerns, leading to acceptance and support for e-bikes.

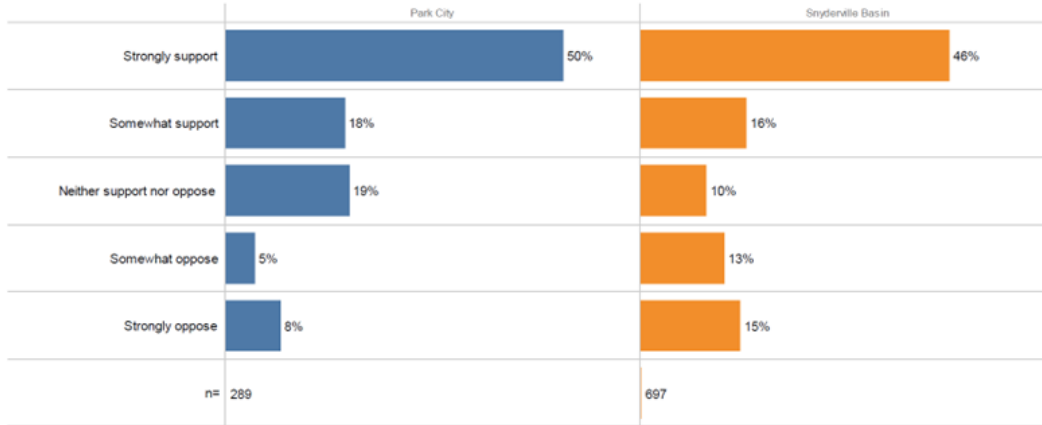
- There is strong support among residents in both jurisdictions for implementing speed limits on pathways. While opinions on specific speed limits vary, a majority felt that 10-15 miles per hour is sufficient, with little support for 20 MPH or higher.



Natural Surface Trails:

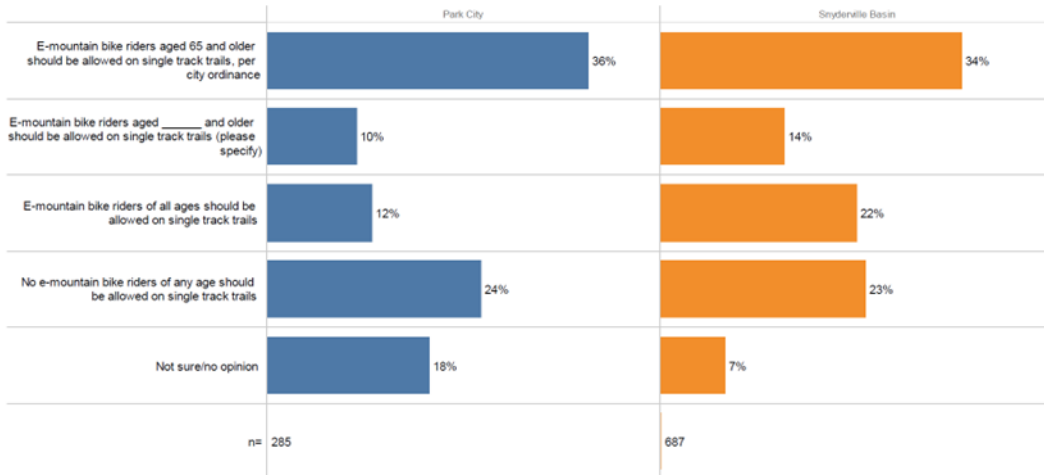
- There is considerable support for the current PCMC Non-motorized Trail Ordinance, which prohibits the use of E-MTB bikes on trails except for individuals with disabilities or those aged 65 and older.

Do you support or oppose the current PCMC Ordinances which prohibit the use of e-mountain bikes on single track trails except in the case of mobility disabilities and users aged 65 and older?



Source: RRC

Which of the following best represents your opinion regarding the use of e-mountain bikes on natural surface, single track trails in the Park City area in relation to age?



Source: RRC

- Opinions vary but there seems to be consensus on allowing e-mountain bikes with some restrictions, either limiting them to certain trails or using the current PCMC age and ability limits. About a quarter of respondents in both areas support a total ban on trail use.

Overall Sentiments:

- Widespread support, particularly in Park City, for increased enforcement of the current ordinance regulating e-bike usage.
- At least two-thirds of respondents in both areas express support for additional efforts to address e-bike policies.
- Preferred options for addressing these policies include the addition of signage and increased ranger presence.

City Council Requested Analysis

- The Council requested additional analysis of the survey results, which will be provided at the next Council presentation.

Program and Policy Questions for City Council

Based on the August 29, 2023, and May 2, 2024, City Council discussions, we compiled a list of programs or policies for the Council to consider, in an effort to mitigate or enhance growing use of e-bikes within park City.

1. Pathway Speed Limit:

As indicated by the Survey, residents support speed limits on the multi-use pathways. The PC Police conducted research on various communities, including Moab, Utah, which recently implemented a posted speed limit. Should the Council pursue this action, there are several considerations:

- Considering feedback from the survey and data collected on the Rail Trail last year, a speed limit of 15mph appears reasonable.
- In 2023, summer data of over 5,000 users revealed a significant majority, or 71% of cyclists, maintained speeds below 15 miles per hour. Moreover, a notable quarter of the survey, accounting for 25%, travels between 16 to 25 miles per hour.
- An ordinance establishing the speed limit would need to be formally adopted in a public meeting.

Enforcement Challenges:

- Communities with posted speed limits rarely have the resources to enforce them consistently, and Park City is no different in this regard. Bike speed limits are typically a deterrent and educational, not something that jurisdictions are actively enforcing via tickets and speed traps. We are concerned members of our community will expect ticketed speed enforcement and demand additional resources not currently budgeted.

These factors highlight the need for careful planning and resource allocation should the City Council seek to implement speed limits.

Is the City Council supportive of a 15mph speed limit on multi-use pathways, with the intent to continue pathway safety education and data collection prior to an enforcement resource discussion?

2. Designated E-Bike Trails:

The Community Survey does not support additional trails for E-MTB use, although the ultimate decision lies with the Council.

- Currently, E-MTB use is permitted on the Clark Ranch west parcel, conveniently near Wasatch County trails, which offers extensive mileage opportunities.
- If the Council supports a pilot project, Trails and Open Space would advise limiting locations to areas that already provide E-MTBs, such as trails in the lower Deer Valley area due to their proximity to Wasatch County and their limited separation from the broader Park City Trail network.
- Another option could be exploring additional trails in the Clark Ranch area distinct from the current system.

We understand this is a sensitive community issue, as recreation and trails remain a passionate community focal point.

Is the City Council interested in identifying additional public E-MTB trails located within park City in Lower Deer Valley and Deer Crest area as a pilot project?

3. Rail Trail Safety Enhancements:

In alignment with the [Rail Trail Master Plan](#), we have undertaken measures to enhance corridor safety, including striping and installing new crossing gates. Additional enhancements recommended by Trails & open Space, could provide additional safety and user benefits.

- Proposed incremental improvements to the Rail Trail include:
 - Clearing additional vegetation clearing on the south side of the trail, providing additional space for users.
 - Installing signage reminding users to keep dogs on leash.
 - Continued monitoring of speed data by park rangers.
- Proposed incremental improvements to the Wag 'on Trail include:
 - Additional directional signage to enhance user navigation.
 - Vegetation clearing along the trail corridor.
 - Designation of the trail as 'off-leash', with appropriate signage.

Is the City Council comfortable with proposed preliminary enhancements to the Rail Trail and Wag 'on Trail noted above?

3. Helmet Laws:

The City Council possesses broad authority to add helmet requirements beyond State law. Should the City Council decide to pursue this, we are prepared to provide recommendations and draft ordinances. Other considerations include:

- Helmets are not expected to be required for the current bike share program this year, although efforts are being explored by Summit County to provide efficient and economical access. This decision is mainly influenced by logistical challenges and the worry that it could reduce the number of users. However, it's worth noting that bike share access is restricted to individuals aged 18 and above, and any regulation aimed at users under 18 would align with the program's guidelines.
- One additional safety consideration is the use of bells. While we don't recommend making the use mandatory, we recommend a concerted effort to provide bells at educational and outreach opportunities. We purchased additional bells already.

Does the City Council desire to explore additional regulations associated with helmet use in Park City?

4. Educational Outreach and Signage:

The Trails Team, collaborating with the Communications Team, Basin Recreation, and Mountain Trails Foundation, initiated multiple public outreach campaigns to educate the community on safety practices, personal awareness, kindness, and best practices with a touch of humor. Simultaneously, ongoing collaboration with the School District, spearheaded by the PC Police Department, encompass:

- Bike to School event on May 10th.
- School assemblies and education opportunities, the Wils Foundation is planning an assembly at Treasure Mountain Junior High and Ecker Middle Schools on E-Bike/Bike safety, in conjunction with the Park City Hospital Emergency Department Trauma Program
- Trail Rangers will be attending an 'E-Bike Expo' hosted by Bingham Cyclery and the Wils Foundation on Saturday, May 11, 2024, providing information on current Ordinances and Information.
- The PC Police Department launched a new [E-bike safety video](#), addressing topics such as providing foot pegs for passengers and night use restrictions.
- The Trails & Open Space Team, in conjunction with Mountain Trails Foundation and Basin Recreation have ongoing outreach messaging and educational videos and signage campaigns.
- Trail Rangers perform 'pathway education' events, which target users on Rail Trail, Poison Creek, and McLeod Creek twice monthly.
- Trails & Open Space Team will disseminate information about adopted ordinances and educational outreach to local bike shops, in alignment with survey results and Council direction.
- Updated trail signage reflecting the Council's direction, including but not limited to noting age and mobility exceptions.

5. Certification/Licensing Program:

While some [states](#) have their own licensing requirements, it is relatively rare for individual municipalities. If the City Council wishes to delve deeper into this matter, we recommend partnering with relevant departments and stakeholders to craft and potentially provide an educational course aimed at young individuals as an initial step before consideration of additional regulations.

Does the City Council wish to dedicate resources to exploring additional educational/certification courses aimed at young individuals and e-bike use?

6. 2024 Legislative Update:

HB385 during the 2024 Legislative Session focused on amendments to the E-bike State Statute, primarily concerning the refinement of e-bike classifications.

- Amendments addressed technological advancements allowing for programmable changes between different e-bike classes, necessitating corresponding language updates.
- To address analogous issues encountered in Summit County, the amendments introduced targeted language distinguishing electric motorcycles from e-bikes, and mandated clear disclosure by manufacturers and sellers regarding the classification of their products as e-bikes or otherwise.

Conclusion

While the Community Survey seems to validate PCMC's existing approach to e-bikes, we have room for improvement in education, safety measures, signage, and potentially pilot programs where feasible. We recognize that recreation and trails are a deeply

personal and passionately debated issue in Park City, requiring thoughtful consideration and balanced decision-making.

Funding

Funding may be required dependent on Council direction and addressed through the upcoming budget process.

Attachment

EXHIBIT A- 2024 Community E-Bike Survey Report

EXHIBIT B- 2024 Community E-Bike Survey- Appendix A

EXHIBIT C- 2024 Community E-Bike Survey- Appendix B