

ORDINANCE NO. 647

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF JEFFERSON, IOWA, BY ADDING A NEW CHAPTER 82 - ELECTRIC BICYCLES, ELECTRIC SCOOTERS, AND PERSONAL TRANSPORTATION DEVICES

Be it enacted by the City Council of Jefferson, Iowa:

SECTION 1. Chapter Added. Chapter 82 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Jefferson, Iowa, 2017, be created and therefore enacted in the following chapter:

**CHAPTER 82**  
**BICYCLES, ELECTRIC SCOOTERS, AND PERSONAL TRANSPORTATION**  
**DEVICES**

**82.01. PURPOSE.** The purpose of this chapter is to establish regulations for the safe and responsible operation of bicycles, electric scooters, low-speed electric bicycles, and similar personal transportation devices on the streets, sidewalks, and public ways of the City of Jefferson.

**82.02. DEFINITIONS.**

1. Bicycle: A device having up to four wheels and at least one saddle or seat for the use of a rider, propelled by human power, or a low-speed electric bicycle. Chapter 76 of this Code of Ordinances regulates bicycles in the City of Jefferson.  
*(Code of Iowa, Sec. 321.1[40.c])*
2. Low-Speed Electric Bicycle: A device with a saddle or seat, up to four wheels, fully operable pedals, and an electric motor of less than seven hundred fifty watts with a top speed of 28 miles per hour or less. Chapter 76 of this Code of Ordinances shall regulate low-speed electric bicycles in addition to those provisions specific to low-speed electric bicycles found in this Chapter 82.  
*(Code of Iowa, Sec. 321.1[36A])*
3. Electric Scooter: A device weighing less than one hundred pounds, equipped with one, two, or three wheels, with or without handlebars or a seat, and an electric motor capable of propelling the device at a maximum speed of no more than twenty miles per hour on a paved level surface.
4. Motorized Bicycle: A motor vehicle with a saddle or seat, designed to travel on not more than three wheels, and not capable of operating at a speed in excess of thirty-nine miles per hour on level ground unassisted by human power, but excluding a low-speed electric bicycle.

*(Code of Iowa, Sec. 321.1[40.b.])*

5. Other-Power Driven Mobility Device (OPDMD): Any mobility device powered by batteries, fuel, or other engines used by individuals with mobility disabilities for locomotion, but not a wheelchair (manual or power-driven) or golf carts as regulated by Chapter 77 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Jefferson.
6. Roadway: The portion of a highway improved, designed, or ordinarily used for vehicular travel.

*(Code of Iowa, Sec. 321.1[65])*

7. Street: The entire width between property lines of every way or place open to public use for vehicular traffic, which is either paved or laid with gravel, the edge of which is marked by a curb or yard.
8. Sidewalk: A paved or unpaved surface, separate from the street, less than ten feet in width, under the jurisdiction of the city, primarily for pedestrian use.
9. Residential District: Means a territory not comprising a business district and which is occupied mainly by structures for residential dwellings.
10. Business District: Means the 12-block area for which the boundaries are Washington Street on the north, Elm Street on the west, Harrison Street on the south, and Locust Street on the east.

**82.03. SCOPE OF REGULATIONS.** These regulations apply whenever an electric scooter, low-speed electric bicycle, OPDMD, or motorized bicycle is operated on any public street, roadway, park road, sidewalk, or in any bicycle lane or path within the City of Jefferson, subject to the exceptions and regulations stated herein.

#### **82.04. APPLICATION OF TRAFFIC CODE**

1. Equal Rights and Duties. Every person riding a motorized bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, electric scooter, or OPDMD on a roadway or in a bicycle lane shall have all the rights and be subject to all the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle under state law and the City's traffic code, except for provisions that by their nature do not apply or where specific exceptions are provided.
2. No Registration or Insurance Requirements. Low-speed electric bicycles, electric scooters, and OPDMDs are not subject to registration, licensure, titling, inspection, or proof of financial liability coverage.
3. Motorized Bicycles Subject to State Vehicle Requirements. Motorized bicycles are subject to registration, licensure, titling, inspection, and proof of financial liability coverage as required by the Code of Iowa, Chapter 321.

4. Licensing Requirements. Riders of motorized bicycles must possess a valid driver's license or permit. Riders of low-speed electric bicycles, electric scooters, or OPDMDs are not required to have a driver's license or permit.
5. Dismounted Riders are Considered Pedestrians. When dismounted, operators of a motorized bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, electric scooter, or OPDMD are subject to all regulations applicable to pedestrians.

#### **82.05. MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATIONS.**

1. Lateral Passing Distance. When overtaking a motorized bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, electric scooter, or OPDMD on a paved shoulder or in a bicycle lane, a motor vehicle must provide at least three feet of lateral passing distance.
2. Yield to Persons in Crosswalks. Motor vehicles must yield right-of-way, slowing down or stopping if need be to so yield, to pedestrians, dismounted operators of motorized bicycles, low-speed electric bicycles, electric scooters, or OPDMDs, and persons on low-speed electric bicycles, electric scooters, or OPDMDs within any crosswalk.
3. Maintain Safe Distance. No person operating a motor vehicle shall steer unreasonably close to or toward a pedestrian, cyclist, or person on an electric scooter or OPDMD on a roadway or street.
4. Prohibition of Throwing Objects. A person shall not knowingly project any object or substance at or against a dismounted operator of or person riding a bicycle, motorized bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, electric scooter, or OPDMD on a roadway or street, adjacent shoulder, sidewalk, multi-use trail, or any other location.

*(Code of Iowa, Sec. 321.281)*

#### **82.06. RESPONSIBLE RIDING.**

1. Riding Restricted. No motorized bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, electric scooter, or OPDMD shall be used to carry more persons at one time than the number for which it is designed and equipped. A person propelling a motorized bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, electric scooter or OPDMD shall not ride other than astride a permanent and regular seat or platform attached thereto.

*(Code of Iowa, Sec. 321.234[3, 4, 5])*

2. Speed. No person shall operate a motorized bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, electric scooter, or OPDMD at a speed greater than is reasonable and proper giving due regard under existing conditions, taking into account the surroundings and environment, such as inclement weather, infrastructure conditions, and grade, and not in excess of the posted speed limit or, if none, twenty miles per hour on bicycle lanes, paths, or sidewalks. No low-speed electric bicycle, electric scooter or motorized bicycle that has been modified to increase its speed beyond the manufactured specifications shall be operated inside city limits.

3. Control. Operators of a motorized bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, electric scooter, or OPDMD must maintain directional, speed, and stopping control of their device at all times.
4. Improper riding. No person shall operate a motorized bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, electric scooter, or OPDMD in a reckless manner or disregard the safety of others or property. All riders must operate their devices in a careful and prudent manner at all times complying with all posted signage and applicable laws. Riders shall not obstruct common areas, paths, sidewalks, parks, or entranceways, and must not interfere with the safe passage of others.
5. Right of Way. Riders of low-speed electric bicycles, electric scooters, motorized bicycles and OPDMDs shall yield the right-of-way to pedestrians, human-powered bicycles, and other human-powered conveyances.
6. Emerging from a Trail, Sidewalk, Alley, or Driveway. When emerging from a trail, sidewalk, alley, driveway, or building, operators of motorized bicycles, low-speed electric bicycles, electric scooters, or OPDMDs shall, upon approaching a sidewalk or sidewalk area, yield the right-of-way to all pedestrians approaching on said sidewalk, and upon entering a roadway, shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles approaching on said roadway.

*(Code of Iowa, Sec. 321.353)*

7. Towing. It is unlawful for any person riding upon any motorized bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, electric scooter, or OPDMD to attach the device or themselves to any moving motor vehicle by tow rope, hand grip or otherwise. It is further unlawful for any person riding a low-speed electric bicycle, motorized bicycle, electric scooter or OPDMD to attach to tow anything or anyone behind the device or themselves. This section shall not prohibit attaching a trailer to a low-speed electric bicycle that is designed to accommodate such a device.
8. Following Emergency Vehicles. No person riding a motorized bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, electric scooter, or OPDMD shall follow closer than 500 feet of an emergency vehicle as defined by Iowa Code section 321.1 which has emergency lights and/or siren activated, and shall not stop, park, or leave a bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, electric scooter, or OPDMD within 500 feet of an emergency vehicle stopped in response to an emergency.

#### **82.07. PLACE OF RIDING.**

1. Bicycle Paths. Electric scooters, low-speed electric bicycles, and OPDMDs may be operated on bicycle paths eight feet or wider unless signs prohibit such use.
2. Roadways and Streets. When riding on a roadway or street, riders of motorized bicycles, low-speed electric bicycles, electric scooters, or OPDMDs shall follow the same laws as

motor vehicles, unless a bicycle path or lane is available, in which case riders may use the path or lane as permitted.

3. Residential District. On public sidewalks in residential districts, low-speed electric bicycles and electric scooters may be operated in a careful and prudent manner, except where signs prohibit such use or designated dismount zones. OPDMD may be operated by persons with mobility disabilities on all sidewalks in residential districts provided they take due care not to risk damage to the sidewalks, surrounding environment, or pose a risk of safety to other sidewalks users.
4. Prohibition of Riding on Sidewalks in Business District. The operation of motorized bicycles, low-speed electric bicycles and electric scooters on sidewalks located within the Business District is strictly prohibited at all times, regardless of the presence or absence of signage, unless otherwise expressly permitted by posted signage authorized by the city or relevant authority. Riders of motorized bicycles, low-speed electric bicycles and electric scooters must dismount and walk their devices when traversing sidewalks in Business Districts. OPDMD may be operated by persons with mobility disabilities on all sidewalks in the Business District provided they take due care not to risk damage to the sidewalks, surrounding environment, or pose a risk of safety to other sidewalks users.
5. City Parks. In city parks, electric scooters and low-speed electric bicycles may only be ridden on paved portions of bicycle paths and sidewalks as well as the designated dirt paths located in Russell Park and Chautauqua Park. Motorized bicycles may not be operated in city parks. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, motorized bicycles, low-speed electric bicycles and electric scooters may be operated anywhere in Daubendiek Park as long as the operator takes due care not to risk damage to trails, surrounding environment, or pose a risk of safety to persons and animals at Daubendiek Park.
6. Prohibited Streets of Operation. Operation of electric scooters is strictly prohibited on US Highway 30 (220<sup>th</sup> Street), North Elm Street, South Elm Street, East Lincoln Way, West Lincoln Way, and North Grimmell Road north of Clark Street, within city limits.  
*(Code of Iowa, Sec..310.1[3])*
7. Special Events. The provisions in this Chapter 82.07 may be modified by City Council for special events.

#### **82.08. HOURS AND MONTHS OF OPERATION OF ELECTRIC SCOOTERS.**

1. Hours. Operation of electric scooters is permitted only from sunrise to sunset.
2. Season of Operation. Operation of electric scooters is strictly prohibited when snow and ice are present on the riding surface.

**82.09. PARKING.** Motorized bicycles, low-speed electric bicycles, electric scooters, and OPDMDs shall not be parked in a manner that blocks or impedes:

1. ADA-compliant pedestrian pathways
2. Fire hydrants
3. Mailboxes
4. Crosswalks or curb ramps
5. Loading zones
6. Transit stops or shelters
7. Accessible parking spaces (except that OPDMD's may be parked in such spaces when and where appropriate)
8. Street furniture or amenities requiring pedestrian access
9. Entryways or driveways
10. Doorways
11. Alleys

**82.10. EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS.** Every person riding a motorized bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, electric scooter, or OPDMD shall be responsible for providing and using equipment as provided herein:

1. Lighting. Between sunset and sunrise, or when visibility is insufficient, every motorized bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, , or OPDMD must have a front white light visible from at least 300 feet and a rear red light visible from at least 300 feet. Lights may be attached to the operator if visibility requirements are met.
2. Braking. Every motorized bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, electric scooter, and OPDMD must have a brake capable of making the braked wheel skid on dry, level, clean pavement.

*(Code of Iowa, Sec. 321.236[10])*

3. No motorized bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle, electric scooter, or OPDMD shall be equipped with or use a siren or whistle, except for police bicycles in the line of duty.

*(Code of Iowa, Sec. 321.434)*

## **82.11. VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES.**

1. Violation. A violation or failure to perform any act or duty required under this chapter shall be treated as a municipal infraction under Chapter 4 of this Code of Ordinances.
2. Special Violation. For those violations that would otherwise be punishable by a standard fine under Section 4.03(1), a person may, in lieu of said fine, allow the person's motorized bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle or electric scooter to be impounded to the City as provided in Section 76.14 of this Code of Ordinances. This special violation is not available to anyone violating Chapter 321 of the Code of Iowa.
3. Officer Impound. For repeated violations of this chapter, an officer may impound a person's motorized bicycle, low-speed electric bicycle or electric scooter for up to thirty (30) days. Impounding a device under this section may be in addition to penalties rendered under this chapter.



SECTION 2. Severability. If any section, provision, or part of this ordinance is adjudged invalid or unconstitutional, such adjudication shall not affect the validity of the ordinance as a whole or any section, provision, or part not adjudged invalid or unconstitutional.

SECTION 3. Effective Date. This ordinance shall be in effect from and after its final passage, approval, and publication as provided by law.

Finally passed by the Council and approved on July 28, 2026.

  
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Craig J. Berry, Mayor

Attest:

  
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Roxanne Gorsuch, City Clerk

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I hereby certify that the foregoing ordinance was published in The Jefferson Herald on August 6, 2026.

  
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Roxanne Gorsuch, City Clerk