

Electric Bicycles on Mackinac Island

The use of e-bikes is prohibited on Mackinac Island with one exception. If you have a **mobility disability**, you may use a **Class I e-bike**. If you have a mobility disability and already own a Class II or a Class III e-bike, you may bring your bike into compliance and use it by either making sure it does not have an operable throttle installed or in the case of a class III e-bike, by having the computer on a class III e-bike reconfigured so the bike can not achieve a peddle-assisted speed of over 20 miles per hour.

Under no circumstances are e-bikes with operable throttles allowed to be used.

The different classes of e-bikes are explained in the graphic below. Also below you will find the answers to frequently-asked questions along with links to local and state ordinances and statutes as well as reference material regarding the Americans With Disabilities Act and the definition of a “mobility disability”.

The ferry companies have been advised of this policy and are free to make their own policy in transporting e-bikes to the island. If you have questions as to whether you can transport your bike to the island, contact your preferred ferry operator.

If you are only visiting the island for up to a few days, you do not need to register your e-bike, however you are still subject to the restrictions outlined here.

The fine for a violation of the e-bike ordinance is \$110.00 for the first offense, \$210.00 for the second offence within a 2-year period, and \$510.00 for the third violation.



Overview of the 3-Class System for E-bikes

	Characteristics		Regulations
Class 1 E-bike	Provides Assistance:	Only when pedaling	Generally treated like a standard bicycle.
	Top Assisted Speed:	20 mph	
Class 2 E-bike	Provides Assistance:	When pedaling or by throttle	Generally treated like a standard bicycle. May be restricted from shared use paths or trails.
	Top Assisted Speed:	20 mph	
Class 3 E-bike	Provides Assistance:	Only when pedaling	More likely to be restricted from shared use paths or trails. May require use of a helmet, have minimum age requirements, or be subject to other regulation.
	Top Assisted Speed:	28 mph	

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 or a Class II bicycle with no operable throttle.

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, 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.

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. Pursuant to Section 66-167(e) if you have a mobility disability and already purchased a Class II or Class III E-Bike with a throttle, and/or which can attain a maximum speed of more than 20 miles per hour, 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 removing or detaching the throttle and by resetting the E-Bike’s computer so that it can only attain a top speed of 20mph. 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 for use on Mackinac Island.

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