

What we learned about where e-bike riders can use the motor in Northeast Ohio

Published: Sep. 05, 2026, 11:00 a.m.

By [Michael Johnson, cleveland.com](#) [cleveland.com Express Desk](#)



City leaders say the goal is not to limit e-bikes and scooters, but to encourage safer riding and reduce conflicts in busy public spaces. Destinnee Jaram

CLEVELAND, Ohio — Whether an electric bicycle rider can use the motor in Northeast Ohio can change simply by crossing from one park system or city into another.

Ohio law establishes three e-bike classes and statewide baseline rules, but local governments and agencies that control trails can impose additional restrictions. That means the same Class 1 or Class 2 e-bike may be allowed

to use electric assistance on one trail and required to shut it off somewhere else.

These are five takeaways from the [original article](#), which examined how e-bike rules differ across Northeast Ohio.

1. Ohio's statewide rules are only the starting point

Ohio divides e-bikes into three classes based largely on how the motor operates and when assistance stops.

Class 1 and Class 2 bikes stop providing assistance at 20 mph, while Class 3 bikes can assist a rider who is pedaling up to 28 mph. All must have operable pedals and motors under 750 watts.

But Ohio also allows governments and agencies controlling trails to decide where e-bikes may operate. Riders therefore need to know both their bike's classification and the rules for the property they're using.

2. Cleveland Metroparks and Summit Metro Parks allow Class 1 and Class 2 motors

Cleveland Metroparks permits Class 1 and Class 2 e-bikes on its roadways and more than 125 miles of paved all-purpose trails. Its public rules do not allow Class 3 e-bikes on those trails.

Summit Metro Parks similarly allows Class 1 and Class 2 e-bikes on multipurpose trails. That creates relatively broad access for the two lower-speed classifications, but riders still cannot assume those rules carry over to another park system.

3. Lakewood requires riders to shut off the motor in city parks

Lakewood announced Aug. 19 that electric bikes and scooters may be used in city parks only with their motors disengaged.

The city also prohibits electric dirt bikes and e-motos from parks. Officials said the rules followed complaints about unsafe and disruptive riding.

For a Class 1 or Class 2 rider, the distinction is straightforward: electric assistance may be used on a Cleveland Metroparks all-purpose trail but not inside a Lakewood city park.

4. State parks treat paved and natural-surface trails differently

Ohio state parks generally allow Class 1 and Class 2 e-bikes on paved and shared-use paths unless restrictions are posted.

Natural-surface trails are more restrictive. On trails specifically designated for mountain biking, Class 1 e-bikes are generally allowed, while other e-bike classes require additional authorization.

The surface and designated use of a trail can therefore determine whether electric assistance is legal.

5. Sidewalk riding brings another restriction

Ohio law generally allows an e-bike on a sidewalk only when its motor is disengaged. Local governments can impose additional restrictions.

Hudson is considering changes after an Aug. 19 forum prompted by concerns about speeding, helmet use and conflicts with pedestrians. Proposals include registration requirements and restrictions on downtown sidewalk riding. City Council is accepting comments through Sept.

18. For riders, knowing the e-bike's class is only part of the equation. The legal use of the motor can also depend on whether the bike is on a roadway, sidewalk, paved trail, mountain-bike trail or park property — and who controls that location.

