

CITY OF SEATTLE
ORDINANCE 127314
COUNCIL BILL 121040

AN ORDINANCE relating to new vehicle types and curb allowances for e-cargo bicycle delivery; establishing a new vehicle type for e-cargo bikes; establishing rules for operations, parking, and loading for e-cargo bicycle delivery; clarifying new curb allowances for e-cargo bike delivery; and adding new Sections 11.23.430 and 11.44.300 to, and amending Sections 11.14.055, 11.23.120, 11.31.121, and 11.76.015 of, the Seattle Municipal Code.

WHEREAS, in 2021, the City Council adopted Ordinance 126517, which integrated vehicle definitions for bicycles and electric-assisted bicycles, distinguishing the two types as independent operating use cases and specifying vehicle requirements, and clarified bicycle rules when riding on roadways; and

WHEREAS, the Seattle Department of Transportation, in partnership with the Office of Sustainability and Environment, Seattle City Light, and other departments is focused on addressing the climate crisis through the Transportation Electrification Blueprint and 2022 and 2025 Climate Executive Orders, including working with private-sector partners and others to explore ways to incentivize zero-emissions freight options at the curb, including support for new e-cargo bike freight delivery programs; and

WHEREAS, the Seattle Department of Transportation recently completed a Zero Emission Freight Project with C40, a global network of mayors working to confront the climate crisis, demonstrating community interest in e-cargo bike programming from businesses and freight partners and proven success in other municipalities; and

WHEREAS, Seattle Municipal Code Title 11 does not include a designated bicycle type for the delivery of goods and services, though delivery activity via bicycle and electric-assisted bicycle is rapidly growing in Seattle and there is a need to clarify approved standards for

electric-cargo bicycles and outline rules of operation to ensure safety of riders and other users of the public right of way; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Section 11.14.055 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance 126517, is amended as follows:

11.14.055 Bicycle and electric-assisted bicycle

A. “Bicycle” means every device propelled solely by human power, or an electric-assisted bicycle, upon which a person or persons may ride, having two tandem wheels either of which is 16 inches or more in diameter, or three wheels, any one of which is 20 inches or more in diameter.

B. “Electric-assisted bicycle” means a bicycle with two or three wheels, a saddle, fully operative pedals for human propulsion, and an electric motor. The electric-assisted bicycle’s electric motor shall have a power output of no more than 750 watts. The electric-assisted bicycle must meet the requirements of one of the following ~~((three))~~ four classifications:

1. “Class 1 electric-assisted bicycle” means an electric-assisted bicycle in which the motor provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour;

2. “Class 2 electric-assisted bicycle” means an electric-assisted bicycle in which the motor may be used exclusively to propel the bicycle and is not capable of providing assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour; ~~((or))~~

3. “Class 3 electric-assisted bicycle” means an electric-assisted bicycle in which the motor provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance

when the bicycle reaches the speed of 28 miles per hour and is equipped with a speedometer((-)) ; or

4. “Electric-assisted commercial cargo bicycle” (e-cargo bicycle or e-cargo bike) means an electric-assisted bicycle with fully operable pedals and an electric motor with a maximum continuous rated power of less than or equal to 750 watts, designed for the distribution of commercial freight, goods, parcels, food, or services, and that has two, three, or four wheels.

Section 2. A new Section 11.23.430 is added to the Seattle Municipal Code as follows:

11.23.430 E-cargo bicycle permit requirements and fees

A. To operate a permitted e-cargo bicycle on City rights-of-way and lawfully utilize the portions of the right of way specified in subsection 11.44.300.A not otherwise allowed by unpermitted e-cargo bicycles, the permittee shall meet the requirements in this subsection 11.23.430.A and comply with the terms in this Section 11.23.430.

1. The applicant shall obtain a commercial e-cargo bicycle permit for each e-cargo bicycle and pay any associated fees to the Seattle Department of Transportation.

2. Permitted e-cargo bicycles may be no wider than 48 inches.

3. Permitted e-cargo bicycles must comply with the manufacturer’s weight rating specifications.

4. Each permitted e-cargo bicycle shall display a unique identification number up to six digits, generated by the Seattle Department of Transportation when permit applications are processed. The number will be associated with the operating business and the unique number for each permitted bicycle. If the e-cargo bicycle includes a trailer, the unique identification number shall be affixed to the back of the trailer.

1 5. The permittee shall comply with the terms of the commercial e-cargo bicycle
2 permit.

3 6. When using on-street parking within City rights-of-way as referenced in
4 Section 11.44.300, the permittee shall comply with all applicable federal, state, county, and City
5 laws and regulations.

6 B. The permittee must possess a valid City of Seattle business license to acquire a
7 commercial e-cargo bicycle permit, except if not required by ordinance. The permittee is
8 required to provide data surrounding number of packages delivered by cargo bike, vehicle miles
9 traveled by cargo bike, and operating ZIP codes.

10 C. The Director of Transportation may administer a system for issuing commercial e-
11 cargo bicycle permits and collecting fees. This system may include consideration of potential
12 effects on existing curb space loading, vehicle and bicycle traffic usage and safety effects on
13 neighborhood business districts, program participation, and other considerations that may affect
14 the public's use of the right-of-way and travel behavior.

15 D. The Director of Transportation may deny issuance of subsequent permits to a
16 permittee for noncompliance with any permit condition.

17 E. E-cargo bicycles shall not park in the following zones or areas:

- 18 1. Zones designated as bus zones;
- 19 2. Car share vehicle zones;
- 20 3. Commercial vehicle load zones;
- 21 4. Pedestrian zones;
- 22 5. Roadway construction zones;
- 23 6. School loading zones;

7. Taxicab, pedicab, and other for-hire car stands;
8. Tow-away zones;
9. Truck load zones;
10. Passenger load zones
11. Vending zones;
12. Parking areas adjacent to Temporary No Parking Zones;
13. Zones temporarily restricted from parking by legally marked and placed temporary traffic control devices; and
14. Any other zone prohibited by the Traffic Engineer.

F. E-cargo bicycles shall not park in a parking space or stall reserved for a person with a disability.

G. The Director of Transportation may establish permit conditions and limitations to address neighborhood impacts, business district impacts, equitable access, peak right-of-way usage, operator liability insurance, or other considerations that may affect the public's use of the public right-of-way.

H. An e-cargo bicycle permit shall be valid for one calendar year, and permits are nontransferable between bikes. Seattle Department of Transportation permitting fees shall be waived for commercial e-cargo bicycle permits for the first 12 months of the active program. Following the first 12 months, the Director of Transportation shall collect a fee to be deposited into the Transportation Fund and established annually by a fee schedule for each permit issued to an applicant.

Section 3. Section 11.23.120 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance 127102, is amended as follows:

11.23.120 Truck and parking permit fees

The fees to be collected annually by the Seattle Department of Transportation for trucking and parking permits are as follows:

Type of Permit	Fee
<u>Commercial E-cargo Bicycle Permit</u>	<u>\$100 per bike</u>
* * *	

Section 4. Section 11.31.121 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance 127213, is amended as follows:

11.31.121 Monetary penalties-Parking infractions

The base monetary penalty for violation of each of the numbered provisions of the Seattle Municipal Code listed in the following table is as shown, unless and until the penalty shown below for a particular parking infraction is modified by Local Rule of the Seattle Municipal Court adopted pursuant to the Infraction Rules for Courts of Limited Jurisdiction (“IRLJ”) or successor rules to the IRLJ:

Municipal Code Reference	Parking infraction short description	Base penalty amount
* * *		
11.23.415	CARPOOL PERMIT	\$69
<u>11.23.430</u>	<u>E-CARGO BICYCLE</u>	<u>\$69</u>
* * *		

Section 5. A new Section 11.44.300 is added to the Seattle Municipal Code as follows:

11.44.300 E-cargo bicycle regulations

A. E-cargo bicycles may park at the curb in load/unload zones, paid parking areas, restricted parking zones, time limited parking areas, any unrestricted parking areas (subject otherwise to the parking restrictions listed in Section 11.23.430), on-street bike corrals, or spaces signed to allow e-cargo bike parking, and shall be permitted by the Director of Transportation to

1 use the parking zones listed in this subsection 11.44.300.A. E-cargo bicycles are not subject to
2 payment at parking payment devices in listed zones as long as permits are properly displayed.

3 B. E-cargo bicycle riding on the sidewalk is unlawful unless there is no alternative to
4 travel over a sidewalk as part of a bicycle or pedestrian path.

5 C. E-cargo bicycles may travel in the roadway and protected bicycle lanes at a maximum
6 speed of 15 miles per hour. The motor must not assist pedaling above 15 miles per hour.

7 D. E-cargo bicycles may park in the furniture zone of the sidewalk if no viable permitted
8 on-street parking space is available.

9 E. E-cargo bicycles are subject to all other electric-assisted bicycle rules in this Chapter
10 11.44.

11 Section 6. Section 11.76.015 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance
12 126399, is amended as follows:

13 **11.76.015 Parking violations on blockfaces, or portions thereof, requiring payment to park**

14 A. No person shall stop, stand, or permit a vehicle within the person's control to be
15 parked on any blockface, or portions thereof, controlled by pay-to-park signage without properly
16 making payment for parking under Section 11.76.005.

17 B. The prohibitions in this Section 11.76.015 shall not apply to:

- 18 1. The act of parking;
- 19 2. The necessary time required to activate the time on a parking payment device;
- 20 3. As indicated by signposting, the parking of a vehicle in a restricted parking
- 21 zone in accordance with Section 11.16.315, or of certified carpool vehicles in accordance with
- 22 Section 11.23.410, or of free-floating car sharing vehicles in accordance with Section 11.23.160,
- 23 or of permitted e-cargo bicycles in accordance with Section 11.44.300.

* * *

Section 7. This ordinance shall take effect as provided by Seattle Municipal Code
Sections 1.04.020 and 1.04.070.

Passed by the City Council the 23rd day of September, 2025,
and signed by me in open session in authentication of its passage this 23rd day of
September, 2025.



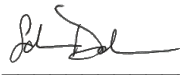
President _____ of the City Council

☒ Approved / ☐ returned unsigned / ☐ vetoed this 26th day of September, 2025.



Bruce A. Harrell, Mayor

Filed by me this 26th day of September, 2025.



Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

(Seal)