

California Independent Electric Mobility Council



July 2026

Executive Summary

Introduction

Over the course of 2025 and 2026, CalBike convened a statewide working group to study the key challenges and trends facing personal electric mobility devices like e-bikes and their operation in California. This report outlines the program and highlights important takeaways for statewide regulatory policy, education, and programming.

About the Organization

The California Bicycle Coalition (501(c)4) and California Mobility Fund (501(c)3), collectively known as CalBike, advocate for equitable, inclusive, and prosperous communities where bicycling helps all Californians to lead healthy and joyful lives.

The California Independent Electric Mobility Council Program & Key Takeaways

In 2025, CalBike proposed a convening of statewide transportation stakeholders in California, with the goal to study the current challenges and landscape facing the adoption and safe integration of personal electric mobility devices, including electric bicycles, into our transportation system. The Council met three times over the course of seven months in summer 2025 to spring 2026, and members met in additional small group meetings to tackle topics related to e-bike policy improvements and public safety and education. This work included identifying recommendations for educational, policy, and program efforts for partners across the state.

The accompanying report outlines the history of the program, key findings from the working group, and resources and references to be distributed to the general travelling public and key statewide partners and stakeholders.

Included in this Report

- Program Report and Key Findings from the 2025-26 California Independent Electric Mobility Council
- E-Bike Safety and Key Facts Infographic Series

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The California Independent Electric Mobility Council

Introduction

Over the course of 2025 and 2026, CalBike convened a statewide working group to study the key challenges and trends facing personal electric mobility devices like e-bikes and their operation in California. This report outlines the program and highlights important takeaways for statewide regulatory policy, education, and programming.

History

Despite the fact that approximately 30% of the population cannot drive due to age, income, or ability,¹ the needs of non-drivers are overlooked by our transportation system. Safe, convenient, and connected facilities for people bicycling, walking, and rolling are often viewed as optional to government agencies in charge of road design, and thus large swaths of the population are without the opportunity to safely travel to their daily destinations.

Low-income households are less likely to have access to a motor vehicle, and can benefit greatly from access to safe and convenient bicycle facilities as a transportation option. CalBike seeks to make California more accessible for people from all walks of life to be able to bicycle for everyday trips, and specifically focuses our work on creating better access for marginalized communities who have historically been underserved by transportation investments.

Electric bicycles offer a practical solution to those who may not have access to a car or be able to drive, and the support of an electric motor makes electric bicycles a more reasonable choice for people with children, older adults, or people traveling longer distances or dealing with elevation or cargo.

Electric bicycles present a unique opportunity to address the need for accessible, affordable, and sustainable transportation. They cost pennies to charge and operate. The price for an electric bicycle has come down in recent years, and public programs have expanded to offset the cost of this climate-friendly and healthy transportation option. Air quality districts, utility operators, and other providers now offer rebates and incentives to support the purchase of e-bikes alongside electric cars. California recently concluded the statewide E-Bike Incentive Project, which distributed over 2,000 purchase vouchers to help low-income Californians purchase electric bicycles and accessories.²

¹<https://usa.streetsblog.org/2025/10/02/report-16-million-have-no-car-access-at-all>

²<https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/california-e-bike-incentive-project>

Electric bicycles are relatively new technology and not well-defined for the general public. They have rapidly gained popularity and provide an opportunity to open up zero-emission and health-promoting transportation for many people, some of whom are not able to ride traditional bicycles due to disability, geography, or need to carry cargo.

However, many communities have declared states of emergencies and sought to limit e-bike use based on a perception that they are unsafe and/or causing collisions. This misconception has the potential to negatively impact the broad adoption of more sustainable modes of transportation like the electric bicycle.

Amid rising safety concerns, particularly in Southern California and the San Francisco Bay Area, proposals to add more restrictions to who can ride an e-bike and where, and to require e-bike riders to have a license, have gained momentum. In 2024, local city councils and the California legislature considered policies that would require e-bike licensing, and many local communities restrict the use of e-bikes in specific areas.

Unfortunately, this is a misguided solution, and does not address a multitude of connected issues. In many cases, collisions involving e-bikes are due to a lack of connected and safe bicycling and walking infrastructure, inadequate and outdated bicycle and driver education, and a lack of clarity around what exactly is an electric bicycle (with many small vehicles such as e-mopeds and pocket bikes traveling at much higher speeds).

Over the course of conversations with aligned partner organizations working in bicycle, pedestrian, and complete streets advocacy in 2023 and 2024, CalBike identified a clear need in communities across the state. Specifically, local organizations calling for more clarity and a better shared understanding of emerging personal electric vehicle technologies, their safe and legal use, including education for users of e-bikes and cars alike about how to safely share the road.

In 2025 and 2026, CalBike responded to this need by convening a statewide working group, and worked with the group to develop recommendations for policy improvements and public education, and is working now to implement the recommendations and educational efforts along with partners across the state.

Recruitment and Membership

In early 2025, the California Mobility Fund (501(c)3) established the California Independent Electric Mobility Council. The This first of its kind statewide working group met over the course of 10 months to study the current challenges and landscape facing the adoption and safe integration of personal electric mobility devices, including electric bicycles, into our transportation system.

The primary goals of the California Independent Electric Mobility Council were to: convene a statewide stakeholder working group representing broad transportation and safety interests; develop updated guidance, policy recommendations, and educational resources, and; implement a communications campaign to dispel misconceptions, share safety practices, educate road users

Representatives were recruited from local and regional bicycle/pedestrian/transit/safe streets advocacy groups, corporate partners representing the bicycle industry, micromobility providers, and transportation planners, as well as our local, regional, and state transportation agencies and environmental commissions.

The California Mobility Fund held an initial forum with all partners to identify the primary issues and develop expected outcomes for the group. Over the next 10 months, we convened representatives to discuss emerging trends and issues across the state, in an effort to identify policy gaps and recommendations for action. Smaller ad-hoc group meetings were held to further develop guidance, make recommendations, or provide strategic direction for communications and outreach.

CalBike is distributing this report and resources to local and regional elected officials, city councils, and county boards of supervisors. At the state level, we'll offer resources to legislators, and representatives from agencies like the California Department of Transportation, the California Highway Patrol, and the California Air Resource Board, which operated California's statewide e-bike incentive program.

California Independent Electric Mobility Council Member Organizations

The organizations listed below accepted an invitation to participate in the Council and were represented at one or more meetings.

- Alta Planning + Design
- California Department of Motor Vehicles
- California Department of Public Health
- California Emergency Nurses Association
- City of Santa Cruz
- Ecology Action
- Lyft
- Marin County Bicycle Coalition
- Mineta Transportation Institute
- Motorcycle Industry Council
- Office of California State Senate Senator Catherine Blakespear
- PeopleForBikes
- Streets Are For Everyone
- VoltVerified



Summary Across all Council Meetings

During the three convenings of the full council, the group took a phased approach to discussing the topics at hand. The group began in August 2025 with level-setting, having a broad discussion to uncover points of agreement, disagreement, and areas for further discussion. This conversation set the course for future meetings, which delved into discussing possible policy solutions as well as areas for public and decision-maker education. Synopses of each meeting are included in the appendix. At the first meeting, the group agreed that any report on deliberations would not attribute contributions to any member or organization specifically, but to the meeting participants generally. For that reason, attributions are not made.

During the first meeting of the California Independent Electric Mobility Council in August 2025, the discussion focused on learning how each member organization interfaces with electric bicycles and other micromobility devices, and what their positions are on different facets of policy, regulation, and classification for the devices. The discussion focused primarily on the distinction between legal electric bicycles, or those falling within the California Vehicle Code section 312.5,³ and out-of-class devices which do not fit into the vehicle code, often called e-motos.

The second meeting of the full council in October 2025 moved from understanding the broad landscape around electric mobility devices and what the position of each member organization is, to discussing the regulatory and educational gaps that exist within the electric mobility sphere. The discussion sought to uncover points of agreement on possible fruitful policy approaches, including assessment of recently-enacted laws and any gaps in implementation.

The final full meeting of the council in February 2026 focused entirely on educational efforts that could improve public and decision-maker understanding of electric mobility, including the distinction between legal e-bikes and other devices, to user education for different age groups, to broader culture change messaging.

In addition to the three meetings of the full California Independent Electric Mobility Council, California Mobility Fund staff met one-on-one and in small groups with Council members. These meetings provided an opportunity to have a deeper conversation on areas of interest to different members or similarly-situated groups of members, and to unearth any challenges, opportunities, and approaches that may not have come up in full Council meetings. Because these meetings are by nature more specific, incorporating the discussions in this report would make it easy to identify which positions are attributable to which organization. As the group agreed to attribute content to the group as a whole and not any individual or organization, the content is not included, but helped develop facilitation prompts and points at each full group meeting.

³https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=312.5&lawCode=VEH



The Starting Point: E-Bikes Belong

Over three full-group meetings, the Council worked through a landscape that everyone agreed is genuinely complicated and getting more so as the devices themselves evolve faster than the rules governing them.

There was little argument that e-bikes belong on the road. The group consistently pushed back against the impulse, common among health officials and some lawmakers, to restrict legal e-bikes in response to problems caused by devices that don't fit neatly into any existing category. The climate, public health, and equity case for expanding electric mobility is strong enough that the Council treated it as background consensus rather than something that needed relitigating.

The Three Class System: Functional but Imperfect

The three class system itself drew mixed reviews. Most participants felt it was functional and well-adopted: it complements the federal framework, most states have incorporated it, and the problems it produces are largely problems of enforcement and compliance rather than design. A few felt it was too confusing to work well in practice, particularly outside the small universe of people who work in the space professionally. Press coverage, law enforcement officer (LEO) encounters, and casual public understanding all suffer from the same gap: the distinctions between classes don't translate well outside the room where they were invented.

Out-of-Class Devices: The Core Problem

What the group agreed on more firmly is that out-of-class devices, including e-motos, high-speed e-scooters, e-unicycles, and similar products that don't fit the existing framework, are where the real problems lie. These devices are already on roads and paths in significant numbers, which complicates any purely prohibitionist response. One camp argued that out-of-class devices are illegal products and should be treated as such: be banned, not legitimized. The other view was essentially that the cat is out of the bag: given how many of these devices are already in circulation, a pragmatic path toward regulated use is more realistic and potentially more beneficial than trying to suppress them. Neither side fully persuaded the other, and this remained unresolved across all three meetings.

Age Restrictions: More Questions Than Answers

Age restrictions generated real disagreement. There was rough consensus that children under 12 probably shouldn't be operating e-bikes on public roads, but very little agreement beyond that. Proposals to restrict riders under 16 found minimal support. The more promising direction seemed to be tiered frameworks, analogous to ATV regulations, that match device performance characteristics to rider age rather than applying a single cutoff across all classes. The Huntington Beach school district permitting model came up repeatedly as a practical example worth building on.

The Throttle Question

The throttle question proved more contested than expected. For law enforcement, throttle is the clearest field indicator; it's something an officer can actually observe and act on. But the regulatory picture is messier. Federal law preempts states from banning throttles on e-bikes, and the line between pedal-assist and throttle is blurring as new devices enter the market. The Also (Rivian) e-bike, where pedaling charges the battery rather than driving the motor, was raised as an example of how quickly the existing distinctions can be rendered ambiguous. Class 2 throttle bikes also drew a more nuanced response than their reputation might suggest: several participants noted that throttle is precisely what makes e-bikes accessible for cargo hauling, riders with physical limitations, and people new to cycling, a genuine access benefit that gets lost when throttle becomes shorthand for the problem.

Power Ratings: A Technical Gap

Power rating created a related technical challenge. The 750-watt limit that appears in both state and federal definitions applies to continuous power, but manufacturers and regulators don't always agree on how to measure it, and the distinction between continuous and peak output can be significant. This hasn't been clearly resolved at either the state or federal level, and it creates room for devices to be marketed as compliant when their real-world performance puts them well outside the intended class.

Education: Necessary but Not Sufficient

On education, the group's consensus was clear even if the next steps weren't. Public understanding of device types, rules, and safety is poor, among buyers, parents, youth, and law enforcement alike. The instinct to reach for an education campaign as a solution was tempered by honest acknowledgment of its limits: handbooks and PSAs reach people who are already looking for information. The harder problem is everyone else. The group also flagged a specific gap at the point of purchase for parents buying devices for children, where almost no good guidance currently exists. Any campaign, the group agreed, needs to lead with the positive case for safe use rather than imagery of crashes and bad actors; the City of Santa Cruz "Cruz Kind" on-trail messaging campaign was offered as a small local example of getting this right.

Manufacturer Accountability: The Most Promising Lever

Manufacturer accountability emerged as the most broadly supported intervention point. Trying to regulate existing fleets or individual riders after the fact is technically difficult, politically fraught, and practically unenforceable at scale. Getting ahead of the problem at the point of manufacture and sale — setting clear standards that must be met before a device can be sold in California — was seen as more promising. What those standards would look like, and how to prevent them from being circumvented by software unlocking or third-party modification, remains an open question. Bosch was cited as an example of a manufacturer that takes its control systems seriously; many others in the market do not, and some devices appear to be designed for unlocking from the start.

Terminology: A Deceptively Hard Problem

Terminology turned out to matter more than it might seem. The term "e-moto" ran into resistance when examined more closely. The motorcycle industry is uncomfortable with it because it risks associating out-of-class off-road products with legitimate on-highway electric motorcycles, which are simply motorcycles and have been for decades. Others felt the term was useful precisely because the press and public need something to grab onto. Whether the Associated Press Stylebook or other style guides could help establish a standard term was floated without resolution. The underlying problem, that imprecise language in public discourse tends to become imprecise language in legislation, remained unresolved.

Larger Questions Still Hanging

Several larger questions hung over all three meetings without clear answers. What California can do legislatively given federal inaction, and how narrow a proposal needs to be to actually pass, was a recurring concern. How the Consumer Product Safety Commission's anticipated interpretive rulemaking over the next year or two interacts with state-level efforts is something the council will need to track. And the fundamental tension remains between the scale of the problem and the resources available to address it, in public health agencies, legislative offices, DMV, and law enforcement alike.



Future Directions

Following the conclusion of the California Independent Electric Mobility Council meetings, the CalBike staff regrouped, reviewed the take-aways from each council discussion, and developed a set of recommendations for future efforts. These are efforts that could be undertaken by CalBike itself or others, separately or collaboratively.

Policy Recommendations

E-Motos: It is clear from the deliberations of the council, as well as the broader policy discourse, that future state policy should address the prevalent “e-moto” issue across California communities. Instead of further refining the legal e-bike categories, policy should be pursued that clarifies and addresses what exists beyond the bounds of legal e-bikes and e-motorcycles, folding these devices into the regulatory framework that governs other motorized means of transportation. Senate Bill 1167,⁴ authored by Senator Catherine Blakespear and co-sponsored by CalBike, People for Bikes, Streets for All, and Streets are for Everyone is one such effort currently in the legislative process.

Program Recommendations

Education: Multiple educational efforts could improve the public understanding and comfort with e-bikes. These include efforts targeted to the general public, drivers, and bicyclists alike.

- Universal rules of the road education in public schools: this would increase the skill level of all children and teens for walking, bicycling, and preparing to drive on California roadways. Targeted education for bicycling and walking would also be beneficial. This would likely take legislative action and years of work to accomplish.
- Teen e-bike rider education: in the shorter term, education for teen riders of legal e-bikes would benefit many teens who do not have access to an experienced bike rider at home to teach bike etiquette or rules of the road. Some efforts currently underway require a seminar to be allowed to park an e-bike on campus, for example. These courses can be taught by bicycle instructors, such as those employed by local bicycle coalitions.
- Driver education: Incorporating information on bike-safe driving into driver education and handbooks would benefit all road users as drivers would become better equipped to safely operate motor vehicles near bicyclists of all kinds, including those riding e-bikes.

⁴https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260SB1167

Public Awareness: education for the broader public, in the form of public awareness campaigns, would be helpful to increase understanding of e-bikes, how to ride them, and how to walk or drive near them.

- Consumer education: broad public awareness of the differences between legal e-bikes and faster/more powerful e-motos would benefit all consumers. Much of this can be accomplished at point of sale, should a measure such as Senate Bill 1167 be enacted. Broad public awareness campaigns on social media and through community organizations could also be effective. Such a campaign is detailed later in this report.

Policymaker Education: Taking educational efforts to city halls, county administrative offices, and the state capitol has the benefit of informing policymakers and their staff, who will shape future policy.

- Informational briefings: these short seminars provide an opportunity for staff to dig-in to the issues with subject matter experts. These can be in person or virtual.
- Meetings: conducting meetings directly with interested elected officials and staff is a great way to solidify their knowledge of the issues as well as know who to turn to for accurate information.





E-Bike Safety and Key Facts Infographics Series

- Page 13: "What is an e-bike?"
<https://www.calbike.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/CIEMCFigureA.jpg>
- Page 14: "Who is getting hurt? By device"
<https://www.calbike.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/CIEMCFigureB.jpg>
- Page 15: "Who is getting hurt? By age"
<https://www.calbike.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/CIEMCFigureC.jpg>



What is an e-bike?



CALBIKE
CALIFORNIA BICYCLE COALITION

The California Vehicle Code (CVC 312.5) defines e-bikes as: “[A] bicycle equipped with fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than 750 watts.”

Class 1

Provides assistance **only when the rider is pedaling** and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches a **speed of 20 mph**.



Class 2

Operates via **pedal-assist or throttle** and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches a **speed of 20 mph**.



Class 3

Provides assistance **only when the rider is pedaling** and ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches a **speed of 28 mph**.



E-Motos

Electric devices built on a bicycle-style frame equipped with one or more operating modes and a throttle. Often lacks operable pedals.

Exceeds 20 mph on motor power alone when the throttle is engaged.
Motor exceeds 750 watts.





Who is getting hurt? By device



California ER patients treated for transportation-related injuries in 2023

Source: Exploring Electric Bicycle Safety Performance Data and
Policy Options for California (Mineta Transportation Institute)

Motor Vehicles: 62%
(287,184 patients)

Other: 10% (45,596)

Conventional bicycle: 10% (44,039)

**Other micromobility, unpowered (kick scooters, skateboards, etc.):
6% (25,905)**

Motorcycle: 5% (23,832)

Pedestrian: 5% (21,780)

Other micromobility, powered (e-scooters, powered skateboards, etc.): 2% (7,969)

Electric bicycle: 1% (4,757)



Who is getting hurt? By age



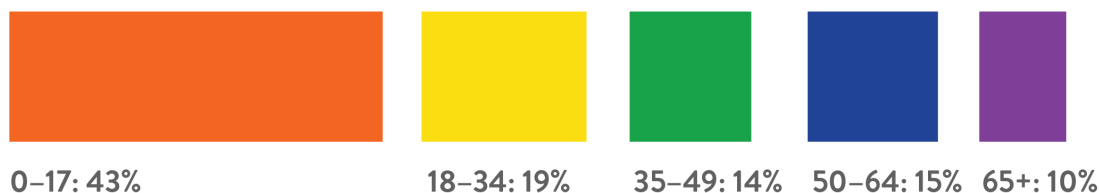
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Age of emergency room patients injured while riding

Each column shows the age distribution of all ER patients with injuries involving that device. National sample (CPSC NEISS), 2020–2024 pooled.

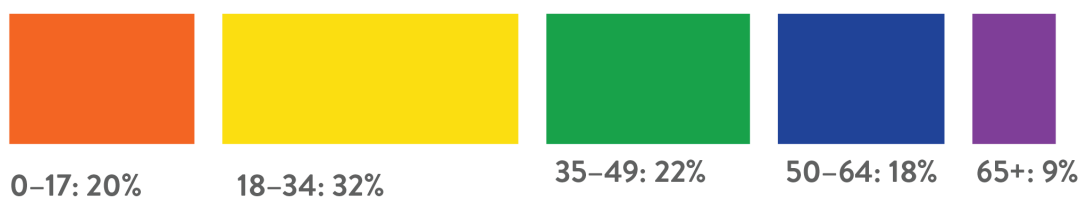
Conventional Bikes Share of Injuries by Age

Median age = 24



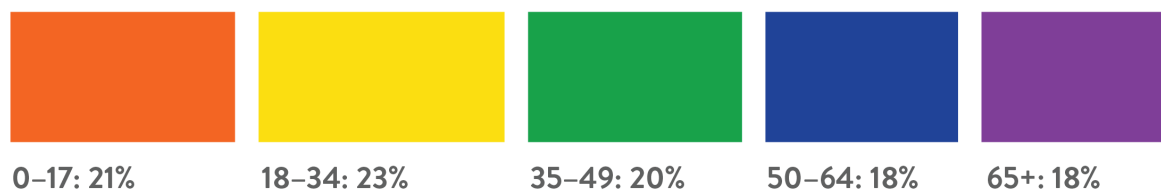
Electric Bikes Share of Injuries by Age

Median age = 34



Share of Population Overall

Median age = 39, From the US Census Bureau





Appendix: Meeting Synopses

August 2025

During the first meeting of the California Independent Electric Mobility Council, the discussion focused on learning how each member organization interfaces with electric bicycles and other micromobility devices, and what their positions are on different facets of policy, regulation, and classification for the devices. The discussion focused primarily on the distinction between legal electric bicycles, or those falling within the California Vehicle Code section 312.5, and out-of-class devices which do not fit into the vehicle code, often called e-motos.

Points of Agreement

- Classification is broken. The current vehicle classification system doesn't adequately capture "out-of-class" electric vehicles (e-motos, high-speed e-scooters, e-unicycles, etc.), creating a legal gray zone.
- Education is critically lacking. There's broad consensus that public understanding of device types, rules, and safety is insufficient — and that enforcement alone can't substitute for it.
- SB 586 (2025) is a good step for off-highway e-motos, though it leaves on-road use unaddressed.
- Data and research are scarce. The group agreed there's a meaningful gap in evidence about these devices and their real-world use and risks.
- Banning e-bikes is not the answer. Restricting legal Class 1–3 e-bikes in response to out-of-class device concerns was seen as the wrong response, even if understandable politically.
- Climate and public health goals favor these modes. There's shared recognition of the value of reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips.

Points of Disagreement

- Legalization vs. prohibition of out-of-class e-motos. This was the sharpest divide:
- Some believe out-of-class e-motos are illegal products and should be banned outright, pointing to the NY battery fire precedent as proof that regulatory action is possible.
- Others argue the "cat's out of the bag" — these vehicles are already on roads in large numbers, and a pragmatic path to regulated legalization is more realistic and potentially beneficial.
- Whether existing fleets can or should be brought into compliance. Some see a pathway to modifying or grandfathering existing devices; others warn this carries significant safety risk, since these vehicles weren't manufactured to on-road standards.

Outstanding Questions

- What can states do unilaterally? Given federal inaction, what is the legal scope for California to act — and what would effective state-level classification look like?
- How do you define "the gray zone" legally? Crafting definitions that are technology-proof and can't be worked around by loopholes (e.g., app-unlockable speed limiters) remains unsolved.

- Is there a viable path to compliance for existing fleets? Can owners of currently out-of-class devices be given a lead time to modify or register vehicles — and is that even technically safe?
- How do you engage e-moto manufacturers? Several brands have shown limited interest in participating in regulatory conversations. How does the council bring them in meaningfully?
- What enforcement is realistic? LEOs lack capacity for nuanced enforcement, and punitive approaches to youth riders have been counterproductive. What does workable enforcement look like?
- Power equivalency across unit types (watts vs. cc vs. horsepower) needs resolution to create coherent cross-category classification.
- Is there a point-of-sale intervention model? One member floated a rough analogy to Amazon’s California product restrictions — could something similar prevent illegal devices from entering the market?

October 2025

The second meeting of the full council moved from understanding the broad landscape around electric mobility devices and what the position of each member organization is, to discussing the regulatory and educational gaps that exist within the electric mobility sphere. The discussion sought to uncover points of agreement on possible fruitful policy approaches, including assessment of recently-enacted laws and any gaps in implementation.

Points of Agreement

- E-bikes are a positive addition to the mobility landscape. General consensus across the group.
- Education is essential — for purchasers, parents, younger riders, and LEO alike. The Huntington Beach school district permitting model was cited as a promising example.
- The existing 3-class system is broadly adopted and has real value; most states have incorporated it and it complements the federal framework.
- Out-of-class devices are the core problem, not legal Class 1–3 e-bikes. Enforcement and regulatory focus should target manufacturers selling out-of-class vehicles.
- Age restrictions below 12 have some consensus — there was rough agreement that very young children shouldn’t operate e-bikes on public roads, though the specifics were debated.
- Restricting riders 16+ found little support.
- Illegal/out-of-class devices should face enforcement consequences, including impoundment, though LEOs may extend good-faith education to parents who unknowingly purchased an out-of-class device.
- Manufacturer accountability is the most promising lever. Rather than trying to regulate existing fleets or individual riders, focusing on what manufacturers must meet before selling to the public was seen as more tractable.
- Helmets and safety gear matter, though states set their own standards and consistency is lacking.

Points of Disagreement

- Whether the 3-class system needs reform. Views ranged widely:
- Some felt the system is sound and the problem is compliance and enforcement, not the classification itself.
- Others felt the system is confusing in practice, especially outside of industry insiders, and that the public and press don't understand it.
- One member raised equity concerns — whether the current system adequately serves people with limited mobility options.
- Whether throttle is the right distinguishing factor. This was a notable fault line:
- Some see throttle as the clearest enforcement indicator for LEO and a meaningful safety distinction (rapid acceleration creates injury risk vs. pedaling up to speed).
- Others questioned whether throttle vs. pedal-assist is still a meaningful line given evolving device technology (e.g., Rivian's new e-bike), and noted federal law preempts states from banning throttles on e-bikes outright.
- One member noted that Class 2 throttle bikes serve a real access function (cargo hauling, mobility limitations) even as they're an easy target for criticism.
- Low-speed vs. high-speed as a risk framework. One person cautioned against assuming low speed equals low risk (recreational crashes happen at low speeds too); others felt speed is still a meaningful proxy for injury severity.
- Age minimums above 12. No agreement emerged on where, or whether, to set a higher age floor for any class of e-bike.
- Software/technical restrictions on devices. While there was interest in requiring harder-to-hack control systems (Bosch cited as a model), one person flagged manufacturer resistance and one noted that no system is truly tamper-proof, making certification difficult to maintain.

Outstanding Questions

- Is the throttle distinction still meaningful? As devices like the Rivian e-bike blur the line between pedal-assist and throttle, does this remain a useful regulatory category — or does it need rethinking?
- Peak vs. continuous power rating. Neither state nor federal law is clear on how to apply the 750-watt limit. Could a peak power clarification close a significant loophole?
- How do you address the existing non-compliant fleet? Retrofitting or certifying devices already in use is technically and practically difficult — and any compliance measure could likely be undone.
- What does a realistic enforcement mechanism look like? Labeling or visual identifiers were floated to help LEO distinguish between classes in the field, but no solution was landed on.
- How narrow does legislation need to be to succeed? One person emphasized that overly broad proposals will fail — the group needs to identify specific, achievable legislative targets focused on safety without restricting use.
- What is the right age framework? ATV age/performance tiering was raised as a potential model — but no equivalent for e-bikes was defined.
- What training should be required, and how? School district permitting programs show promise, but a statewide framework doesn't exist. Minnesota's 15-year-old minimum was noted as one model.
- How should CPSC coordinate with state efforts? One member noted the agency may issue interpretive rulemaking in the next 1–2 years on gray areas in federal e-bike regulations — the group should track and potentially align with that process.

- European helmet standards addressing higher e-bike speeds were flagged as potentially relevant — should California consider adopting or referencing them?

February 2026

The final full meeting of the council focused entirely on educational efforts that could improve public and decision-maker understanding of electric mobility, including the distinction between legal e-bikes and other devices, to user education for different age groups, to broader culture change messaging.

Points of Agreement

- Education campaigns are needed and should be multi-channel — combining virtual and in-person, social media, and traditional public outreach.
- Framing matters: don't demonize e-bikes. There was broad agreement that messaging should emphasize positive, safe use rather than leading with danger or bad actors.
- Existing resources should be leveraged rather than reinvented — PFB has materials available, SFMTA's scooter campaign is a useful model, and CDE and state health departments are ready partners.
- Multiple audiences need to be reached — not just purchasers, but parents, youth, the general public, and LEO. A parent-focused guide ("So your kid wants an e-bike") was flagged as a specific gap.
- E-bikes and e-motos are persistently conflated in public and press coverage, and addressing that confusion is part of the education challenge.
- The Santa Cruz trails campaign was cited as a good example of effective, positive local messaging.

Points of Disagreement

- Whether "e-moto" is the right term to coalesce around. This was the most contested issue:
- Some see it as useful shorthand that could gain traction in press and policy. Others worry it causes confusion with legitimate on-highway electric motorcycles, which the motorcycle industry does not want associated with out-of-class devices.
- One person flagged that imprecise terminology could actively complicate legislation.
- Another person raised the same concern from a public communication standpoint.
- Scope of the education audience — whether campaigns should target e-bike users and purchasers specifically, or the broader public. This was not resolved.

Outstanding Questions

- What term should be used for out-of-class devices? "E-moto" remains contested. Could the AP Stylebook or NYTimes style guide be leveraged to establish a term? No consensus was reached.
- Who leads and funds the education effort? Public health and legislative offices noted they are severely resource-constrained. No lead agency or funding source was identified.
- How do you capture people who won't seek out safety information? One member noted that PSAs and handbooks only reach motivated audiences — the harder problem of reaching inattentive or disengaged users (including many youth riders) remains unsolved.

- Is there a scalable parent education model? The “guidebook for parents” idea was raised but not developed — who would create it, and through what channel would it reach parents?
- How do you make safe use more attractive than unsafe use when social media attention often flows to dramatic or dangerous content?

Small Group Meetings

In addition to the three meetings of the full California Independent Electric Mobility Council, California Mobility Fund staff met one-on-one and in small groups with council members. These meetings provided an opportunity to have a deeper conversation on areas of interest to different members or similarly-situated groups of members, and to unearth any challenges, opportunities, and approaches that may not have come up in full council meetings. Because these meetings are by nature more specific, incorporating the discussions in this report would make it easy to identify which positions are attributable to which organization. As the group agreed to attribute content to the group as a whole and not any individual or organization, the content is not included, but helped develop facilitation prompts and points at each full group meeting.