

**Ordinance Committee
Thursday, August 20, 2026
Bushor Conference Room, City Hall
or Remote via Zoom. Burlington, Vermont
DRAFT MINUTES**

Members Present: Councilor Bergman (Chair), Councilor Barlow, Councilor Carpenter (on-line)

Staff Present: Kim Sturtevant (Assistant City Attorney), Laura Wheelock (City Engineer), Phil Lewis (Director of Parks and Recreation)

Public Present: Sharon Bushor, Richard Hillyard, Polly Vanderputten (public and school board member), Councilor Melo Grant

Meeting called to order at 4:34 PM.

1. Adopt the Agenda

1.1 Adopt the Agenda

Motion to Adopt Agenda.

Motion by Councilor Barlow, Seconded by Councilor Carpenter.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous

2. Adopt Draft Minutes

2.1 Adopt Draft Minutes from July 16, 2026

Motion to Adopt minutes.

Motion by Councilor Barlow, Seconded by Councilor Carpenter.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous

Councilor Bergman noted the minutes for the Joint Planning Commission and Ordinance Committee's IZ work would be adopted at the next meeting.

3. Public Forum

Richard Hillyard of Ward 1 advocated for more education in every city and school regarding e-scooter and e-bike safety, emphasizing resources need to be multilingual, as from their perspective, many cyclists in general do not obey road rules.

Polly Vanderputten of Ward 2 commented that riding behavior for e-bikes and e-motos seems to be different from bicycles, so road rules need to be clarified, and the public and students need to

be educated on those rules. Vanderputten also noted that drivers need to be more educated on how to share the road with cyclists.

Sharon Bushor commented from a pedestrian perspective that traffic laws for bikes are confusing, and riding behavior is too inconsistent to know what to expect when sharing the road. Bushor stated education needs to target walkers, bikers, and vehicle drivers, that enforcement needs to be part of the strategy, and that the whole community needs to urgently band together on this issue. Bushor also added that other traffic rules should be reconsidered, such as the age limit for riding on sidewalks.

Public Forum closed at 4:52 PM.

4. Motorized Bicycle Ordinance Discussion

Councilor Barlow commented that while enforcement was important, education was key and the school will need to take an active role in that, including in educating parents, many of which are under the impression they are buying e-bikes for their children when they are in fact, buying e-motos, which do not fit the definition of an e-bike. Councilor Barlow also stressed the importance of BPD stepping in to deter behavior to the extent they can.

Councilor Carpenter stated she urged a constituent to report a recent encounter to the police, but that the constituent was reluctant to do so because they were not confident in the police response and wonders what BPD does with reports of e-moto incidents when they come in. Councilor Carpenter questioned if there are any changes that need to be made at the ordinance level and is looking to BPD and DPW to provide input on that. Councilor Carpenter also suggested that a committee or group be created through resolution to organize a citywide educational campaign.

Chair Bergman expressed that the Committee needs to look at the bike ordinance to add e-motos and also look at sidewalk rules. Chair Bergman added the role of e-moto sellers is worth considering and agrees with looking at enforcement and that the whole community needs to be engaged.

Director Lewis summarized BPRW's response to e-motos on the bike path and put up signs in various locations along bikepath. Some of those signs have gone missing. The department is creating permanent signs that specify no e-motos or motorcycles. The department also did some outreach with the school, and Director Lewis said the school had a substantial campaign at the end of the year and believes e-moto traffic on the bike path has gone down. Director Lewis also noted staff have collected data that shows e-motos account for 0.2% of bike path users. Director Lewis clarified that when an incident occurs, the department tries to document it and provide that information to law enforcement and urges community members to do the same through either SeeClickFix or BPD's non-emergency number.

Councilor Barlow commented on how e-motos should be defined so signs prohibiting them are clear to the public.

Councilor Carpenter asked Director Lewis how to take a community education campaign for e-motos to the next level. Director Lewis offered BPRW support in educating the public and said Local Motion has held community meetings to discuss e-motos. Director Lewis added the department has checked for alignment in the City's ordinances with state laws and would be willing to participate in a multi-stakeholder educational group or initiative.

Chair Bergman asked Director Lewis to state what resources BPRW has and if civil enforcement parks officials can be added and what money there is for enforcement and education efforts.

Sharon Bushor commented BPRW's signs could have pictures to address language barriers and stressed regulating e-motos is also a university and employer issue and that Local Motion is not a large enough platform to broadly educate the public and believes CATMA may have a role to play. Bushor suggested BPRW and BPD create a shared budget to put toward education and enforcement.

Councilor Grant commented that the issue seems to be enforcement and that the school personnel may have a role to play in intervening when underage students ride e-motos to school.

Councilor Carpenter agreed with Councilor Grant's comments and suggested the Committee ask the Mayor to appoint someone to be a coordinator of the initiatives discussed. Councilor Carpenter also noted the nuisance e-moto riding behavior is not isolated to the bike path but an issue on city streets.

Chair Bergman requested Polly Vanderputten relay the Committee's desire to develop an approach to this issue with the coordination with the school district to the School Board. Vanderputten confirmed they would be in touch with Chairperson Wool and Superintendent Flanagan and would also email the Committee further ideas and comments.

Chair Bergman invited City Engineer Laura Wheelock to speak from the DPW perspective on the issue, who summarized the following:

- DPW currently has no ordinance changes in the works and that work done earlier in the year clarified city ordinances and brought them in alignment with state statutes, but noted the language at the state level is weak and suggested communities band together to change the language at that level.
- DPW expects an ordinance or policy change will need to occur but that a public community conversation needs to happen first, pointing out e-motos are a form of alternate transportation, of which increasing the use of is an initiative of the City's and would be in line with the BTV Mobility plan, which is being updated and why DPW has not proposed anything as of yet.
- Past changes were developed in collaboration with the Walk/Bike Council and Local Motion who have more recommendations and would be a starting point for community input.
- DPW fully supports stronger guidance and has already seen a difference from BPRW's signage and the campaign last spring.

- Implementing speed limits on the bike path could be effective because it would apply to all modes of transportation and address issues with unsafe speeds in congested areas.
- The Committee should consider if this is the right forum to take up this issue at this time and that there are challenges with enforcing ordinances against this behavior.

City Engineer Wheelock clarified for Councilor Barlow that DPW is open to looking at imposing a speed limit or changing the age limit for bike path use but has concerns for vulnerable riders. Councilor Barlow agreed the conversation needs to be broadened outside the Committee and wants to hear from the school district and BPD on the issue.

Richard Hillyard commented witnessing children as young as 7 or 8 riding to school on e-scooters with no helmets and emphasized helmet safety needs to be part of the education. Hillyard also said at least some of the kids source the e-motos online and trade within the community.

Sharon Bushor spoke to City Engineer Wheelock's point about who should take lead on this issue and said whoever does take lead needs to have a clear, cohesive approach in tackling it. Bushor also stated the Walk/Bike Council does not focus enough on the pedestrian compared to riders.

The Committee discussed next steps:

- Councilor Carpenter said the Committee should go to the Mayor to assign a coordinator for the City and how that should be handled, and the Committee can continue to be involved but not lead.
- Councilor Barlow supported Councilor Carpenter's idea to authorize Chair Bergman to speak to the Mayor.
- Chair Bergman noted there are many stakeholders and many parties information needs to be gathered from before change is made. Chair Bergman requested that each committee member write individual requests for information and collective requests and recommendations, based on this meeting's deliberations, to be considered at a future meeting, with the idea that the Committee get to a point of reaching a decision or motion on a proposal from the Committee.
- Chair Bergman requested the City Attorney's Office work provide input where needed and that the Committee needs to compile the ideas that have come out of 3 meetings on this topic.

Councilor Grant said this topic is relevant to public safety and that the Public Safety Committee should take it on.

5. Any Other Committee Business

The Committee said they would meet again on the September 17, but will generate and circulate their lists by September 2 to committee members, key departments, and the Mayor.

6. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Bergman, without objection.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 PM.