




To: File
From: Sue Donoghue, Commissioner 
CC: Alessandro Olivieri
Re: Variance for NYC Parks Rule §1-05(n)(1)
Date: May 29, 2025

Pursuant to my authority under § 533(a)(9) of the New York City Charter to establish and enforce rules for the use, governance, and protection of public and of all property under the charge or control New York City Department of Parks & Recreation (“NYC Parks”), on June 16, 2023, I granted a variance pursuant to Title 56 § 1-01(c) of the Rules of the City of New York, regarding Title 56 § 1-05(n)(1) of the Rules of the City of New York. I granted a first extension to the variance on May 30, 2024.

While the variance regarding § 1-05(n)(1) is in effect, e-bikes in Class 1, 2, and 3, electric scooters (please refer to exhibit A, which sets forth the specific bikes and scooters covered by this variance) may be operated within NYC Parks jurisdiction anywhere a human-powered bicycle may be operated. Specifically, e-bikes, e-scooters (identified in exhibit A) may be operated on park drives and NYC greenways under the jurisdiction of NYC Parks (including those otherwise closed to motor vehicles), subject to the rules currently applicable to bicycles. Operators of such e-bikes and e-scooters must follow signs and road markings, obey applicable speed limits, yield to pedestrians, and stop lights and comply with all applicable NYC Parks rules.

For clarification, this variance does not allow use of such e-bikes and e-scooters on park paths or sidewalks and does not allow the use of mopeds, including electric mopeds, or e-mobility devices not presently legal to operate in NYC—including but not limited to hoverboards, battery-powered skateboards, and electric unicycles—in Parks. On park paths and sidewalks, bicycles, e-bikes, and e-scooters must be walked. Note: This variance does not affect the Hudson River Greenway south of 59th Street (as depicted in Exhibit B), where e-bikes and e-scooters are prohibited by State law.

The rationale for the initial variance is still applicable as the continuation of the variance will allow for the finalization of new safety initiatives for park drives and greenways as Parks decides on potential rule changes involving e-bikes and e-scooters. I am, therefore, extending this variance to December 31, 2025.



NYC Parks

Not Included in Pilot

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Know the difference	E-Bike Class 1 Electric Bike with Pedal Assist	E-Bike Class 2 Electric Bike, Throttle up to 20 MPH, Operable Pedals	E-Bike Class 3 Electric Bike, Throttle up to 25 MPH, Operable Pedals	Moped Class C Limited Use Motorcycle, Low-speed, 1-3 Wheels	Moped Class B Limited Use Motorcycle, Low-speed, 2-3 Wheels	Moped Class A Limited Use Motorcycle, Low-speed, 2-3 Wheels	E-Scooters Device with handlebars, a floorboard or seat, weighing less than 100 lbs. Can be powered by electric and/or human power
How fast can I go?	20 MPH	20 MPH	25 MPH	20 MPH	30 MPH	40 MPH	15 MPH
Do I need a license?	No	No	No	Yes, Driver's License	Yes, Driver's License	Yes, Driver's License Endorsement	No
Do I need to register my bike?	No	No	No	Yes, Must be registered with NYS DMV, must have license plates & VINs	Yes, Must be registered with NYS DMV, must have license plates & VINs	Yes, Must be registered with NYS DMV, must have license plates & VINs	No
Where can I ride?	Bike Lanes* and streets with speed limits no greater than 30 MPH	Bike Lanes* and streets with speed limits no greater than 30 MPH	Bike Lanes* and streets with speed limits no greater than 30 MPH	Right lane and/or shoulder (except when making a left turn)	Right lane and/or shoulder** (except when making a left turn)	Vehicle Lanes***	Bike Lanes* and streets with speed limits no greater than 30 MPH
Do I need to wear a helmet?	Recommended for all, Required for 16-17 year olds and working cyclists	Recommended for all, Required for 16-17 year olds and working cyclists	Yes, Required by law	Recommended	Yes, Required by law	Yes, Required by law	Recommended for all, Required for 16-17 year olds

*Including on bridges

** Including vehicle lanes on bridges





State Law prohibiting e-bikes/e-scooters from the Hudson River Greenway applies between West 59th Street and Battery Place.