



## CITY OF LAGUNA NIGUEL

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August 29, 2024

Honorable Maria Hernandez  
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of California  
County of Orange  
700 Civic Center Drive West  
Santa Ana CA 92701

The City of Laguna Niguel has reviewed the Orange County Grand Jury (OCGJ) Report "E-Bikes Friend of Foe." In accordance with California Penal Code 933 and 933.05, the City submits the following responses to the findings and recommendations.

### Findings and Responses:

**F1. The majority of Orange County's 34 cities do not have ordinances or policies in place, which makes it difficult to address the safe operation and regulation of E-bikes leading to confusion.**

**Response: Agrees with the finding.** While the majority of Orange County's 34 cities do not have ordinances in place to address E-bike safety, the City of Laguna Niguel has adopted Ordinance No. 2024-227, establishing regulations relating to the operation of E-bikes.

**F2. Due to the increasing incidence of E-bike injuries and deaths, there is a need for consistent and accurate tracking by law enforcement and first responders, which does not exist now.**

**Response: Agrees with the finding.** There is a need for law enforcement agencies to implement a consistent and accurate process for E-bike incident reporting. The City of Laguna Niguel proactively established a process for residents to report unsafe riding behavior, allowing the City to perform targeted education efforts.

**F3. Training and education on E-bike use and safety varies from city to city causing confusion amongst bike riders.**

**Response: Agrees with the finding.** Currently, there is no training or education on E-bike use and safety consistent across all Orange County cities. The City of Laguna Niguel is dedicated to creating an increasingly safe and educated electric bicycle user community in the City. In 2021, the City enacted its Electric Bicycle Action Plan—an education-first approach towards enforcement of unsafe or improper use of E-bikes. This plan was awarded the 2022 CalCities Helen Putnam Award of Excellence in Community Safety.

## Recommendation and Responses

**R1. Each Orange County city should have specific policies that define the rules of the road for use of E-bikes in their communities by December 1, 2024.**

**Response: The recommendation has been implemented.** On March 5, 2024, the City of Laguna Niguel adopted Ordinance No. 2024-227, establishing regulations relating to the operation of E-bikes. The ordinance amended the Laguna Niguel Municipal Code, adding the definition of an E-bike as is defined in the California Vehicle Code. The ordinance further prohibited the operation of an E-bike in an unsafe manner, including, but not limited to, riding on the sidewalk without due caution for pedestrians, riding against the flow of traffic, performing a wheelie, and riding without a properly fitted and fastened helmet under the age of 18. Additionally, the ordinance prohibits the operation of an E-bike while operating a handheld or wireless communications device. Ordinance No. 2024-227 is consistent with the County of Orange's June 4, 2024, adopted E-bike ordinance.

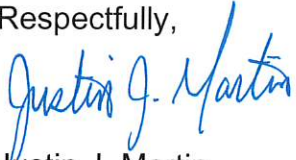
**R2. Each Orange County city should have a mechanism in place to report accidents, injuries, and deaths involving E-bikes by December 1, 2024.**

**Response: The recommendation will not be implemented.** The City of Laguna Niguel will not implement an E-bike incident report mechanism, as the City contracts public safety with the Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSD) and the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA). The OCSD and OCFA respond to all calls for service and have an existing reporting mechanism that can be modified to implement this recommendation. The City of Laguna Niguel provides a webpage dedicated to providing the community with resources for promoting E-bike safety, including a form for community members to provide feedback to the City on areas they believe need additional outreach and enforcement.

**R3. Each Orange County city should research and develop outreach and education programs regarding the safe operation of E-bikes for their residents by December 1, 2024.**

**Response: The recommendation has been implemented.** On July 20, 2021, the City enacted a Helen Putnam award-winning Electric Bicycle Action Plan to promote the responsible ownership and safe operation of E-bikes in the community. As a part of the Action Plan, Laguna Niguel's Police Services (OCSD) distributed educational materials to adolescents on E-bike safety, conducted several formal presentations for local schools, PTSA groups, and various Neighborhood Watch groups, resulting in positive reports from school administrators about the considerable progress in safe ridership practices. A further update to the Electric Bicycle Action Plan, including results, occurred on September 6, 2022. The City's education program has served as a model across Orange County cities contracting with the OCSD. Additionally, the City has painted speed limit reminders on sidewalks and deployed electronic message boards and temporary signs in high trafficked areas surrounding schools and parks.

Respectfully,



Justin J. Martin  
Assistant City Manager