



CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA

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September 11, 2024

Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive, West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

RE: Response to 2023-2024 Orange County Grand Jury Report, "*E-Bikes Friend or
Foe*"

Dear Honorable Judge Maria D. Hernandez:

The City of Rancho Santa Margarita has reviewed the Orange County Grand Jury Report entitled, "*E-bikes Friend or Foe*". As required by California Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05, the City of Rancho Santa Margarita is responding to the findings and recommendations included within the report. Each of the findings and recommendations is listed below in italics, followed by the City's response.

Findings:

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: Based on the information presented in this report, the City of Rancho Santa Margarita agrees with this finding.

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: Based on the information presented in this report, the City of Rancho Santa Margarita agrees with this finding in that e-bike injuries are not specifically and separately tracked apart from other traffic incidents.

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

Response: Based on the information presented in this report, the City of Rancho Santa Margarita agrees with this finding.

Mayor
Carol A. Gamble

Mayor Pro Tempore
Bradley J. McGirr

Council Member
L. Anthony Beall

Council Member
Anne D. Figueroa

Council Member
Jerry Holloway

City Manager
Jennifer M. Cervantez

Recommendations:

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: This recommendation has already been implemented. The City of Rancho Santa Margarita held a first reading of an ordinance regulating e-bike use on August 28, 2024, with adoption scheduled for September 11, 2024.

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: This recommendation has already been implemented. Using procedures and systems currently in place by the Orange County Sheriff's Department and the Orange County Fire Authority, accidents involving e-bikes will be reported and tracked. Additional tracking will occur upon the effective date of the City's ordinance regulating e-bike usage in the City (see response above to Recommendation 1).

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: This recommendation has already been implemented. The City's Orange County Sheriff's Department personnel have held numerous e-bike safety courses in the City over the past two years. The City has also held two "bike rodeo" events to promote safe bicycle and e-bike use. E-bike education and enforcement occurs on a regular basis, and all available social media and online platforms are used to promote safe bicycle and e-bike ridership. Finally, the City recently launched the Project 529 in the City to encourage bicycle and e-bike registration which can help with educational efforts as well as prevent theft.

Should you have any questions or need any additional information, please contact Captain Mihaela Kennedy at (949) 635-1821 or via email at KennedyMM@ocsheriff.gov.

Respectfully,



Carol A. Gamble
Mayor

cc: Orange County Grand Jury
700 Civic Center West
Santa Ana, CA 92701