

# Agenda Report

**TO:** City Council Date: May 5, 2003

**THROUGH:** Public Safety Committee

**FROM:** City Manager

**SUBJECT:** MODIFICATION OF AN ORDINANCE REGULATING THE USE OF PERSONAL MOBILITY DEVICES ON SIDEWALKS WITHIN DESIGNATED HIGH CONGESTION RETAIL SHOPPING DISTRICTS.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the City Council direct the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance amending chapter 10.61 of the Pasadena Municipal Code to add Electric Personal Assistive Mobility Devices (EPAMD) (such as Segway Human Transport) and scooters, and expanding the area where use is prohibited making it unlawful to ride or propel these devices on sidewalks in designated retail shopping districts.

**Background:**

This recommendation focuses on pedestrian safety on our already crowded sidewalks within designated retail shopping districts with sidewalk frontage. Existing ordinance prohibits the use of skateboards and roller skates on sidewalks within Old Pasadena and South Lake Avenue (PMC 10.61.040). While PMC 10.61.040 covers most of Old Pasadena and most of South Lake Avenue, it leaves the use of these devices in other similarly congested areas unrestricted.

The recommended modification would serve two purposes. It would add EPAMDs and scooters to the list of prohibited conveyances; and secondly, allow for an expansion of the area where use is prohibited to extend beyond Old Pasadena and South Lake Ave. The streets under consideration include:

Colorado Bl. between Orange Grove Bl. and the East City Limits  
Lake Ave. between Rio Grande St. and California Bl.  
Washington Bl. between Hill Ave. and Belford Ave.  
Fair Oaks Ave. between Holly St. and Dayton St.

Raymond Ave. between Holly St. and Dayton St.  
Delacey Ave. between Union St. and Dayton St.  
Union St. between Pasadena Ave. and Arroyo Parkway  
Green St. between Pasadena Ave. and Arroyo Parkway

Each of these designated areas has significant numbers of retail shopping outlets that are accessed directly from a public sidewalk. Other retail areas such as the Hastings Ranch shopping center have similar amounts of pedestrian activity, however, direct access to stores is generally not from a public sidewalk. This recommendation focuses on those areas with the highest potential for a collision between riders of these conveyances and other pedestrians.

Users of these conveyances are considered pedestrians under definition of the California Vehicle Code. Though collisions between pedestrians on these conveyances and other pedestrians are rare, they do occur, and are often not formally reported to the police department.

In July 2002, City Council approved a recommendation to oppose Senate Bill 1918 (Torlakson) which defined the user of an EPAMD, such as the Segway Human Transport, as a pedestrian. However, this bill was signed into law in September 2002, effective March 1, 2003.

An EPAMD, sold under the trade name of Segway, is currently being marketed and may be operated anywhere in the city where a pedestrian may walk. These particular EPAMDs weigh approximately 80 pounds and have a top speed of approximately 12.5 mph. The device does not have brakes, but studies show that a rider can stop faster than a human being running at the same speed. Forward and backward motion is controlled by a weight shift, while turning is performed by assertively turning the handgrips.

While use by the general public has been minimal, the Segway has been used extensively by police, postal workers, and other civil servants in New York, San Francisco, and Atlanta. There have been no reports of incidents of injury to pedestrians (50,000+ hours of use). However, San Francisco has already passed a law banning the device from all sidewalks in the city, citing overcrowded sidewalks, the lack of safety devices or warning mechanisms, and the potential for a runaway device in their hilly terrain. One such incident occurred in San Francisco when a runaway EPAMD crashed into a building, cracking a marble wall. Other cities in California considering a ban include Sacramento, Oakland, Santa Cruz and San Jose. Many cities are considering restricting EPAMDs for public service use only, such as police, postal workers, and meter readers.

The scooter is defined as a human powered mobile device with 2 or more wheels, a deck to stand on, and a handlebar to control turning. They have grown in popularity these past few years and are seen at a rate that nearly equals the number of skateboarders and roller skaters using sidewalks daily. These devices match skateboards and roller skates in virtually every way, including speed and potential for collision.

This recommendation to regulate EPAMDs and scooters in the same manner as skateboards and roller skates on sidewalks in commercial districts would enhance the safety of pedestrians in those high density areas.

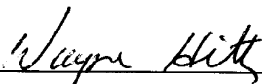
**Fiscal Impact:**

No new appropriations will be required if such ordinance modifications are enacted. Existing staff will manage enforcement and signage costs can be absorbed within existing appropriations.

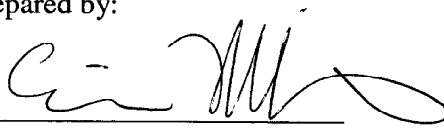
Respectfully submitted,

  
Cynthia J. Kurtz  
City Manager


Approved by:

  
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Prepared by:

  
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