

**Harada, Patricia**

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**Subject:** FW: Here's an idea

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**From:** Julie Stolnack <[esnoitall@yahoo.com](mailto:esnoitall@yahoo.com)>  
**Sent:** Saturday, August 5, 2023 7:45 AM  
**To:** \*ALL CITY COUNCIL <[allcouncil@elsegundo.org](mailto:allcouncil@elsegundo.org)>  
**Subject:** Here's an idea

Good morning,

Not just young e-bike riders, but all e-bikers should be adhering to the traffic laws. Let's do something before we have a tragedy on our hands in El Segundo. Not sure if ESPD is already ticketing or if warnings are still being issued.

Thank you,  
Julie

[PUBLIC SAFETY - Council directs MBPD: no more e-bike warnings](#)



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by Mark McDermott The Manhattan Beach City Council on Tuesday night adopted a zero-tolerance approach to young e

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NEWS, NEWSLETTER

## PUBLIC SAFETY – Council directs MBPD: no more e- bike warnings

MARK MCDERMOTT | AUGUST 4, 2023



*A pair of young e-bike riders wait in traffic in downtown Manhattan Beach.*

**by Mark McDermott**

The Manhattan Beach City Council on Tuesday night adopted a zero-tolerance approach to young e-bike riders who violate traffic laws, whether it's running a red light or riding without a helmet. No more warnings, the council instructed the chief of police: Manhattan Beach Police Department officers should ticket every infraction they witness.

“Now we go from carrot to stick,” said Mayor Richard Montgomery.

The directive came after the council received a report from MBPD Captain Andrew Enriquez about the department's efforts to both educate young e-bike riders and step up enforcement.

Enriquez said the department recognized the growing number of young e-bike riders shortly after the pandemic receded, and began educational outreach. School resource officers helped organize school assemblies about “the rules of the road,” pamphlets were distributed at bike shops, and even last year's Junior Lifeguard class received e-bike safety information. As this year's school year ended, Enriquez said, MBPD and other local agencies conducted five different one-day enforcement operations — eight-hour operations in which officers monitored locations known to be troublesome in terms of e-bike riders ignoring traffic rules.

Enriquez said that in preparing for Tuesday's presentation officers learned that MBPD's records management system does not allow the pulling of “specific citation data for e-bikes versus standard bicycle riders.” What data he had was what MBPD traffic supervisors had collected recently.

“For operations conducted in May, June, and July of this year, officers issued 53 total citations,” he said. “Our next operation is

scheduled for August 16 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and will involve members of the Manhattan Beach, Redondo Beach and Hawthorne police departments. This operation will be promoted through our social media platforms.”

Enriquez said MBPD is also planning an e-bike safety event on August 24.

Councilperson Steve Napolitano was not impressed.

“This will be, like most of my questions, partly rhetorical,” he said. “But two months equals 40 stops — 21 citations, 19 warnings. I guess first of all, why warnings at all? Second of all, 40 stops in two months? We could walk out across the street to Metlox and issue 10 citations a day if we wanted to. And then, why would we tell them that we’re going to have this big push so that they behave on one day?”

“Why aren’t we issuing citations on a daily basis?” Napolitano said. “Warnings? I don’t understand that. We’ve had this outreach for months now...Everybody has had a warning. Just cite them.”

“It’s a good question,” Enriquez said. “Sometimes I ask that myself. And I think a lot of it is, you know, this is so much more than just an education and citing issue....We have some outside-the-box thinkers that work for us, and so we had officers and supervisors recognizing that some of these citations or warnings were actually not really doing much, and they started actually going to the homes of some of these kids and talking with the parents because we’re only bound by so much with the rules and regulations. And the parents are the most responsible for their kids. Once they started finding out that their kids were getting cited for these things, or they were downtown without a helmet on, we started to see a significant decline in the kids hanging out at Metlox, or not wearing helmets.”

MBPD Chief Rachel Johnson told Napolitano that in some instances, especially first-offense violations of not wearing a

helmet for young e-bike riders, rather than issue a citation the kids are sent through the department's juvenile diversion program.

"To learn about the dangers of not wearing a helmet, and with an effort toward encouraging better behavior through understanding how unsafe it is," Johnson said. "Subsequent citations we certainly send them to traffic court."

"We are coddling them," Napolitano interjected.

"Well, they're our youngest residents, and oftentimes there's a lack of education," Johnson said.

Coastal communities in California have attracted national attention for their struggles with the rise in young e-bike riders. Part of the problem, as Enriquez alluded to in noting that citation records don't separate e-bikes from standard bikes, is the technology of e-bikes has moved faster than the laws governing their use. California law, for example, has three classes of e-bikes, but only one — for bikes that go faster than 28 mph — requires riders to be 16 and have a driver's license. The law does not yet fully take into account how e-bikes are actually used.

"It's not like a bicycle," Sgt. Jeremy Collis of the San Diego County Sheriff's Office told the New York Times this week. "But the laws are treating it like any bicycle."

In some instances, there's little the law can do. Motorized bicycles sharing the road with cars present an inherent danger. The Times story included an in-depth account of the death of a 15-year-old e-bike rider from Encinitas, Brodee Champlain Kingman, who was killed in June after a collision with a car. He wore a helmet and broke no laws. Three days later, another teenage boy from Encinitas was seriously injured in a collision with a car while riding his e-bike. According to police, that boy had been driving recklessly. The City of Encinitas subsequently

declared a state of emergency for e-bike safety. But that action revealed the limits of what cities can do — mostly, it launched an e-bike safety campaign and made adjustments to city ordinances making it clear that bikes not built to have passengers must not have passengers.

Times reporter Matt Richtel, who won a Pulitzer previously for his reporting on distracted driving, said that his investigation revealed a society unprepared for e-bikes.

“Driving is the most dangerous thing that most of us will do in our lives on a regular basis,” Richtel said in an interview for the paper’s California Report Wednesday morning. “Now we’re adding in a product that adds speed and weight to bikes, with no training, no license, no registration, in a very, very risky traffic environment.”

Medical authorities nationally have suggested e-bike injuries are being underreported because, like traffic citation record systems, current medical records do not account for e-bikes.

“I honestly believe that we probably are only seeing the tip of the iceberg,” Dr. Marko Bukur, medical director of trauma at New York’s Bellevue Hospital, told Fortune magazine. “A lot of the injuries that are coded (in the electronic medical record) as conventionally powered devices are probably e-devices.”

City Attorney Quinn Barrow told the council that Encinitas’s state of emergency ordinances would add little to what Manhattan Beach is already doing.

“Encinitas...adopted some regulations, but they’re still limited by preemption issues [with state law],” Barrow said. “And so the type of regulations that they’ve adopted are pretty much already in our code.”

That code, which governs bicycles, was adopted in 1961 and last updated in 1975, Barrow said. He suggested taking a look at it to see if any updates could help. The council directed him to do so.

The larger issue is state law. Mayor Richard Montgomery has called for changes in state law that would require age restrictions and licensing for e-bike riders, as well as give cities the ability to impound e-bikes after traffic violations. At the end of Tuesday's meeting, a motion made by Montgomery and Mayor pro tem Joe Franklin to send a letter requesting the aid of state legislators Ben Allen and Al Muratsutchi passed unanimously.

Meanwhile, a bill already exists that would accomplish some of what Montgomery seeks.

"Currently, Assembly Bill 530 is making its way through the legislature," Enriquez told the council. "The bill in essence would prohibit riders younger than 12 from operating any class of e-bike and would require some sort of e-bike license program. Until this bill is in its final form and approved by the governor, we are unable to determine what local impact it will have on us in Manhattan Beach."

The council unanimously agreed to step up the issuance of citations locally and to cease warnings. Even Franklin, a bicycling enthusiast who has played a key role in the City's e-bike safety campaign, said that education has its limits with kids.

"They need this kind of discipline," Franklin said. "The parents need this kind of help. They are probably telling them you need to wear your helmet, and then these kinds of things are going on. So the time has passed for just education...It should be citations, not warnings."

"If the parents object, give them my phone number, I'll talk to them," Franklin said. "I'll tell them why it's so important. It's not only just riding bicycles. Now you're on a machine that can take you 20 miles an hour [and potentially more]...Go on to YouTube

and you can hack all of them and take the regulator off. These kids are doing it. So let's do it. Let's step up our enforcement. Let's flood the zone." ER

### **Comments:**

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