

# Memorandum



TO: Mayor Manier and City Council  
FROM: Ray Forsythe, City Administrator RPF  
DATE: August 9, 2019  
SUBJECT: Golf Carts on City Streets

Over the last several months, several residents have inquired about the ability to drive golf carts on City streets. The Public Safety Committee discussed this topic at the most recent meeting and recommended denial of the request. Following is information that was presented to the Committee.

Under Illinois statute 625 ILCS 5/11-1426.1, golf carts are considered non-highway vehicles and their use is restricted. Generally, it is unlawful for you to operate a non-highway vehicle on any street, roadway or highway in the state. However, there is an exception to this law. Illinois allows municipalities to decide for themselves when golf carts can be used. If a municipality specifically allows it, golf carts can be driven on roadways that are deemed safe and have speed limits of 35 miles per hour or less. Below is an excerpt of the State Statute. I have highlighted sections I believe are important for the City Council to understand:

(d) A municipality, township, county, or other unit of local government may authorize, by ordinance or resolution, the operation of non-highway vehicles on roadways under its jurisdiction if the unit of local government determines that the public safety will not be jeopardized. The Department may authorize the operation of non-highway vehicles on the roadways under its jurisdiction if the Department determines that the public safety will not be jeopardized. The unit of local government or the Department may restrict the types of non-highway vehicles that are authorized to be used on its streets.

Before permitting the operation of non-highway vehicles on its roadways, a municipality, township, county, other unit of local government, or the Department must consider the volume, speed, and character of traffic on the roadway and determine whether non-highway vehicles may safely travel on or cross the roadway. Upon determining that non-highway vehicles may safely operate on a roadway and the adoption of an ordinance or resolution by a municipality, township, county, or other unit of local government, or authorization by the Department, appropriate signs shall be posted.

If a roadway is under the jurisdiction of more than one unit of government, non-highway vehicles may not be operated on the roadway unless each unit of government agrees and takes action as provided in this subsection.

(e) No non-highway vehicle may be operated on a roadway unless, at a minimum, it has the following: brakes, a steering apparatus, tires, a rearview mirror, red reflectorized warning devices in the front and rear, a slow moving emblem (as required of other vehicles in Section 12-709 of this Code) on the rear of

the non-highway vehicle, a headlight that emits a white light visible from a distance of 500 feet to the front, a tail lamp that emits a red light visible from at least 100 feet from the rear, brake lights, and turn signals. When operated on a roadway, a non-highway vehicle shall have its headlight and tail lamps lighted as required by Section 12-201 of this Code.

The Public Safety Committee reviewed this information and input from the Chief of Police, Deputy Chief of Police and City Administrator and has recommended against the change to the City Code. The determination that the City must consider the volume, speed, and character of traffic on the roadway and determine whether non-highway vehicles may safely travel on or cross the roadway would require significant staff research for each roadway within the City limits, in addition, where another jurisdiction have authority over a portion of the roadway, each entity would have to approve the change. This would include City, Township, County, and the State. It would be a time consuming and costly process. The Chief of Police has publicly stated that he does not believe Golf Carts can safely travel on public roadways. In addition, the City Administrator is concerned that the City is taking on the liability of accidents, personal damage to vehicles or persons, as well as public property should the City allow this local amendment to the State Code.