

UI introduces no-ride zones for e-bikes amid safety concerns

By [Anya Nair](#), Staff Writer • Apr 20, 2026



Figure 1: Several Veo bicycles are parked in front of Wohlers Hall on Nov. 10, 2023. Anh-khoi Pham

In January, the University updated its [bicycle ordinance](#) to address growing concerns over safety and complaints on campus regarding e-bikes.

“There have been several incidents and some complaints that we have received about crashes between e-bikes and e-scooters and pedestrians — especially in Main Quad areas,” said Sarthak Prasad, sustainable transportation assistant for Facilities & Services at the University.

The new ordinance includes no-ride zones for e-bikes and other micromobility devices like e-scooters. All the quad areas — including the Main Quad, South Quad, North Quad and Bardeen Triangle — are no-ride zones.

According to Prasad, the ordinance also discourages students from using the throttle on sidewalks, as the acceleration increases potential risks.

“We don’t want to make things difficult for anybody, but we want to make sure that we have the least risk for pedestrians because most of our students are walkers,” Prasad said.

45% of the student population walks as their primary mode of transport, along with around 35% of students who take the bus, which also entails walking to and from stops, according to Prasad.

“I think it makes sense for the quad areas, it’s just pathways for people to walk on, so I think it’s dangerous to ride Veo bikes or any sort of e-vehicles on them because they’re very narrow,” said Anshul Bisht, an Urbana resident and University alum.

E-bike safety has been a longstanding concern of the University, according to Prasad. This includes banning e-bikes in campus buildings and residence halls, as their batteries create a significant [fire hazard](#). There are also growing concerns over e-bike-related injuries.

Between 2019 and 2022, e-bike-related injuries increased by 293%, according to a [press release](#) from the Office of the Secretary of State, introducing a new e-bike safety initiative.

“I injured myself at the end of last spring,” Bisht said. “I was coming home after a night out, and I was driving a little recklessly, so that’s more on me than the e-bike.”

According to Prasad, the University has received complaints about near-misses and conflicts regarding e-bike and pedestrian interactions, especially during class times.

“I think if anything, the danger is the people who are driving them, because e-bikes by themselves don’t go really fast,” Bisht said.

Increased incidences of e-bike-related accidents are a growing concern across Illinois, with Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias announcing a statewide safety campaign, “Ride Safe, Ride Smart, Ride Ready,” in January.

The press release cited two fatal cases in Illinois: a Mount Prospect teen whose e-bike collided with a pick-up truck and an Illinois State University official who was struck by an e-bike rider in Bloomington-Normal.

The initiative aims to improve driver education, community-based enforcement and increase public awareness.

On Wednesday, the Illinois Senate unanimously passed [Giannoulias’ e-bike bill](#) — a part of the statewide safety initiative.

The bill requires riders traveling on e-bikes and e-scooters capable of traveling over 28 mph to have a driver’s license, title, registration and insurance. Riders of any e-vehicle must also be at least sixteen years old.

All high-speed micromobility devices, including e-bikes and e-scooters, will be prohibited from riding over 28 mph on all roads, bike-paths and sidewalks.

“We are really glad that the state has taken this step towards defining what an e-bike is and rules of operations,” Prasad said. “There’s a lot of confusion about what an e-bike is or what type of e-bikes should be allowed where, and this initiative is going to give clear guidance.”

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