

Guidance for Golf Carts

Golf Cart Guidance:

- A model ordinance was established to create uniformity within Municipalities and Counties throughout the State for the use of golf carts on public streets. A city is not required to implement this model ordinance verbatim.
- The municipality or county is only required to follow the statutes "§ 153A-245, "§ 160A-300.6. The statute allows a municipality/county to regulate golf carts on any street with a speed limit 35 mph or less and the operator must be 16 or older.
- The municipality has the legal authority to establish speed limits on municipal streets. General Statute § 20-141 establishes a 35 mph speed limit within the corporate limits. It requires that on state maintained roadways within a municipality that both the Municipality and the State have concurring ordinance to establish a speed limit higher or lower than 35mph.
- If a municipality repeals a concurring ordinance, then by statute § 20-141 it reverts to 35mph. As indicated in § 20-141, if the Department determines on the basis of an engineering and traffic investigation that a higher maximum speed is reasonable and safe under the conditions found to exist upon any part of a highway designated as part of the Interstate Highway System or any part of a controlled-access highway (either inside or outside the corporate limits of a municipality) the Department of Transportation shall determine and declare a reasonable and safe speed limit. Previous rulings have indicated that control of access includes partial and or full.
- Effective December 1, 2009, the speed limit on all state roads that are annexed within the corporate limits will remain at the posted speed limit of the roadway prior to when the road was annexed until both the Municipality and State have concurring ordinances.
- The General Statutes do not require that a municipality complete an engineering and traffic study to modify the speed limits, the Town may use whatever reason they deem appropriate. However, on state maintained roads the statutes require an engineering and traffic study as the basis of the Departments decision to raise or lower the speed limit from the statutory speed limit. The Department has taken the position that the desire to operate golf carts on a roadway is not engineering justification to lowering the speed limit on a state maintained roadway.
- If a municipality/county allows the use of golf carts on public streets, as indicated in the General Statutes, the Department of Transportation will not install signing indicating the presence of golf carts.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**SESSION 2009****SESSION LAW 2009-459****HOUSE BILL 121****AN ACT TO ALLOW ALL UNITS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO REGULATE GOLF CARTS.**

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Chapter 153A of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 153A-245. Regulation of golf carts on streets, roads, and highways.

(a) Notwithstanding the provisions of G.S. 20-50 and G.S. 20-54, a county may, by ordinance, regulate the operation of golf carts, as defined in G.S. 20-4.01(12a), on any public street, road, or highway where the speed limit is 35 miles per hour or less within the county that is located in any unincorporated areas of the county or on any property owned or leased by the county.

(b) By ordinance, a county may require the registration of golf carts, charge a fee for the registration, specify who is authorized to operate golf carts, and specify the required equipment, load limits, and the hours and methods of operation of golf carts. No person less than 16 years of age may operate a golf cart on a public street, road, or highway."

SECTION 2. G.S. 160A-300.5 is repealed.

SECTION 3. Chapter 160A of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 160A-300.6. Regulation of golf carts on streets, roads, and highways.

(a) Notwithstanding the provisions of G.S. 20-50 and G.S. 20-54, a city may, by ordinance, regulate the operation of golf carts, as defined in G.S. 20-4.01(12a), on any public street, road, or highway where the speed limit is 35 miles per hour or less within its municipal limits or on any property owned or leased by the city.

(b) By ordinance, a city may require the registration of golf carts, charge a fee for the registration, specify who is authorized to operate golf carts, and specify the required equipment, load limits, and the hours and methods of operation of golf carts. No person less than 16 years of age may operate a golf cart on a public street, road, or highway."

SECTION 4. Section 6 of S.L. 2001-356 is repealed.

SECTION 5. Section 1 of S.L. 2003-124, as amended by S.L. 2004-58, S.L. 2007-204, and S.L. 2007-259, reads as rewritten:

"SECTION 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of G.S. 20-50 and G.S. 20-54, the Towns of Beech Mountain, North Topsail Beach, and Seven Devils, and the City of Conover may, by ordinance, regulate the operation of golf carts and utility vehicles on any public street or road within the City or Town. By ordinance, the City or Town may require the registration of golf carts and utility vehicles, specify the persons authorized to operate golf carts and utility vehicles, and specify required equipment, load limits, and the hours and methods of operation of the golf carts and utility vehicles."

SECTION 6. Section 1 of S.L. 2005-11, as amended by S.L. 2007-18, is repealed.

SECTION 7. Section 3 of S.L. 2005-11, as amended by S.L. 2006-149, S.L.

2006-152, and S.L. 2007-18, reads as rewritten:

"SECTION 3. Section 1 of this act applies only to the Towns of Benson, Bladenboro, Chadbourn, Clarkton, Elizabethtown, Four Oaks, Rose Hill and Tabor City. Section 2 of this act applies only to Moore County."

SECTION 8. Section 9.4 of the Charter for the Town of Cary, as enacted by Section 1 of S.L. 2005-117, is repealed.

SECTION 9. S.L. 2006-27, S.L. 2006-149, S.L. 2006-152, S.L. 2007-18, S.L. 2007-72, S.L. 2007-336, and S.L. 2008-71 are repealed.

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SECTION 10. Section 5.2 of the Charter for the Town of Whispering Pines, as enacted by Section 1 of S.L. 2008-105, is repealed.

SECTION 11. This act becomes effective October 1, 2009. A county may adopt an ordinance under G.S. 153A-245, and a city may adopt an ordinance under G.S. 160A-300.6 when this act becomes law, but the ordinances may not become effective prior to October 1, 2009. The repeal herein of any act does not affect the rights or liabilities of a local government that arose during the time the act was in effect, or under an ordinance adopted under such an act. If any county or city had adopted an ordinance under any act repealed by this act, and the ordinance would be permitted under G.S. 153A-245 or G.S. 160A-300.6 as enacted by this act, that ordinance shall remain in effect until amended or repealed by that county or city.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 30th day of July, 2009.

s/ Marc Basnight

President Pro Tempore of the Senate

s/ Joe Hackney

Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Beverly E. Perdue

Governor

Approved 12:26 p.m. this 7th day of August, 2009