



MEMO

TO:	MAYOR & CITY COUNCIL
FROM:	BRETT BOERM, CHIEF OF POLICE
RE:	CONSIDERATION OF PERMISSIBLE USE OF "NEIGHBORHOOD VEHICLES" ON PUBLIC ROADWAYS
DATE:	FEBRUARY 10 TH , 2026

Overview

At the direction of the City Manager and City Council, I was tasked with researching the potential use of golf carts and other "neighborhood vehicles" on City streets. The goal of this process has been to determine whether permitting neighborhood vehicles on City streets is feasible, safe, and in the best interest of Collinsville residents.

This report provides an overview of my findings, along with the draft ordinance, and seeks Council feedback on whether to move forward with adopting regulations, or to continue under current prohibitions.

Research Conducted

As part of my review, I surveyed approximately twenty police chiefs across the Metro-East to better understand how peer communities regulate neighborhood vehicles. Of the municipalities contacted, only five—Belleville, Troy, Caseyville, Swansea, and Mascoutah—have ordinances that allow such vehicles. Of these, Belleville is the only city with a population and street system comparable to Collinsville. The other four are smaller communities without the same topographical challenges or arterial roadways that we must manage.

Feedback from the chiefs of those five communities was largely positive. They reported no significant problems since adopting their ordinances, and no major accidents or safety concerns. Each indicated they would enact the same ordinance again if given the choice. The remaining chiefs I spoke with were either indifferent to the idea or opposed to it for various reasons.

In addition to peer feedback, I reviewed national safety data. According to the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System, approximately 13,000 golf cart-related accidents occur each year on public roads in the United States. These incidents are concerning because the resulting injuries are, on average, 40 percent more severe than those sustained on golf courses. This higher level of injury is largely due to the fact that golf carts and similar vehicles share the roadway with much larger, heavier, and faster motor vehicles. From a law enforcement perspective, this presents real safety risks that must be carefully considered before moving forward.

Draft Ordinance Summary

The draft ordinance establishes a framework under which golf carts, mopeds, and side-by-side utility vehicles would be classified as neighborhood vehicles and allowed to operate on City streets under certain conditions. These vehicles would require a valid driver's license, liability insurance, and an annual permit issued by the City following an inspection. Vehicles would be required to meet equipment



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standards, including functioning headlights, brake and turn lights, mirrors, a horn, seatbelts, a windshield, and appropriate safety emblems and reflectors.

Operation would be limited to streets with a posted speed limit of 30 miles per hour or less, effectively prohibiting these vehicles from traveling on state highways, arterial roadways, and major collector streets. Drivers would be limited to speeds of 25 miles per hour. Use would be permitted only between sunrise and 11:00 p.m., and prohibited during inclement weather, periods of poor visibility, or on State and County roads except at designated crossings. Enforcement provisions include fines ranging from \$250 to \$750, with higher penalties for operating without insurance or driving on prohibited roadways. Repeated violations could result in suspension of the permit.

It is also important to note that the annual permit requirement creates burdens for both residents and City staff. For residents, the process involves completing an application, providing insurance documentation, signing a liability waiver, and presenting the vehicle for inspection each year. For staff, time and resources must be dedicated to reviewing applications, conducting inspections, processing renewals, and managing enforcement. While these steps are necessary to ensure safety and compliance, they do represent an ongoing administrative and financial commitment that may outweigh the benefit for a relatively small number of users.

Conclusion and Request for Feedback

The decision before Council is whether to advance this draft ordinance for consideration, or to continue under the existing prohibition. On one hand, some peer communities have successfully allowed neighborhood vehicles without major incident, and some Collinsville residents are already using them informally. On the other hand, the national accident data demonstrates clear risks when these vehicles operate alongside larger and faster traffic.

As Chief of Police, my foremost concern is the safety and well-being of our residents and the motoring public. While the ordinance provides a framework to regulate and mitigate risks, I remain cautious about the potential for accidents and serious injuries. With this report, staff is seeking Council's direction on whether to move forward with formal regulations or maintain the current approach.