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Micromobility Safety November 2023

When the State of New York passed legislation to [legalize e-bikes and e-scooters in 2020](#), the status of the batteries and where they would be charged was not taken into consideration, nor was how the micromobility devices would impact pedestrian safety.

From January 2023 to present, lithium-ion batteries have sparked 216 fires that have led to 120 injuries and 14 deaths. While the NYPD does not track data on micromobility collisions, we know from shared personal experiences and news reports that the danger is significant. As your Council Member, I have taken the following actions to promote e-bike, e-scooter, and moped safety:

Legislation

I was one of the first Council Members to pass bills that outlawed second-hand batteries from being sold in New York City.

- [Local Law 42](#) prohibits the assembly or reconditioning of a used lithium-ion battery using cells removed from other batteries. These “second use” batteries are considered the most dangerous. FDNY Commissioner Laura Kavanaugh says this law is helpful to the department and we are working together to make the law stronger.
- [Local Law 38](#) requires the FDNY and Department of Consumer and Worker Protection develop an information campaign to educate the public on the fire risks posed by powered mobility devices such as e-bikes and electric scooters. The campaign includes guidance on how to identify safe products as well as best practices for maintenance, storage, and charging.
- [Intro. 1220](#) would require e-bike and e-scooter retailers to obtain a license to operate in New York City. The goal is to ensure businesses comply with laws and regulations designed to prevent lithium-ion battery fires. To obtain a license, retailers and repair shops would need to be inspected by FDNY and show proof of liability insurance.

- [Intro. 819](#) would require all businesses that sell e-bikes or e-scooters to post lithium-ion battery safety information materials in multiple languages.
- [Res. 746](#) supports legislation in Albany that would require lithium-ion batteries sold in New York for micromobility devices to be manufactured in accordance with federal standards and specifications.

E-bikes, e-scooters, and mopeds must follow the rules of the road, and I am focused on effective legislation to improve pedestrian and traffic safety. I have not signed on to [Intro. 758](#), sponsored by Council Member Bob Holden, which would require e-bike users to register their devices with the New York City Department of Transportation. While I support the intent of this bill, DOT is not equipped to establish, manage, or pay for an e-bike registration program or to be responsible for enforcement. Instead, I support the New York State Commercial E-Bike Licensing Act ([S.7587/A.7833](#)), sponsored by Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal and Assembly Member Tony Simone, which supersedes and improves upon [Int. 758](#). Under the State bill, registration would be managed by the Department of Motor Vehicles, which already has the resources and systems in place. Unlike the City bill, the State bill would allow NYPD to enforce the registration requirement. Additionally, I introduced the following legislation:

- [Intro. 1163](#) would require the Department of Transportation to develop a micromobility safety course to cover safe and lawful operation of powered bicycles and scooters. The law would also require third-party delivery companies to ensure that their delivery workers complete the safety course and to provide safety equipment.
- [Res. 750](#) supports legislation in Albany that would increase penalties for leaving the scene of an accident involving an e-scooter and expanding the law to include e-bikes. This legislation, [A.1679/S.561](#), was inspired by a West Side constituent who was struck by an electric moped on W. 65th Street in 2022 and suffered a traumatic brain injury.
- [Res. 747](#) supports the Commercial E-Bike Licensing Act ([S.7587/A.7833](#)) which would require the registration and licensure of e-bikes used for commercial purposes with the DMV.

Advocacy

In addition to legislation, I work with constituents, advocates, and city agencies to improve conditions on the Upper West Side.

- When the Department of Parks & Recreation announced plans for a “deliverista hub” at 71st and Broadway, I asked the commissioner for more community involvement and to consider alternative locations in the district. I support deliverista hubs, but Verdi Square is not a suitable location. Separately, I am advocating for installation of battery kiosks where e-bike and e-scooter riders can exchange their depleted batteries with fully charged ones. The Brooklyn-based startup [Popwheels](#) is an example of this subscription-

based model.

- I convened the Upper West Side Micromobility Taskforce with representatives from NYC E-Vehicle Safety Alliance, Workers Justice Project, CHEK-PEDS, Transportation Alternatives, Open Plans, Community Boards 4 and 7, the Upper West Side Coalition, Block Associations, the Mayor's Office, and other elected officials to discuss how we can work on solutions together. Getting opposing viewpoints to talk together is an accomplishment. We are working on parking, street design, education and other practical solutions.
- I distributed safety literature to micromobility drivers with the Workers Justice Project and CHEKPEDS along 8th, 9th, and 10th Avenues in Spanish, French, and English. We focused on advising delivery workers to stay the sidewalks when riding any device. Delivery workers were very receptive.
- I held workshops at Upper West Side migrant shelters on acclimating to New York City and finding support. Part of the workshop focuses on micromobility safety and regulations.
- I have contacted NYPD to confiscate illegal mopeds from residential streets.