The Federal eBike Law states: An “electric bicycle” is a bicycle equipped with fully operable pedals, an electric motor of less than 750 watts, and a top non-pedaling speed of 20 MPH (with a 170 pound rider). They are treated the same as pedal bicycles under the law according to the Federal Electric Bicycle Law HR 727. Note: There may be specific local ordinances in effect, though federal law is supposed to supersede any state imposed regulations.

After years of confusing laws on electric bikes that only deterred people from riding them, California decided to clarify the law and make it easier for people to know where and when they can ride e-bikes. As a result, the California electric bike law created a three-tier system to define e-bikes…

**Type 1 e-bikes** (us); are pedal operated and have a max speed of 20 mph. Pedal assist bikes are great for getting from A to B without breaking a sweat.

**Type 2 e-bikes**; are operated by a throttle and don’t require pedaling by the rider, but they still have a max speed of 20 mph. These are a great alternative for those trying to avoid rush hour traffic because you can still ride them in the bike lane. OUR PRIM IS THIS

**Type 3 e-bikes**; are pedal operated, but these ones can have a max speed of 28 mph. In California, type 3 e-bikes are not permitted on bike paths, but you can still ride them in bike lanes.

California’s law created a great system that will lead to a greener and healthier future. With the recent announcement by NY Mayor Bill de Blasio that New York City will legalize pedal assist electric bikes (Type 1 e-bikes in Cali terms), it seems the electric trend is well on its way to becoming mainstream. As you read this more and more States are adopting the California Guidelines simply because of the pressures from the consumers that are fueling the fasted growth marketing in the cycling industry.

Note that State and Local Laws dictate your use, but cannot constitutionally supersede the federal law – Any e-bike purchased within the 750W/20mph limits has no fear of being under federal motor vehicle classification, nor can any state classify them a motor vehicle. The ebike is considered a ‘bicycle’ for consumer purposes. However, the State Laws on local bike paths and local thruways may prohibit or limit ebike access. When bike path signs use word such as ‘motor vehicles’ and ‘motorbikes’ , the laws are likely referring to gas-ICE motorbikes/dirt bikes/scooters, and not ebikes. Other references to ‘motorized bicycles’ or ‘motorized vehicles’ sound more inclusive and probably are intended for either ebikes or gas mopeds. If in doubt, you always have the option to pedal unassisted by completely powering your bike down. Even though Federal lawgrant ebikes a bicycle status, the common consensus found in my research allows local and state law to add additional regulation to pathway and road access, just because “it has a motor”. So the Federal laws protects the consumer from the burden of motor vehicle requirements, but not the restrictions to local and state right of ways enjoyed by all non-motored bicycles.