

City of Exeter Golf Cart Regulations Clarification

October 8, 2026



GOLF CART REGULATIONS

EXETER, CA – On September 8, 2026, the Exeter City Council took action to begin the development of a golf cart plan and local regulations and authorized the application for a Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant for multimodal transportation within the city. Currently, the use of all vehicles on public streets, including golf carts and low speed vehicles (LSV), is solely regulated by the California Vehicle Code. The golf cart plan will evaluate the City's transportation network and make recommendations for the development of an Ordinance that could locally permit the use of golf carts on specific public streets within the city that are not currently allowed.

State law prohibits the use of golf carts and low speed vehicles to be driven on public City roadways unless the vehicles have a current registration with a license plate. Although a local golf cart plan and potential Ordinance is under development that may allow the use of some golf carts (that are not DMV-registered) on limited roadways, that is not the law today.

What is a low speed vehicle?

While also often referred to as a “golf cart,” a “low-speed vehicle” (LSV) is a motor vehicle that under State law meets ALL of the following requirements: Has four wheels, can attain a speed in one mile of more than 20 mph and not more than 25 mph on a paved level surface and has a gross vehicle weight rating of less than 3,000 pounds.

A low-speed vehicle is NOT a golf cart and is subject to all requirements applicable to a motor vehicle (21251 V.C.), such as headlamps, turn signals, tail lamps, stop lamps, reflectors, driver and passenger mirror, windshield, seat belts, insurance, registration, license plate, and a 17-digit Vehicle Identification Number (VIN). They are also subject to all requirements applicable to the driver of a motor vehicle, including a valid driver's license.

Licensed low speed vehicles CAN be operated on local roads that have a speed limit of 35mph or less. The Exeter Police Department will be enforcing the California Vehicle Code as it pertains to the use of golf carts and other nonpermitted vehicles operating on public roadways.

Thank you,

Jason Ridenour

Jason Ridenour, City Administrator

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Golf Cart and Low Speed Vehicle Comparison



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