



TOWN OF ZIONSVILLE | OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

MEMORANDUM

To: Zionsville Town Council members

From: Mayor Emily Styron

Date: February 22, 2023

Subject: Veto of Ordinance 2023-04: An ordinance to Amend Title VII: Traffic Code, Chapter 76: Golf Carts of the Zionsville, IN Code of Ordinances

Dear Councilors:

I am vetoing Ordinance No. 2023-04 amending Chapter 76: Golf Carts of the Zionsville, IN Code of Ordinances. Ordinance 2023-04 amends the current ordinance and allows golf carts on all town streets with the exceptions of Oak Street, Sycamore Street (from First Street to Michigan), 116th Street, 106th Street and 96th Street.

I have concerns about this ordinance:

1. Prior to Ordinance 2023-04 being passed by Council, there was little – if any – thorough input gathered from public safety and public works team members. Town Council members should invite many Town departments to the table to speak on the subject of golf cart operation in Zionsville including the Zionsville Police Department, Department of Public Works and Town administration.
2. With Council's amendment, golf carts will share the road with vehicles traveling relatively high speeds. Parts of Whitestown Road, CR 975 East and CR 300 South have posted speed limits of 40 MPH. In passing a golf cart ordinance, we must consider the speed limit of public roadways.
3. Town Council members have not given any indication as to if there will be additional signage on roads to inform vehicles, pedestrians and golf cart drivers of these changes.
4. Persons with a valid driver's license are permitted to drive golf carts in the state of Indiana. This means 16-year-olds – new drivers – are permitted to drive golf carts. Drivers without proper training may be unable to safely navigate obstacles on the roadway. Consideration must be given to new drivers (as well as experienced drivers) operating golf carts during inclement weather such as rain, fog or when there is accumulation of ice or snow on the ground.



5. Golf carts are not manufactured with the same safety mechanisms as vehicles. The handling characteristics of golf carts are vastly different from other vehicles. They can tip easily, and they do not safely enclose the driver and riders inside a cabin that is outfitted with airbags. Golf carts offer little protection to occupants in crashes with other vehicles, especially SUVs that can weigh three or four times as much as a golf cart. Simply put, they are not crashworthy.

Our residents should have the opportunity to ride golf carts around town, but we are not a resort or retirement community. We must consider all safety measures and consult with our public safety departments to pass a golf cart ordinance and golf cart regulations that prioritize safety.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emily Styron", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mayor Emily Styron