

Proposed for adoption after public hearing before the Town of Damascus Town Council on
February 2, 2026

TOWN OF DAMASCUS, VIRGINIA

**AN ORDINANCE REGULATING THE OPERATION OF GOLF CARTS WITHIN THE
TOWN OF DAMASCUS BY ADDING ARTICLE III, SECTIONS 34-64 THROUGH 34-
100, REGULATING THE OPERATION OF GOLF CARTS WITHIN THE TOWN OF
DAMASCUS**

WHEREAS, Virginia Code § 46.2-916.3 authorizes the Town of Damascus, Virginia (the “Town”) to impose limitations and restrictions on the operation of golf carts upon public highways within the town; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council of the Town of Damascus seeks to promote the safe and responsible operation of golf carts on public highways within Town limits while preserving pedestrian, bicycle, and trail safety;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Town Council of the Town of Damascus, Virginia, that Chapter 34 – Motor Vehicles and Traffic – be amended to add Article III. – Golf Carts, Sections 34-64 through 34-100. Added language is include below in italics and underline.

ARTICLE III. – GOLF CARTS

Sec. 34-64. Authority to Regulate

Pursuant to Code of Virginia, § 46.2-916.3, (1950) as amended, the Town of Damascus is authorized, by ordinance, to impose limitations and restrictions on the operation of golf carts upon public highways within the town.

Sec. 34-65. Definitions

The following terms, wherever used herein, shall have the respective meanings assigned to them unless a different meaning clearly appears from the context:

- a) Golf cart means a self-propelled vehicle having at least four wheels, which is designed to transport persons playing golf and their equipment on a golf course.

Sec. 34-66. Insurance Required

Every golf cart and driver thereof shall be covered by an insurance policy. Such policy shall meet the minimum liability amounts contained in Code of Virginia, § 46.2-472, as amended, and provide coverage during the operation of the golf cart upon public highways.

Sec. 34-67. Town Inspection and Safety Equipment

Golf carts shall pass a safety inspection at least once yearly. Such safety inspection shall be conducted by an inspection station approved by the Town of Damascus. Such safety inspection shall only cover the following items:

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- a) Headlights, taillights, brake lights and turn signals
- b) Rear reflectors meeting the visibility requirements of §46.2-1016 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended
- c) Tires
- d) Windshield wipers if equipped with a permanent windshield
- e) Horn, adequate steering gear, brakes, emergency or parking brake, one mirror, adequately fixed driver's seat
- f) All other factory installed safety or mechanical systems, including checking for gasoline or propane leaks
- g) Safety lap belts
- h) The golf cart shall be capable of maintaining a minimum speed of twelve (12) miles per hour on a dry, paved, level surface as verified during the town safety inspection
- i) Slow moving vehicle emblem in conformity with §46.2-1081 of the Code of Virginia (1950) as amended

Sec. 34-68. Operation on public highways.

It is unlawful to operate a golf cart on a public highway within the Town of Damascus unless the following requirements are met:

- a) Golf carts may be operated on the highways of the Town of Damascus that allow a maximum speed of twenty-five (25) mph.
- b) Golf carts must display a slow-moving vehicle emblem in conformity with Code of Virginia, § 46.2-916.3, as amended.
- c) No person may operate a golf cart unless that person is licensed to drive upon highways of the Commonwealth of Virginia and then, only in accordance with such driver's license.
- d) Golf carts must be operated in accordance with all applicable state and local laws and ordinances, including all laws, regulations and ordinances pertaining to the possession and use of alcoholic beverages.
- e) Only the number of people the golf cart is designed to seat may ride on a golf cart. Additionally, passengers shall not be carried on the part of a golf cart designed to carry golf bags.
- f) Golf carts must be operated to the extreme right of the roadway and must yield to all vehicular and pedestrian traffic when safely possible.
- g) Golf carts shall not be operated in bicycle lanes or on sidewalks.
- h) Golf carts shall not be operated during inclement weather, nor when visibility is impaired by weather, smoke, fog, or other conditions.
- i) Golf carts may not cross over the highways of the Town of Damascus that allow a speed of more than twenty-five (25) mph.

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- j) The Chief of Police, or his designee, may prohibit the operation of golf carts on any highway if the Chief determines that such prohibition is necessary in the interest of public safety.

Sec. 34-69. Local vehicle license.

No golf cart shall be used on the public highways unless it has obtained a Town of Damascus vehicle license. No vehicle license shall be issued until the owner of the golf cart presents evidence that the golf cart is insured in accordance with the requirements of section 34-66. The golf cart license shall be issued by the town treasurer. The fee for such license shall be \$50.00 per year.

Sec. 34-70. Golf cart zones.

Golf carts are permitted on the public highways in all areas within the town having a speed limit of twenty-five (25) miles per hour or less.

Golf carts are prohibited from operating on trails, sidewalks, parks, and non-road public areas.

Golf carts are prohibited from operating on the Virginia Creeper Trail, including but not limited to Trestle 16 & Trestle 17 under 36 Code of Federal Regulations § 261.55 (Prohibitions on National Forest System trails).

Sec. 34-71. Liability disclaimer.

This article is adopted to address the interest of public safety. Golf carts are not designed or manufactured to be used on the public streets and the Town of Damascus in no way advocates or endorses their operation on public streets or roads. The Town of Damascus has no liability under any theory of liability and the town assumes no liability for permitting golf carts to be operated on public streets and roads under special legislation granted by the Virginia General Assembly. The Town of Damascus, by regulating such operation is merely trying to address obvious safety issues and adoption of this article is not to be relied upon as a determination that operation on public streets is safe or advisable if done in accordance with this article. All persons who operate or ride upon golf carts upon public streets or roads do so at their own risk and peril, and must be observant of, and attentive to, the safety of themselves and others, including their passengers, other motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians. Any person who operates a golf cart is responsible for procuring liability insurance sufficient to cover the risk involved in using a golf cart on the public streets and roads.

Sec. 34-72. Penalties for violation.

A violation of any provision of this article shall be punishable as follows:

- a) The first violation shall be deemed a civil matter and shall be punishable by a fine of not more than \$150.00.

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- b) The second violation within a 12-month period shall be punishable as a class 2 misdemeanor.
- c) The third or subsequent violation within a 12-month period shall be punishable as a class 1 misdemeanor.

Sec. 34-73—100. Reserved.

VOTE:

Katie Lamb, Mayor	Aye/Nay/No Vote	Sammy Campbell	Aye/Nay
Hunter Faust, Vice Mayor	Aye/Nay	Charles Fields	Aye/Nay
Buddy Albro	Aye/Nay	Derwin Creech	Aye/Nay
Jeff Buckley	Aye/Nay		

ADOPTED, this the ___ day of _____, 2026.

Katie Lamb, Mayor

ATTEST:

Tuesday Pope, Clerk

