

ORDINANCE NO. 1703

A TEMPORARY EVENT ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE LIMITED OPERATION OF GOLF CARTS, UTILITY TASK VEHICLES (UTVs), SIDE-BY-SIDES, AND OTHER APPROVED LOW-SPEED VEHICLES DURING THE ANNUAL LA JUNTA TARANTULA FEST

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of La Junta recognizes the annual La Junta Tarantula Fest as an important community event that promotes tourism, economic development, and civic engagement; and

WHEREAS, the festival requires transportation assistance for event organizers, volunteers, vendors, sponsors, public safety personnel, and individuals with mobility limitations; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that allowing the temporary operation of golf carts, utility task vehicles (UTVs), side-by-sides, and other low-speed vehicles on designated streets and event areas under controlled conditions will enhance the safe and efficient operation of the festival;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LA JUNTA, COLORADO:

Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of this Ordinance is to establish temporary regulations for the operation of golf carts, side-by-sides, utility vehicles, and similar low-speed vehicles during the La Junta Tarantula Fest.

Section 2. Effective Period

This Ordinance shall become effective upon passage and shall remain in effect beginning at 12:01 a.m. on Friday September 25, 2026 and ending at 11:59 p.m. on Saturday, September 26, 2026.

Section 3. Authorized Vehicles

The following vehicles may operate under this Ordinance:

1. Golf carts.
2. Utility Task Vehicles (UTVs).
3. Side-by-side recreational utility vehicles.
4. Other low-speed utility vehicles approved by the City Manager or designated Festival Coordinator.

Section 4. Permitted Streets and Roadways

A. Vehicles authorized under this Ordinance may operate only on streets owned and maintained by the City of La Junta and within designated festival areas.

B. Vehicles authorized under this Ordinance shall not be operated on State Highway 50, State Highway 109, or U.S. Highway 350.

C. Nothing in this Ordinance shall authorize the operation of any vehicle on state-owned highways or roadways under the jurisdiction of the Colorado Department of Transportation unless separately authorized by the appropriate authority.

Section 5. Equipment Requirements

Authorized vehicles shall have:

1. Functional brakes.
2. Operational steering.
3. Headlights and taillights if operated after sunset.
4. A slow-moving vehicle emblem or other visible safety markings when operating on public streets.

Section 6. Operator Requirements

Operators shall:

1. Possess a valid driver's license.
2. Be at least eighteen (18) years of age.
3. Carry bill of sale, title of vehicle, or other proof of ownership.
4. Carry proof of insurance, liability minimums apply in accordance with state law.
5. Operate the vehicle in a safe and prudent manner.
6. Comply with all directions from law enforcement, fire personnel, event staff, and traffic control personnel.

Section 7. Operational Restrictions

A. Maximum speed shall not exceed twenty (20) miles per hour or any lower posted speed limit.

B. Vehicles may operate only on:

- City streets authorized by this Ordinance;
- Festival grounds;
- Event staging, vendor, parking, and support areas.

C. Vehicles shall yield at all times to:

- Pedestrians;

- Emergency vehicles;
- Parade participants.

D. No reckless driving, racing, stunts, or exhibition driving shall be permitted.

E. No person shall operate a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances.

F. Occupancy shall not exceed the manufacturer's stated seating capacity.

Section 8. Accessibility and Special Use

Nothing in this Ordinance shall prohibit the use of approved mobility devices or transportation accommodations necessary to assist individuals with disabilities.

Section 9. Enforcement

The La Junta Police Department and designated City officials are authorized to enforce the provisions of this Ordinance.

Any operator violating this Ordinance may be ordered to cease operation immediately and may be subject to citations or penalties as provided by applicable law.

Section 10. Liability

When operated on any public road in the City, authorized vehicles as described in Section 3 of this Ordinance shall be considered to be "motor vehicles" as defined by the Colorado Motor Vehicle Financial Responsibility Law, Article 7, Title 42, C.R.S., and shall be required to maintain, and produce upon request by any law enforcement officer, liability insurance equal to at least the minimum amount required by law.

Operators shall be responsible for damages or injuries resulting from negligent or unlawful operation of a vehicle under this Ordinance. Nothing herein shall be construed as creating liability on the part of the City beyond that provided by applicable law.

Section 11. Severability

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or provision of this Ordinance is declared invalid, the remaining portions shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 12. Repeal and Expiration

This Ordinance is temporary in nature and shall automatically expire at 11:59 p.m. on Saturday, September 26, 2026, unless extended by action of the City Council.

INTRODUCED AND PASSED on first reading this 8th day of September, 2026

ADOPTED AND APPROVED on second reading this 21st day of September, 2026

CITY OF LA JUNTA, COLORADO

Joseph Ayala, Mayor

ATTEST:

Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Clayton Buchner, City Attorney