



# Cheapest street legal electric car

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In Part 1 and Part 2 of this series on LSVs and electric micro-cars, we discussed the definitions, use cases, and street-legal rules regarding this important class of tiny vehicles. Now in Part 3, the final installment of the series, we'll look at which street-legal vehicles are actually available in the US.

As we discussed in Part 2, there are clearly defined federal regulations that low-speed vehicles (LSVs) must meet to be considered street-legal in the vast majority of the US. While there are a few states with more lenient LSV laws (I'm looking at you, Arizona and Colorado), almost everywhere in the US requires LSVs to meet dozens of regulations relating to their manufacturing and safety equipment.

Also, it is important to note that there are a growing number of unscrupulous micro-car dealers in the US that claim street-legal status for their LSVs purely based on claims that the vehicles "only reach 25 mph of speed" or "come with seat belts," though as we learned in Part 2 of this series, that isn't nearly enough to make the vehicles street-legal.

The Eli ZERO is an all-electric two-seater that is already available in Europe as a quadricycle, but is expected to enter the US market soon as a street-legal LSV.

Initially designed for the US market, the Eli ZERO was later developed into a European version of the vehicle, which has already been made available in select regions across Europe. Building on the international experience gained, the company is now planning to introduce a special edition of the Eli ZERO for the US market.

In the US, roughly 60% of journeys are under six miles, and cars in urban areas move slower than you would think. The average speed of a car in Midtown Manhattan is only 4.7 mph. As people seek affordable, practical, and eco-friendly ways to get around, the demand for advanced micro-EVs like the Eli ZERO is set to soar. According to McKinsey, the addressable market can reach \$100 billion by 2030, and Eli is well-positioned to seize the opportunities presented by this transformative era.

Wink currently has four different models of LSVs that have all been homologated for street-legal use in the US. Two of its models, the Sprout and the Sprout Solar, are designed for budget-minded drivers, coming in at just under US \$10,000. The more premium models, known as the Mark 1 and Mark 2 Solar, are still fairly low-priced at around US \$12,000.

All of the models are four-seaters and have similar performance specs, feature safer fireproof lithium iron phosphate (LiFePO<sub>4</sub>) batteries as standard, and include air conditioning.

The solar versions of each body style include a large solar panel on the roof to partially recharge the battery



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from the sun. The panels are sufficiently large to add around 5 miles of range per day, or even more in extra sunny areas. For those that only use the vehicle in the city or around the neighborhood, that might be enough to never charge the vehicles into the wall for home-charging.

Compared to most other buggy-style street-legal LSVs in the US, Wink's models are slightly more car-like in their appearances, especially the Mark 1 and Mark 2 solar. The prices also compare favorably to higher cost LSVs, putting the Wink vehicles closer in line with LSV golf cart pricing.

The GEM is one of the original low-speed tiny cars to popularize the concept of a neighborhood electric vehicle (NEV). The company changed ownership a few times, most recently being spun out from the larger Polaris umbrella and now settling with WAEV.

They're popular at commercial venues, campuses, airports, and other locations that require people movers that aren't necessarily cars, or that require indoor vehicle use.

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