



CITY OF SAINT PAUL OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Rebecca Noecker
Council President

Megan Jekot
Legislative Aide

To: City of Saint Paul City Councilmembers

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Subject: Proposed Pedicab Ordinance Changes (Amending Chapter 375 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code)

ABOUT

Pedicabs are small, pedal-powered vehicles—typically three-wheeled—that provide short-distance passenger transport, often in urban or tourist areas.

In the City of Saint Paul, pedicabs have operated for over a decade, becoming a popular, eco-friendly alternative to motorized transportation.

Expanding pedicab services through the proposed changes will enhance the vibrancy of downtown, support local businesses, and provide residents and visitors with scenic, sustainable travel options that reflect the city's environmental values.



Example of a pedicab

PROPOSED ORDINANCE CHANGES

To support local businesses and promote an environmentally friendly alternative to transportation, this amendment proposes the following changes to Chapter 375 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code:

To permit the addition of a pedicab trailer to a pedicab vehicle, allowing operators to transport up to six (6) passengers at a time. A pedicab trailer is defined as a two-wheeled vehicle securely attached and locked to a pedicab, with a maximum width of fifty-five (55) inches. Each trailer shall be limited to carrying no more than three (3) passengers and must be equipped with functional turn signals and red tail lights to ensure visibility and safety.

To remove the City's current restrictions on the hours of operation for pedicab operators downtown. Under the existing regulation, operators are prohibited from operating a pedicab for hire on public streets between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., and between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. on weekdays, excluding national holidays. However, upon written application by a licensee, the Director of Public Works may waive this prohibition for special events at their discretion.

City Hall
Email: ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us

Suite 310B

Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102-1615
COUNCIL 11
AFSCME
UNION 6800

651-266-8620
www.stpaul.gov/ward2

RATIONALE FOR THE PROPOSED ORDINANCE CHANGES

The proposed changes to Chapter 375 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code are intended to enhance sustainable transportation options, support local small businesses, and modernize outdated regulatory barriers that limit the viability and efficiency of pedicab operations within the city.

Expanding Capacity with Pedicab Trailers

Permitting the addition of trailers to pedicabs addresses a key limitation currently facing operators: restricted passenger capacity. By allowing securely attached two-wheeled trailers—each carrying up to three passengers—the city can:

- Increase the economic viability of pedicab businesses by enabling operators to serve more riders per trip, particularly during events and busy weekends.
- Provide a family-friendly, group-oriented option for residents and tourists, enhancing the appeal of downtown as an accessible destination.
- Maintain high safety standards by requiring functional turn signals and rear lights on trailers, ensuring the visibility of larger pedicab setups in traffic and low-light conditions.

This change balances growth and safety, giving local operators the tools they need to meet rising demand while maintaining a responsible presence on city streets.

Removing Rush Hour Operating Restrictions

Current regulations restrict pedicab operations during weekday rush hours (7:00–9:00 a.m. and 4:00–6:00 p.m.), based on traffic concerns that may no longer reflect the evolving transportation landscape.

Repealing these restrictions will:

- Support multimodal transportation by giving commuters and downtown visitors an alternative to cars, taxis, or ride-shares during peak times.
- Encourage local economic activity by enabling pedicab operators to provide consistent service throughout the day, without interruptions that reduce their earning potential.
- Align with the city's sustainability and mobility goals, offering a low-emission, people-powered transportation choice that reduces congestion rather than adding to it.

With appropriate oversight still in place, such as licensing and safety inspections, lifting these restrictions allows for a more flexible and equitable framework for small-scale transportation providers.

Overall, these proposed changes reflect Saint Paul's commitment to innovation, equity, and sustainability—by empowering local businesses while creating safer, greener streets for everyone.