



RECOMMENDATION

Bicycle Advisory Council

Recommendation Number 20170516-03A: Pedicab Access During Street Closures and Special Events

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Bicycle Advisory Council (BAC) is to advise the City of Austin, and other jurisdictions, on all matters relating to the use of the bicycle;

WHEREAS, pedicabs provide transportation by bicycle for people of all ages and abilities;

WHEREAS, pedicabs provide a mobility aid to people with ADA needs, personal injuries, physical limitations, medical conditions, and special needs;

WHEREAS, an aspirational goal of Bicycle Master Plan is a safe, accessible, connected network for people of all ages and abilities to travel by bike;

WHEREAS, unrestricted 24/7 access to shared-use paths, such as those in Butler Park and the future I-35 path, provides safe connected routes for people using bicycles for transportation, including pedicabs;

WHEREAS, Austin is a participant in the Big Jump Project with a goal to connect more people in the central core to places of opportunity via bicycle, and to encourage people of all ages to take short trips (less than three miles) by bicycle rather than by car;

WHEREAS, pedicabs are designed for short-distance trips of less than three miles, and their business is first and last mile transportation;

WHEREAS, pedicabs have been an innovative transportation option for the central business district for almost 20 years;

WHEREAS, street closures for special events impact the mobility of everyone, from big events to the regular shutdown of 6th St. every weekend;

WHEREAS, special events with large attendance increase the overall demand for transportation around activity centers and for short distances rides;

WHEREAS, congestion caused by car traffic is a recognized problem in Austin, especially during major events such as UT Football Games, SXSW, ACL, Texas Relays, Halloween, New Years Eve, July 4th, ROT Rally, and others, including the regular weekend 6th St. closure;

WHEREAS, transportation access and mobility are essential to quality of life for Austin residents;

WHEREAS, pedicabs provide people with more choices for getting around without a car;

WHEREAS, according to city policy adopted in 2014, Complete Streets serve all users and modes, require connected travel networks, are beautiful, interesting and comfortable places for people, require best-practice design criteria and context-sensitive approaches, protect Austin's sustainability and environment, include all roadways and all projects and phases, and are the work of all City departments.

WHEREAS, the closure of the bike lane and the reversal of the one-way travel lanes on Trinity between 15th St. and MLK Blvd. to car-traffic only during UT Football games does not align with the principles of the city's Complete Streets policy and the aspirational goal of an all-ages-and-abilities bike network;

WHEREAS, the prioritization of travel lanes for car traffic during any special event is not in alignment with the principles of the city's Complete Streets policy and an all-ages-and-abilities bike network;

WHEREAS, the city has implemented permanent contraflow bike lanes already within the built out bike network, such as on Rio Grande, Pedernales, and Bluebonnet Streets, and a temporary contraflow bike lane on Brazos between 6th and 7th St. within the regular weekend 6th St. traffic plan.

WHEREAS, pedicabs provide low-speed, human-scale, sustainable transportation;

WHEREAS, the Vision Zero Action Plan, adopted by Council in May 2016, calls for the encouragement of transportation alternatives to reduce the risks associated with driving and to reduce the total vehicle miles traveled per capita in Austin.

WHEREAS, Austin's goals in support of the Great Streets Program establishes a set of values for downtown development, valuing pedestrian, transit and bicycle facilities and support for travelers in the downtown area;

WHEREAS, recent aspirational high-level city planning efforts such as the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, Project Connect, and the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan call out the need for increased options for local/neighborhood travel and short-distance trips, and a safe, accessible, connected street network as essential to Austin's travel needs and improved mobility;

WHEREAS, there are 503 pedicabs currently registered to operate in Austin, with the capacity to provide transportation by bicycle to thousands of people during every special event and every night.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Bicycle Advisory Council supports the use of pedicabs at special events and requests that all appropriate city departments, UT Austin departments, and other jurisdictions recognize the safe, clean, convenient service provided by pedicabs to people for the first and last mile of transportation for special events, and to provide reasonable accommodations and access for effective pedicab service during events and in traffic plans.

This support includes a request for:

- All city and UT-Austin offices related to transportation and special events take steps to make traffic planning consistent with the aspirational goals of high-level city planning and policies;
- A permanent Austin Police Department Liaison for the Pedicab community, with clear and consistent communication of regulations, rules and routes to Pedicab drivers;
- Provision of safe, consistent, direct, predictable, established routes for Pedicab drivers throughout and to serve events held downtown and in activity centers;
- Safe, consistent, direct, predictable, established routes for UT games and events with consideration of the Pedicab drivers' need for safety and minimizing hills;
- Planning and siting of more areas for pedicabs to stand, pick up, and drop off passengers at entrance and egress points at special events held on E. 6th St (including the regular weekend closure), around Zilker Park, at Auditorium Shores, the UT Football Stadium, and in other locations and activity centers.
- Creation of a temporary (or permanent) contraflow bike lane on Trinity between 15th St. and MLK Blvd. that stays open to bike traffic during football games.

Date of Approval:

Record of the vote:

Attest: