

August 9, 2019

Dear Commissioners,

It's been great working with ATD and Austin Energy to bring our pilot program into play, to try electric-assist motors with pedicabs which is currently prohibited by the current code (chapter 13-2). The last 18 months have been an absolute game changer for our local vehicle-for-hire pedal-pushing industry. We really appreciate your attention, time and support as we've worked long and hard to get where we are today.

We'd love to make this temporary initiative permanent before our demanding Fall season in an effort to expand our reach and impact as experienced professionals within the blossoming bicycle and micromobility garden transforming Austin's streets. We're incredibly passionate about moving people in a safe, fun, and memorable way. We'd like to be recognized as a last 2-3 mile solution while still embracing the experiential elements we deliver every day.

We owe the UTC the most appreciation for their recommendation in August 2017 to try electric pedicabs in a pilot program with the objective to study the use of e-assist motors to write permanent regulations, envisioning an expanded market for pedicabs as a mobility option. As a cost-effective strategy for reducing drive-alone car trips, we believe in e-pedicabs as a locally-grown travel mode to tap for added trip capacity, a greater range, and jobs accessible for more people, and ask that the pilot program be extended to all pedicabs and become a permanent program under the city code.

The UTC recommendation previewed the policy directions later adopted by Strategic Directions 2023 and the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan, which both call for a better alignment of city regulations to make room for and leverage innovation and technology. We feel that amending chapter 13-2 to allow e-assist for pedicabs is a perfect case to apply these policies, and more. Shared mobility services such as pedicabs are among the tools for managing demand named in the ASMP to help more people meet their needs without a car easily and safely. Even with motors, pedicabs run on human hearts and energy at forgiving speeds and with less risk of serious harm in a crash than large, powerful vehicles like cars, and provide fun dynamic experiences that will help make the ASMP's 50/50 mode share goal a reality.

Here's some quick data on the impact of electric assist motors on our business and by extension on the market for short-distance trips as a whole. A survey of pedicab business owners in August 2019 confirms that the success of the pilot program and that e-pedicabs are popular and in demand by pedicab drivers, and there is almost universal

agreement that we should have more of them. On the other hand, riders make less money with pedal-only, non-electric pedicabs and demand and use of these cabs has gone down. There were 503 registered pedicabs in February 2018 at the beginning of the pilot and as of July 29 of this year, 419 are left, pedal-only pedicabs making up all the reduction.

The more recent arrival of our siblings in the transportation space, shared scooters, has been a source of natural rivalry and also a loud statement of the massive demand for short-distance rides. Since April 2018, over 5 million trips with an average distance of 1 mile have been logged in Austin, according to the data reported through the app-based scooter companies. Pedicabs don't have an app but serve the same market and have a wider appeal than shared scooters, which are not accessible or desirable for many people, and the trip data provided courtesy of the scooters shows the positive impact of and demand for this kind of electrified mobility including for pedicabs with it.

We also posted a simple poll on Facebook and Twitter which has been running 9-1 in favor of expanding the current pilot program and making it permanent. While not a formal study, this poll is an informative look at the popularity of e-pedicabs and general support for pedicabs.

In addition, ride data was collected through the Strava app to record overall mileage and range during a pedicab shift as part of the pilot program. When analyzed by the city, the data will confirm our hands-on knowledge that the average mileage per hour and range by drivers using electric pedicabs are more than those of pedal-only pedicabs. We are confident that with sensible policies for safety and speed, the industry can grow in a healthy way once cleared of regulatory barriers that are like dead soil in a climate in crisis.

To conclude, we are hoping for another recommendation by the UTC to Council and ATD for the authorization of any permitted pedicab to use an electric assist motor as part of the current pilot program or through code amendments.

Major city plans from Imagine Austin through SD2023 and the ASMP have strategies for improving quality of life that are based on private sector partnerships and a resilient business environment. As local small businesses, the Austin pedicab industry has a part to play to help nurture and support the vision within these plans: walkable places and complete communities that connect people and promote happy and active lives, and please help us thrive by making this change.

Signed,

Patricia Schaub
Firefly Class Transport

Nathan Lipson
Metrocycle Pedicabs

Ken Cameron
Precision Pedicab Manufacturing

Matthew J. Maschek
Austin Pedicab Company

Chris Rodriguez
High Roller Pedicab

Bernadette Hutchinson
Flat Earth Pedicab

Adam Finton
Austin Pedicab Company

Luis Velazquez
Gimpy Trips

Corey Callahan
Wanderlust Pedicabs

Chris McInnis
Come and Take It Pedicab

Tim Olson
Cruz Del Sol Pedicabs

Stephen Hatgis
Baustin Pedicab Company

David Knipp
Movemint Bike Cab

Casey Clemmons
Texas Trike Pilots

Phil Reyna
Kween Cab

Sarah Yopp
Wonder Traveler Pedicab

Adrian Nunez
Danger Noodle Rides

David Hoefler
Natural Choice Pedicabs

Ani Colt
Trike Neighborhoods

Preston Tyree
Trike Neighborhoods
Public Safety Commission

Omar Abu Hamdan
Pedi Express

Adrian Ramirez
Austin Bike Taxi

Ryan Cope
Hollyweird's Hill Country Experience

Nathan McDonald
Knight Owl Pedicab

DANA LETTER ON PEDICABS

Dear Mayor Adler and City Council:

Because DANA represents downtown residents, we are understandably concerned with mobility. It has come to our attention recently that pedicabs, which have always been helpful to us, are seeking to have the cap on the number of electric motors they can drive lifted. We heartily support this move.

Pedicabs help in not just last mile transport but also for somewhat longer trips. Also, they are accessible for those with mild to moderate mobility issues, which scooters are not; this is particularly helpful to older residents. Therefore, more pedicabs with electric (but NOT internal combustion) engines will help more pedestrians and residents without increasing air pollution.

Therefore, as long as inspections and safety regulations are included, and speeds are limited to no more than 20 mph., DANA supports including pedicabs in the bike/micromobility category, and embraces the contributions they already make to urban mobility; we look forward to even greater benefits for Austin pedestrians and the mobility-challenged, with these simple and common sense changes.

Respectfully yours,

Eileen McKillip Portner, President
Kimberly Levinson, Vice President
Jarrad Toussant, Secretary
Adam Levinson, Treasurer
Steve Blackmon
Alex Choice
Erica Diaz
Angela Hovis
Staci Livesay
Tanner Long
Chris Riley
Kate Rogers
Philip Wiley
Kristina Witt

BIKE AUSTIN

August 8, 2019

Mayor and Council:

Bike Austin applauds your continued efforts and those of the Austin Transportation Department to support pedicabs as a for-hire transportation option. Pedicabs are an important part of the vision of a climate-friendly, safe multimodal system for Austin. Increasing the use of shared mobility solutions like pedicabs is an express goal of the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan.

Over the past two years, ATD staff have been working with industry stakeholders to create safe and practical regulations for equipping pedicabs with electric-assist motors through a pilot program using a limited number of pedicabs. We encourage you to provide policy direction to advance this effort.

In particular, Bike Austin supports the concept of allowing **all** pedicabs the option of using an electric-assist motor by:

- Opening the current pilot program to all pedicabs permitted by ATD, and
- Amending the Austin City Code to allow pedicabs to use electric-assist motors.

After two years of study, it's long past time to lift the regulatory barriers that currently prevent the pedicab industry from making full use of the clear benefits of electric assist.

As evidenced by the rapid growth of e-bikes in recent years, a small motor can dramatically extend the range and potential of bikes. With electric-assist, pedicabs can provide a low impact, quick transportation option for people to get around without a car.

Like all e-bikes, pedicabs with electric-assist motors make riding, or pedicabbing and pedicab jobs, more accessible and equitable to people of diverse ages and abilities. Having a motor also can prevent overuse injuries, pain, and exhaustion that frequently force pedicab workers to lose valuable time on the job and to eventually quit, sometimes suffering long-term physical problems.

This change would be a great way to build on our existing assets. It will be implemented by a local industry already regulated by the city, and does not require extra city resources or fiscal commitments for enforcement, administration, or infrastructure.

For years, pedicabs have quietly played an important role in growing the bicycling movement in Austin, literally doing the work of the Bike Austin mission. Pedicabs normalize biking on our busiest city streets and at the busiest times, in defiance of the attitude that cars are the only viable mobility option. With a top assisted speed of 20 mph or less, the presence of pedicabs

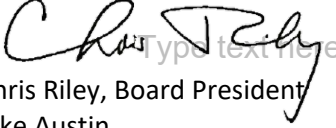
adds to the safety of the overall system by having low potential crash energy. A pedicab is human scale transportation that makes a street an active and inviting place, enhancing walkability and raising the quality of life for everyone.

Pedicabs also serve as a visible reminder that transportation alternatives are available, and that an internal combustion engine and a large heavy vehicle are not requirements for moving people.

The success of the current electric pedicab pilot program is a testament to your and ATD's approach and the nimbleness with which Austin has adapted our rules to new technologies. We urge you to make electric pedicabs a permanent transportation service.

Bike Austin looks forward to the next steps in this process, and to seeing these improvements realized. We hope you'll join us in support of this important opportunity.

Best regards,


Chris Riley, Board President
Bike Austin

Mayor Steve Adler
Mayor Pro Tem Garza
Councilmember Harper-Madison
Councilmember Rentería
Councilmember Casar
Councilmember Kitchen
Councilmember Flannigan
Councilmember Pool
Councilmember Ellis
Councilmember Tovo
Councilmember Alter

cc:

Urban Transportation Commission
Austin Transportation Department

Mayor and Council,

AURA calls for immediate action to legalize electric pedicabs.

Austin should simplify riding a pedicab and making a living doing it. We've heard from pedicabbers that earnings are way down since Uber and Lyft rode into town, made their own rules, and then went around the city to the state legislature, and then earnings went down again after scooters started operating before rules were written for them.

The pedicabbers have always worked with the city and played by the rules. They carry insurance, have design guidelines for safety, and have a strong Austin cultural identity. More importantly, they are often a safer alternative to single-rider micromobility and a greener, safer alternative to car-based rideshares.

Every effort should be made to remove barriers to pedicabbers and pedicabs, especially given the regulations around TNCs and scooters. Council should immediately allow electric motors for all pedicabs, should allow them to operate anywhere that bicycles are allowed to operate, and should allow them to carry more passengers, at any time of day. Any design criteria not absolutely necessary for safety should be eliminated.

Let's keep it simple. Let's make it easier for pedicabbers to earn a living in Austin and easier for Austinites to get a safe, low-carbon ride. There's no need to delay.