



Stalled Plan to License Pedicabs Advances

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The city will move forward with its long-stalled regulation of pedicabs, officials said on Sunday, four days after an accident in Brooklyn seriously injured a driver and focused attention on the lack of oversight of the tourist-friendly tricycles.

Owners of the pedal-powered cabs would have a 60-day window to register with the city, under a proposal announced by the mayor and the [City Council](#) speaker. Those who provide proof of ownership and insurance would receive a license, providing that their vehicles pass a safety examination.

The proposed rules are a shift from the city's first attempt at regulating the industry in 2007, when the city insisted on a limit to the number of licenses it would issue. Pedicab owners sued, arguing the cap would hurt established businesses, and regulation was held up for two years.

The lawsuit was resolved in April, and the licensing cap was thrown out. In the meantime, safety laws enacted in 2007 — including the requirement of seat belts, turn signals and emergency brakes — have not been enforced. Last week, a pedicab collided with a taxi at the foot of the Williamsburg Bridge, injuring the pedicab driver and two passengers.

Advocates for regulation said the city should have enforced rules that made it illegal for pedicabs to travel on bridges, but the city said it was powerless until a licensing procedure could be established.

Sunday's proposal was an attempt to end that impasse, but enforcement may still be a few weeks or months away. The proposal must wind its way through the legislative review process, and city officials have said their hands are tied on regulation until the new procedure becomes law. (The first public hearing for the bill is set for the end of month.)

But one potential hurdle may have been cleared: Pedicab owners who sued over the original licensing plan said they had no qualms with the new proposal.

"This is really what we had been hoping for from the beginning," said Chad Marlow, a lawyer for the [New York City Pedicab Owners Association](#). "We think we'll be the most vigilant supporters of the bill out there."

City officials said the plan had been in the works since April, when the lawsuit was resolved.

"To say the mayor and the speaker saw this accident and they're jumping into action because

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of that, that would take credit away from them,” Mr. Marlow said.

The bill would require pedicabs to display a fare card, owner information and contacts so passengers can file complaints. The city would revisit licensing rules after 18 months. The original rules limited licenses to 325; owners estimated that there were about 1,000 pedicabs in the city.

One pedicab operator said Sunday that the new rules could still put established companies at a disadvantage. “It leaves the window wide open for anyone who is going to speculate on this and say, ‘If I’m going to jump in the pedicab business, now’s my time.’” said Robert Tipton, owner of Mr. Rickshaw.

“An accident is always an unfortunate thing to have happen,” he said. “But if there is any good that’s coming out of it, pedicabs in New York City should be safer after this.”

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