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Pedicabs green-lighted in New York City

By BikeRadar

New York City pedicab drivers are having to conform to the safety and legal standards as taxi drivers, as legislation inroads have been agreed upon by several parties, including Mayor Michael Bloomberg and the Pedicab Owners Association after a three-year legal battle.



Pedicabs no longer run amok in New York City, as tighter regulations reel in safety measures. (FREDERIC

J. BROWN/AFP/Getty Images)

"Pedicabs have become an integral part of the City's streetscape for tourists and locals alike," said Bloomberg, who two years ago vetoed legislation to authorise the Department of Consumer Affairs to issue licenses for the popular mode of transportation. "I have always had faith that our Administration and the

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(Christine C.) Quinn, we have.

"This legislation will address outstanding concerns and ensure that pedicab passengers get a safe ride. It's an important step forward in our efforts to keep making the streets of New York City safer than ever," the Mayor added.

Under the new agreement, Quinn will introduce legislation which the Mayor will sign upon passage to create a 60-day period for licensing all pedicab vehicles for commercial use in New York City for the next 18 months.

Pedicab owners will be required to carry insurance, and their vehicles will be required to pass a safety inspections that verify functioning safety equipment including headlights and taillights; passenger seatbelts; and hydraulic, disc, or drum brakes that are unaffected by rain or other wet conditions. Safety has been a growing concern, especially in light of a [recent accident involving a pedicab and taxi cab](#) in Brooklyn June 11.

Unlike past legislation, which has resulted in litigation by the Pedicab Owners Association, this bill carries the association's endorsement.

"The New York City Pedicab Owners' Association is thrilled to be partnering with this legislative effort to ensure that each and every pedicab on the streets of New York is as safe as it can possibly be," said Chad Marlow, staff attorney for the New York City Pedicab Owners Association. "We are pleased to hear the City Council will quickly consider this legislation and, when passed, Mayor Bloomberg will sign it into law."

Monday's agreement by the Mayor and the Speaker allows New York City to move forward with pedicab vehicle licensing. The Council will move quickly to amend the current law, and the Mayor will sign it upon passage.

In the place of a cap on pedicab vehicle licenses, as previous legislation had required, the new law would instead cap the application period. Once the law goes into effect, the Department of Consumer Affairs will accept applications that include proof of insurance and ownership of each vehicle for which a pedicab vehicle license is requested during a 60-day period.

After 18 months, the cap on the Department of Consumer Affairs' ability to license pedicabs beyond those who applied during the 60-day period will elapse.

Pedicab requirements from the Department of Consumer Affairs include:

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- In addition to requiring insurance, Consumer Affairs will also schedule and conduct pedicab safety inspections of every pedicab vehicle for which a completed license application is filed.
- Before being licensed to operate, pedicabs must conform to safety standards that include (but are not limited to) a unibody frame; seating with seatbelts for no more than three passengers; brakes that are impervious to rain or wet conditions; a secondary or emergency brake system; and headlights, tail lights, and turn signals.
- All licensed pedicabs to display a sign on the interior of the vehicle within view of passengers indicating the name and telephone number of the pedicab business, the pedicab's registration number and the 311 and (212/718) NEW-YORK telephone numbers and nyc.gov websites to register complaints to the Department of Consumer Affairs.
- All licensed pedicabs have a sign conspicuously posted on the exterior of the pedicab detailing the amount to be charged for the use of the pedicab or the basis for calculating such amount, just like those in taxicabs.
- Consistent with the City's 2007 pedicab legislation, pedicab operators will not be allowed to carry passengers on bridges or in tunnels.

Pedicab vehicle licenses will be separate from pedicab driver licenses, which the Department of Consumer Affairs will also offer. The 60-day limit for applications will apply only to pedicab vehicle license applications. Updates on when pedicab vehicle and driver licenses applications will be made available will be posted on the [Department of Consumer Affairs' website](#).

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