



Recommendation for Action

File #: 19-2865, **Agenda Item #:** 66.

9/19/2019

Posting Language

Approve an ordinance amending City Code Chapter 12-2 (Ground Transportation Passenger Services) to add regulations related to the operation of pedicabs and group cycle services.

Lead Department

Austin Transportation Department

Fiscal Note

This item has no fiscal impact

Prior Council Action:

Ordinance No. 20141106-054 - Council approved an ordinance to revise and add definitions related to the operation of charter services was approved on consent on a 6-0 vote with Council Member Spelman absent.

For More Information:

Robert Spillar, 512-974-2488; Jacob Culberson, 512-974-1489; Jason Redfern, 512-974-7020; Gilda Powers, 512-974-7092.

Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:

August 13, 2019 - Approved by the Urban Transportation Commission on a 6-0 vote with Commissioners Alvarado, Davis, Reyna and Wilfley absent.

Additional Backup Information:

The Austin Transportation Department (ATD) recommends amendments to section 13-2 of the City Code to grant electric pedal-assisted pedicabs and group cycles access to operate within the City of Austin.

Pedicabs with electric pedal-assist motors have the potential to increase the number of pedicab trips and to provide greater access to streets with hills and terrain difficult to traverse with traditional pedicabs. Electric pedal-assist pedicabs also make pedicab jobs more accessible for drivers of all ages and all ability levels. For the past 18 months, ATD has administered a pilot program for electric pedal-assist pedicabs wherein staff have collected data to monitor the safety and viability of electrical pedal-assisted pedicabs. Up to seventy-five pedicabs equipped with electrical pedal-assisted motors have participated in the pilot for the purposes of safety studies, data collection, and determination of best-practices. Licensed pedicab companies are unanimous in their support to be permitted to operate electric pedal-assist pedicabs in order to meet demand and level the playing field with other electrified micro-mobility options already available in Austin's landscape. The Austin Transportation Department also recommends that group cycle businesses be granted permission to utilize electric pedal-assist motors in their operations to increase the safety and convenience of their service. Cities such as San Antonio, Texas; Memphis, Tennessee; and Nashville, Tennessee, currently allow the operation of electric pedal-assist group cycles and have for several years without any reported safety issues.

Additionally, during the pilot program, ATD had discussions with pedicab holders about the possibility of lifting codified pedicab operational boundaries, which currently limit pedicab use to within the geographic boundaries between 38th Street in the North, Oltorf Street in the South, MoPac Boulevard in the West, and Chestnut Avenue in the East. ATD recommends these geographical restrictions be lifted and that licensed pedicabs be

granted permission to operate on all roadways with a speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less. Expanding the boundaries further allows this mobility option to serve more people as an alternative to driving alone.