



Legislation Text

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Ordinance Amending Chapter 4 of the Greensboro Code of Ordinances with Respect to Alcoholic Beverages, Chapter 16 of the Greensboro Code of Ordinances with Respect to Motor Vehicles and Traffic, Chapter 26 of the Greensboro Code of Ordinances with Respect to Streets and Sidewalks, and Chapter 28 of the Greensboro Code of Ordinances with Respect to Taxicabs and Buses

Department:

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Purpose:

The City of Greensboro has been requested to consider amending ordinances of Chapters 26 and 28 of City Code that would permit the operation of low-speed vehicle taxicabs and pedal cars in the public right-of-way with restrictions and permitting requirements for public safety and traffic congestion purposes. An amendment to Chapter 16 of the City Code would define the streets approved for such vehicle operations and an amendment to Chapter 4 of the City Code would permit passengers on a pedal car to possess and consume malt beverages or unfortified wine while on the vehicle.

Background:

The City has received formal requests for City Council consideration of ordinance amendments from two new companies that are seeking to operate businesses that provide alternative passenger vehicle transportation services within the downtown area for remuneration. The companies would operate under the names Brew Peddlers (pedal cars) and Caddie Carts (low speed vehicle taxicab golfcarts).

The modes requested to be considered that these ordinance amendments address are low speed vehicle (LSV) taxicabs and pedal cars. Because the transportation of people within and around the downtown area by means of vehicles is a matter which affects the public interest and due to the high volume of pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular traffic in downtown, staff recommends permitting and regulating the operation of these types of passenger vehicles, that do not meet the definition of a taxicab or bus, on city streets. As a precursor to construction of ordinance amendments, City staff in transportation, police, planning, and legal researched these modes and evaluated how other municipalities permit and regulate the varied elements related to their operations. Conditions and restrictions of the amendments prioritize safety and welfare of passengers and the general public.

Low speed vehicle taxicabs are low speed vehicles as defined and regulated by NCGS 20-121.1 that are hailed like a taxicab. Low speed vehicles must be capable of reaching a 20mph speed, but may not exceed 35mph. Low speed vehicle taxicabs are not currently regulated by the City.

Pedal cars, also identified as pedal pubs or commercial quadricycles, are four (4) or more wheeled bicycle-like vehicles that transports passengers on saddle type seats that are either human powered by five or more

passengers or by a motor capable of propelling the vehicle in the absence of human power. Pedal cars offer pre-arranged tours and typically operate with a business model that allows passengers to bring and consume their own alcoholic beverages while on the vehicle. Pedal cars are not currently regulated by the City. Pedal cars that do not meet the standards of low speed vehicles are not currently permitted by the City. The city code does not permit alcohol consumption on public streets by occupants of vehicles not licensed by the State of North Carolina.

The proposed amendment to Chapter 26 is similar to ordinances recently adopted in the City of Winston-Salem and Town of Carolina Beach. The amendment:

- defines pedal cars as an alternative passenger vehicle (APV) mode that may be utilized for the commercial purpose of transporting passengers
- establishes a process for permitting of APV businesses, vehicles and pedal car drivers
- establishes an annual APV business permit fee of \$50, an annual APV vehicle decal fee of \$15 per vehicle, and requires that pedal car drivers obtain a taxicab driver's permit
- restricts the streets APVs may operate on within and adjacent to the Central Business District as defined in traffic schedule 12B
- regulates the operations of APVs on streets
- establishes safety and equipment standards that the vehicles, owners, and operators must meet

The proposed amendment to Chapter 28:

- establishes a process for licensing of LSV taxicab businesses, and permitting of LSV taxicab vehicles and drivers
- establishes an annual LSV vehicle decal fee of \$15 per vehicle, and requires that the LSV taxicab business obtain a business privilege license and drivers obtain a taxicab driver's permit
- restricts the streets LSV taxicabs may operate on within and adjacent to the Central Business District as defined in traffic schedule 12A
- regulates the operations of LSV taxicabs on streets
- establishes safety and equipment standards that the vehicles, owners, and operators must meet

The proposed amendment to Chapter 16:

- establishes traffic schedules for LSV taxicabs and APVs

The proposed amendment to Chapter 4:

- permits the possession and consumption of malt beverages or unfortified wine when served at sidewalk cafes or as a passenger on pedal cars

The proposed amendments are supported by Downtown Greensboro Inc., and by both Brew Peddlers and Caddie Carts.

Budget Impact:

There is no budget impact for this item

Action Requested:

Staff recommends that City Council consider adoption of the amendments to Chapters 4, 16, 26 and 28 of the City Code.