



## Licenses and Consumer Services Staff Report

**Date:** June 7, 2010  
**To:** Council Member Elizabeth Glidden  
**Referral to:** Regulatory, Energy and Environment Committee  
**Subject:** Analyze Traffic Codes related to Taxicabs  
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### Staff Report

At the May 17, 2010 Regulatory, Energy & Environment Committee meeting staff was directed to analysis the traffic laws and taxicab ordinances and what would be required to straighten out the situation for Hennepin and First Avenue. Taxicabs are regulated by Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, Title 13 Chapter 341, Taxicabs and various chapters of Title 18, Traffic Code.

In addition to defining the requirements for the licensing and operating a taxicab in the City of Minneapolis, Chapter 341 also regulates the operation of the licensed vehicle on the streets of Minneapolis. Chapter 341 is enforced by License Inspectors.

**341.210. No parking in certain area.** No owner or driver of a taxicab, or any agent or employee of either, while the taxicab is in service, or soliciting patronage, or subject to call, shall stand or park any taxicab, unless the city council shall have first permitted such standing or parking by ordinance or special permit therefore, upon any public street, alley or driveway in the area of the city bounded on the south by Interstate Highways 35 and 94, on the north by the Mississippi River, on the west by Interstate Highway 94 and Third Avenue North, and on the east by Interstate Highway 35.

**341.250 Prohibited acts.** The relevant sections include the following:

No taxicab driver shall:

- (a) Operate a taxicab in violation of state or local traffic regulations, or in any event without proper regard for the traffic, surface, and width of the street or highway and the hazards at intersections and any other conditions then existing, nor in such a manner or condition as to endanger or to be likely to endanger the safety of passengers, pedestrians, vehicles or the persons and property of others;
- (g) Block the normal flow of traffic, except while parallel parking;

**341.605. Taxicab stand permits.** (a) No taxicab vehicle shall wait at any taxicab stand in the central business district without having first obtained a permit therefor. At the time a permit is issued, the applicant shall be furnished with a decal. The applicant shall attach such decal on the lower right side of the rear windshield of the taxicab.

- (b) Licensees not displaying a taxicab stand decal, may discharge passengers at taxicab stands, but may not collect passengers within one hundred (100) feet of the same unless:
- (1) The licensee is operating under a contract or charge account previously signed and on file at the company; or
  - (2) The licensee is responding to a special call for service when such call has been documented by telephone records and such other evidence as the director deems necessary.
- (c) No licensee or service company may apply for taxicab stand permits in excess of fifty (50) percent of that licensee's or service company's total Minneapolis-licensed fleet.
- (d) The downtown taxicab stand permit requirement shall not apply when the director deems that special circumstances, including but not limited to special events, warrant the waiver thereof.
- (e) Notwithstanding the other provisions of this section, an individual or company holding a taxicab vehicle license or having applied for transfer of a taxicab vehicle license on or before January 21, 1985, which was not a member of a company, cooperative, or association of at least fifteen (15) taxicabs or which was not equipped with two-way radio dispatch equipment may apply for taxi stand permits for all licensed taxicabs operating under their color scheme.
- (f) The fee for the downtown taxicab stand permit shall be two hundred dollars (\$200.00) per year and due with the regular license fee each year.

The Traffic Code, enforced by the Minneapolis Police Department and the Traffic Control Division of Regulatory Services cites the following regulations.

**466.230. Obstructing traffic with vehicle.** It shall be unlawful for any person to so drive and operate or park a vehicle upon the streets or highways in the city as to needlessly, unnecessarily and unwarrantedly block, obstruct or interfere with the orderly flow of traffic on said streets. Proof that such traffic was blocked, obstructed or interfered with shall be prima facie evidence that such blocking, obstructing and interference was needless, unnecessary and unwarranted.

**478.110. No-stopping zone.** No person shall stop or halt a vehicle, even momentarily, in any place on any street or highway where official signs prohibit stopping, except when necessary to avoid conflict with other traffic or in compliance with the direction of a police officer or traffic-control sign or signal.

**478.600. Parking prohibited; exceptions.** (a) No person shall stop, stand or park a vehicle on any street or highway where there has been established a no-parking zone or a corner clearance zone and such zones are marked by a sign, provided, a driver may stop his vehicle momentarily while actually engaged in receiving or discharging passengers from his vehicle.

Staff analysis of this language concludes that taxi vehicles cannot stop to pick up or drop off any passengers in a no-stopping zone but they can perform this service in a no-parking zone if they do not obstruct or interfere with traffic flow. This rule applies to Hennepin Avenue.