

Pedaler hopes to get his foot in door

A pedicab entrepreneur in Minneapolis won preliminary City Hall approval for loosening regulation of the city's non-existent pedicab industry.

By [STEVE BRANDT](#), Star Tribune
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Sometimes job creation comes by the carload. Sometimes it comes one pedicab at a time.

A request from would-be pedicab entrepreneur Kao Rosa is leading to some loosening of pedicab regulations at Minneapolis City Hall.

Nobody holds an active pedicab license in the city now. "A quick look at our rules explains why," Council Member Gary Schiff said, after reviewing the city's ordinance with Rosa, a constituent in his Ninth Ward.

So a proposal that Rosa says will make the pedicab business more viable in Minneapolis won preliminary council approval Wednesday.

It junks a citywide ban on night and rush-hour use of pedicabs in exchange for displaying the kind of lights required for night biking. And it opens up some of the downtown streets and bridges previously off limits to pedicabs.

Pedicabs are still banned from the greater downtown area for two hours in the morning rush and two during the evening.

Rosa, a Corcoran neighborhood resident who pedaled a cab during his last year of college in San Diego, plans to manage the business this time. He has lined up four street pedalers and is planning to find one more. He plans to operate from May through October.

Tourists and people opting to be hauled home from bars are expected to account for major chunks of business. Rosa expects to charge a \$5 minimum fare and figures fares will average around \$13.

Getting into the business isn't cheap. He plans to shell out \$5,000 apiece for five Colorado-made cabs, plus cover the required \$300,000 liability insurance and city fees.

Rosa thinks there's room for 25 pedicabs in Minneapolis. In New York City, where news reports estimate 600 pedicabs on the road, the city moved to cap registrations at 325 because of complaints that unregulated cabs posed a traffic hazard and competed with taxis and horse-drawn carriages for business. A judge struck down the limits.

The Minneapolis proposal was passed by the council's regulatory committee and is up for a full council vote on Aug. 22.