

## NYC DOT

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## Press Releases

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 14, 2023

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# NYC DOT Takes Action to Authorize the Use of Larger Pedal-Assist Cargo Bikes

*Proposed rule would allow larger pedal-assist bicycles to operate on-street to make deliveries safer and more sustainable*

*August 14, 2023 marks the start of the 30-day comment period during which NYC DOT will solicit public feedback on proposal*

**New York** — New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT) Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez today announced that the agency has taken action to authorize the use of larger pedal-assist cargo bikes. NYC DOT published [the Notice of Public Hearing and Opportunity to Comment](https://a856-cityrecord.nyc.gov/RequestDetail/20230807003) [https://a856-cityrecord.nyc.gov/RequestDetail/20230807003] in the City Record. The proposed rule, which would permit the use of these cargo bikes, is designed to make deliveries safer and more sustainable by reducing the number of delivery trucks on New York City streets.

"Safety and sustainability go hand in hand in New York City, and our administration is innovating every day and using every tool available to advance both," said **New York City Mayor Eric Adams**. "Cargo bikes have been a valuable tool in our administration's efforts to move goods throughout the city while prioritizing street safety and our environment, and these pedal-assist cargo bikes will help New Yorkers get the items they need while reducing carbon emissions and traffic congestion — and getting dangerous trucks off our streets."

"Greater use of cargo bikes will bring incredible environmental and safety benefits for New York City by reducing the number of large, high-polluting trucks on our streets," said **NYC DOT Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez**. "Just two cargo bikes can replace one box truck, increasing safety and reducing CO2 emission by 14 tons per year — equivalent to 30,872 passenger car miles traveled."

The proposed rule would expand low or no-emission options for freight deliveries — including packages and groceries — by allowing the use of pedal-assist bicycles that may be up to 48 inches wide and have up to four wheels. The expanded width and wheel allowance, combined with the pedal-assist feature, make cargo bikes easier to pedal while carrying heavy loads. Current rules restrict such devices to a maximum width of 36 inches with no fourth wheel.

Since NYC DOT's launch of its Commercial Cargo Bike pilot program in 2019, cargo-bike deliveries have increased significantly in New York City. In 2022, cargo bikes made more than 130,000 trips delivering over 5 million packages, resulting in the reduction of over 650,000 metric tons of CO2 emissions, and demonstrating their effectiveness as a last-mile delivery mode. Based on trends in the freight delivery industry, NYC DOT has determined there is even more unmet demand that could be addressed through this proposed rule change.

The pedal-assist feature of these bikes activates a small motor only when users are pedaling. The technology is commonly used by existing e-bicycle carriers — as well as on Citi Bike's popular pedal-assist models.

The announcement of the proposed rule in the City Record today begins the 30-day public comment period. NYC DOT will hold a virtual public hearing on the proposed rule. Members of the public may access and participate in this hearing online or by telephone. The public hearing will take place on September 13, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. Anyone may provide written comments on the proposed rule by:

- **Website.** You can submit comments to NYC DOT through the NYC rules website at <http://rules.cityofnewyork.us> [http://rules.cityofnewyork.us].
- **Email.** You can email comments to [rules@dot.nyc.gov](mailto:rules@dot.nyc.gov) [mailto:rules@dot.nyc.gov].
- **Mail.** You can mail comments to Diniece Mendes, New York City Department of Transportation, 55 Water Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10041
- **Fax.** You can fax comments to 212-839-7777.

"Cargo-bikes are an increasingly important mode of freight and package delivery in New York City, helping to reduce the number of vehicles on the street as well as lower emissions on our roadways," said **Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine**. "Wider cargo bikes will allow them to be more widely used as well as safer to operate, and I applaud DOT for starting this rule making process."

"As our reliance on delivery services continues to increase, we must do all we can to ensure deliveries are made safely and in a manner that minimizes the emission of greenhouse gasses that contribute to global warming," said **Borough President Donovan Richards**. "The proposed rule would help us achieve these goals, while also making it easier for bike-riding delivery workers to make a living. I support this proposed rule and looking forward to it ultimately being adopted."

"Cargo bikes can do the same work as a delivery truck without negatively impacting our neighborhoods," said **Open Plans Co-Executive Director Sara Lind**. "They're easier to navigate on narrow streets, take up far less space at the curb, emit no air pollution, and sit silently — no idling engine noises — while workers deliver packages right to doors. Paired with wider, safer bike lanes and reliable loading zones, cargo bikes are an excellent, efficient way to accommodate booming e-commerce in the 21st century."

"New York is the densest city in the nation, but roughly 90% of our freight is transported by trucks, competing for extremely limited parking space and increasing traffic congestion. This situation is only worsening as demand for home deliveries continues to skyrocket, but shifting to e-bikes for last-mile freight could alleviate many of the local environmental and safety issues of trucks and vans," said **Corey Hannigan, Active Transportation Program Manager at the Tri-State Transportation Campaign**. "Electric bicycles have been widely adopted for food delivery services, and NYCDOT's 2019 e-cargo bike pilot program proved the effectiveness and viability of cargo bikes as a general last-mile solution in the urban core. Despite this however, we have seen e-cargo-bike growth in New York lag behind peer cities in Europe, mainly due to a restriction on cargo bikes wider than 36" (combined with a disconnected protected bike lane network that often features very narrow lane-widths). Standard pallet-sized 48"-wide cargo bike models are commonly used by international carriers like DHL and UPS, and so increasing allowable widths could allow more manufacturers and carriers to enter the market, bringing down costs. The Tri-State Transportation Campaign supports allowing wider e-cargo bikes, and urges the city to accelerate the planning and construction of wider protected bike lanes like the recent redesigns on 9th and 3rd Aves in Manhattan."

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