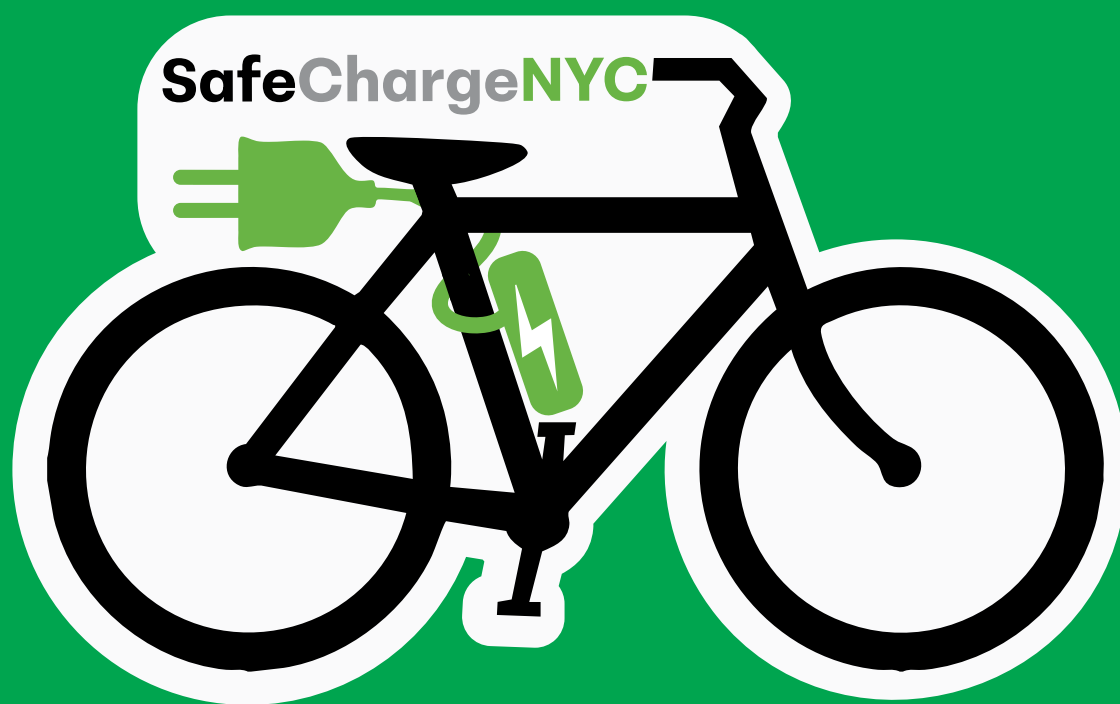


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# Sidewalk E-Bike Battery Swapping and Charging Cabinets 101:

*How Property Owners and Tenants Can Apply*



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Commissioner

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## Overview

E-bikes<sup>1</sup> can provide a convenient and affordable way for New Yorkers to get around and have dramatically grown in popularity in recent years. Unfortunately, some of these e-bikes are not UL-certified and use low-quality lithium-ion batteries that pose a risk of fire. These batteries are now a leading cause of fires and fire-related deaths in New York City; in 2024 alone, lithium-ion batteries caused 279 fires, resulting in six deaths.

To reduce the fire risk posed by lithium-ion batteries, the City of New York supports the installation of outdoor e-bike battery charging and swapping cabinets on public sidewalks. Through an agreement with the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) called a revocable consent (RC), property owners and tenants can now install battery swapping and charging cabinets adjacent to their buildings in the public right-of-way to expand access to safe charging.<sup>2</sup>

This document provides property owners and tenants with an overview of how they can petition for a revocable consent from DOT for a charging cabinet. A revocable consent is the grant of a right to an individual or organization to construct and maintain certain structures on, over, or under the inalienable property (streets and sidewalks) of the City of New York. The process to obtain a revocable consent takes roughly one year. Generally, revocable consents are granted for a term of 10 years, at the end of which they may be renewed. As the name implies, the City retains the right to revoke a revocable consent at any time.

Please review the materials below for more details and information on how to apply.

### What are battery swapping and charging cabinets?

Battery swapping and battery charging cabinets are compact, vending-machine-sized stations designed to charge multiple electric micromobility batteries safely and securely.

A battery swapping cabinet allows users to rent a charged, UL-certified battery. When the battery is depleted, the user can exchange it for a fully charged one at the cabinet. The cabinet provider owns and maintains all the batteries in the system.

In contrast, a battery charging cabinet is designed for users to safely store and charge their own personal batteries.

### Cabinets can be:

- Open to the general public
- A building amenity, limited to use by a specific group of users



Battery swapping cabinets at Cooper Square as a part of DOT's 2024 E-Bike Charging Pilot Program.

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## Eligibility

### Who is eligible?

The property owner or tenant that applies for a revocable consent is called a petitioner. Eligible petitioners for a battery cabinet revocable consent can be property owners or tenants (with the property owner's approval) of:

- Residential buildings with 5 or more dwelling units; or
- Buildings where the ground floor has a non-residential use

### What types of cabinets are eligible?

- Battery swapping cabinet (administered by a battery subscription service)
- Battery charging cabinet (for personally-owned batteries)

### Where cabinets can be placed:

he public sidewalk in front of petitioner's property subject to certain siting criteria below and further delineated in **chapter 7** of Title 34 of the Rules of the City of New York (the RC Rules).

### How to submit a petition for a revocable consent:

Contact DOT's Revocable Consent team at [revocableconsents@dot.nyc.gov](mailto:revocableconsents@dot.nyc.gov) to begin the revocable consent process.

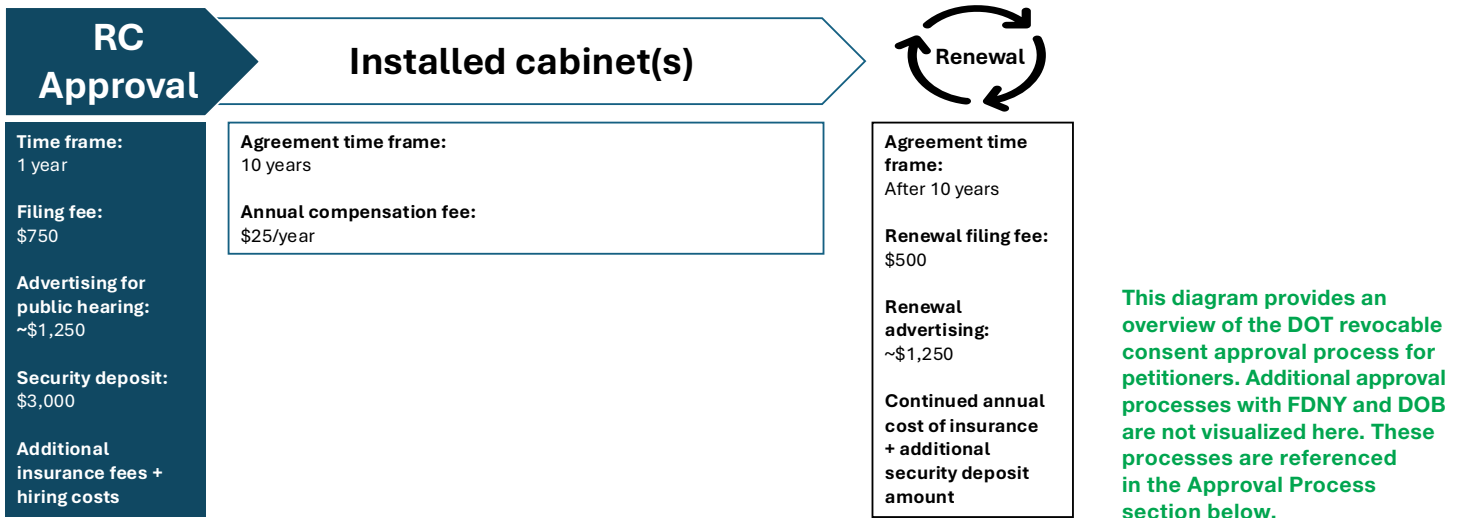
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## Site Design

All cabinets must be sited in accordance with the requirements of DOT, the New York City Fire Department (FDNY), and the New York City Department of Buildings (DOB). Below is a non-comprehensive list of the DOT requirements. For complete siting guidelines, please review DOT's **RC Rules**. FDNY has additional siting requirements that vary based on the type of cabinet to be installed. A New York State (NYS) registered design professional must assist with the siting process. In addition, any proposed cabinet installation requires review and approval by the New York City Public Design Commission (PDC), which may request changes to the design and placement of the proposed cabinet.

Basic dimensional requirements per the RC rules include:

- **Cabinet dimensions**
  - Maximum height: 8 feet and 5 inches
  - Maximum depth: 4 feet
  - Maximum width: 4 feet
  - If multiple cabinets are approved for installation, they must be at least 3 feet apart from each other, unless otherwise approved by FDNY.
- **Clearances**
  - A charging cabinet can be installed adjacent to a 90-degree or angled parking spot, provided that bollards are installed between the cabinet and the parking spot.
  - A charging cabinet must leave an unobstructed clear path for pedestrian flow. Generally, the minimum width of the clear path shall be the greater of 8-feet or one-half of the sidewalk width. If certain specified elements or objects are also present on the sidewalk then the required minimum 8-foot width may be increased to up to 12 and one-half feet.
  - Additional minimum clearances are required from other specified elements or objects that may also be present on the sidewalk. For more information, please refer to **section 7-06** in the RC Rules.
- **Installation**
  - Power: Below ground installation via conduit with electrical connection from petitioner's property
  - Cost: Covered by petitioner
  - Maintenance: Overseen by petitioner



## Approval Process

The revocable consent (RC) process takes an average of 12 months to complete. Petitioners can begin the RC process by contacting the DOT Revocable Consent Team at [revocableconsents@dot.nyc.gov](mailto:revocableconsents@dot.nyc.gov).

### FDNY Approvals

The New York City Fire Department (FDNY) must approve both the cabinet model and its specific placement on the sidewalk. Any cabinet installed through a DOT revocable consent must first undergo FDNY's Tech Management (TM) review process and receive a Certificate of Approval (COA) from FDNY. Petitioners intending to install a cabinet model already reviewed by TM and granted a Letter of No Objection (LNO) may submit the LNO in lieu of the COA.

Petitioners must include the COA (or LNO, if applicable) in the RC application package submitted to DOT. Additionally, the site plan must comply with FDNY clearance requirements as well as DOT clearances. Some of these FDNY clearances are specific to the cabinet model and determined through the TM review, while others apply to all outdoor cabinet installations.

More information on the TM process and additional installation considerations is available on [FDNY's webpage](#).

### The Revocable Consent Process

The revocable consent (RC) process involves three main phases:

- 1. Initial submission and development of plans (6 months):** A petitioner submits an initial documentation package, including a site plan prepared by a NYS registered design professional. The full list of required documents is listed below. Once the petitioner has submitted a complete application, they work with DOT's RC staff to revise the design plans, if necessary, and distribute conformed plans to appropriate Council Member, Community Board, Borough President, and DOT Borough Commissioner for review. The petitioner then works with DOT's Urban Design unit to develop a proposal for approval by the New York City Public Design Commission (PDC).
- 2. Submission approval and development of RC agreement (3.5 months):** Once design plans are approved by DOT, FDNY, and PDC, the RC staff drafts the revocable consent agreement and schedules a public hearing on the terms and conditions of the proposed revocable consent agreement. The petitioner is eventually responsible for signing four copies of the agreement, and providing additional supporting documentation, including a security deposit, payment of advertising fees for public hearing, and proof of insurance documentation that indicates that the kinds, amounts, and limits of the required insurance has been obtained by the petitioner.
- 3. Agreement approval and finalized registration (<2 months):** DOT and the Mayor's Office of Contract Services countersign the revocable consent agreement, then submit the agreement to the New York City Comptroller's Office for registration.

## DOB Approval

Approval by the New York City Department of Buildings (DOB) will be required for electrical connection to the benefiting property. Once the RC has been granted, the petitioner must apply for DOB permits and approval to proceed with the installation.

## Required Documents for a Revocable Consent Petition

Below are the required documents for the initial RC petition and for subsequent phases of the approval process. Petitioners can submit a petition by emailing these documents to [revocableconsents@dot.nyc.gov](mailto:revocableconsents@dot.nyc.gov). More details and templates of these documents can be found on the [DOT's Revocable Consents webpage](#).

### Documents needed for the initial RC submission:

- **Draft Petition Form**
- Copy of Deed
- Copy of Corporate Papers, Articles of Organization or Condominium Declaration
- Current IRS 147-C Letter or Current IRS SS-4 Letter
- **RC-10 Form**
- **Plan Set in Revocable Consent Format**
- Filing Fee (\$750)
- If the cabinet is proposed to be installed above a sidewalk vault, documentation that (1) the sidewalk vault is licensed pursuant to **§19-117** of the New York City Administrative Code; and (2) a certification by a registered design professional that the sidewalk vault has been inspected and can safely support the cabinet.

### Documents needed for the 2nd phase of the application process:

- **City of New York Substitute W-9 Form**
- **Affirmation Form**
- Certification of Insurance
- **Insurance Broker's Certification**
- Security Deposit (\$3,000)

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## Costs for Petitioner

### New petition – base costs

- Initial filing fee: \$750
- Security deposit: \$3,000
- If initial documents are approved, subsequent fees for remainder of application: \$1,250 +/- fee for advertising for public hearing
- If approved, over 10-year fixed term: \$25 annual fee

### New petition – additional costs based on specifics of the proposal

- Annual cost of maintaining the required insurance
- Cost to hire NYS registered Professional Engineers (PE) or Registered Architects (RA) to create revocable consent drawings
- Cost to hire PE or RA to generate a PDC submission

### Renewal costs

All petitioners qualify to renew their RC after the initial 10-year term.

- \$500 fee for renewal filing fee
- \$1,250 for renewal advertising
- Continued annual cost of maintaining insurance
- Additional security deposit amount increases based on the Consumer Price Index

Please note: These are current prices as of 2025, and these costs are subject to change over time.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

For any additional questions, please contact the DOT Revocable Consent team at [revocableconsents@dot.nyc.gov](mailto:revocableconsents@dot.nyc.gov).

### How do I submit a petition for a revocable consent?

Contact DOT's Revocable Consent team at [revocableconsents@dot.nyc.gov](mailto:revocableconsents@dot.nyc.gov) to begin the revocable consent process.

### Are there exceptions to paying an annual fee?

All petitioners must pay an annual fee. There are no exceptions.

### Who can apply for a battery swapping and charging cabinet revocable consent?

Adjacent property owners or tenants (with property owner's approval) of:

- Residential buildings with 5 or more dwelling units; or
- Buildings where the ground floor has a non-residential use

### Is battery swapping and charging open to the public?

There are two methods for users to utilize the cabinets:

- As a building amenity: only tenants (free or for a fee); or
- Through a membership: open to members of a paid service

### How much would it cost to petition for and receive a battery swapping and charging cabinet revocable consent?

Please see the Costs for Petitioner section of this document for more information.

### What are the design standards for cabinets?

Please refer to the Site Design section of this document for more information.

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## Additional Information

- [DOT: Revocable Consents](#) provides details on DOT's revocable consent process
- [DOT: Agency Rules on Revocable Consent for Electric Micromobility Device Battery Swapping and Charging Cabinets](#)
- [DOT: Street Design Manual](#) summarizes DOT street design guidelines
- [The Revocable Consent Rules](#) provide the requirements applicable to all revocable consents, including but not limited to required clearances
- [FDNY: E-Micromobility Cabinet Review and Installation](#) provides details about the TM review and FDNY clearances

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## Endnotes

1. In New York's Vehicle and Traffic Law (VTL), an e-bike, or bicycle with electric assist, is defined as a bicycle no more than 36 inches wide with an electric motor of less than 750 watts that is equipped with operable pedals and that meets the equipment and manufacturing requirements for bicycles as adopted by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. An e-bike must meet the requirements of one of three classes (Class 1, Class 2, or Class 3). See [section 102-c](#) of the VTL

2. See section 7-04(a)(38) of chapter 7 of Title 34 of the Rules of the City of New York.