

# Determining the Possible Effect of DILG Memorandum Circular 2007-001 (Prohibition of Tricycle along the National Highways) in Cabanatuan City as a Business Hub

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**Abstract:-** Just like in many of Southeast Asian countries, Tricycles in the Philippines are undeniably one of the most popular modes of public transportation. Apart from its accessibility, the uniqueness of its design allows them to transport passengers at almost any point. Hence, tricycles are being patronized not only in most parts of the countryside but also in some parts of Metro Manila. This study underlines the importance of addressing the social impacts of the directive on tricycleban plying on National Highways. In the case of Cabanatuan City, tagged as the “TRICYCLE CAPITAL OF THE PHILIPPINES”, the banning of tricycles on highways shall greatly affect the bustling economy of the city. Tricycle operation is one of the major provider of livelihood to tens of thousands of Cabanatuëños, thus the directive from the DILG on tricycle ban is a major concern for many. This study adopted both survey and descriptive research designs. Quantitative data were presented and analysed to gain better perspective of the actual predicament facing the most basic and relevant means of public transportation in Cabanatuan City. The study findings revealed that the local public transport route plans and policies that the city is devising aim to provide a more efficient and effective public transport system in Cabanatuan. An important additional issue that was identified is the fact that Single Motorcycles are allowed to traverse on main highways yet they also pose hazards to other motor vehicles and are often caught in fatal road mishaps; henceforth, recommends the government to take a look at the case and make valuable study if the same shall be banned too.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Public Transport sits at the heart of modern business and society. It is universally accepted that transport has played a predominant role in the economic development of all modern civilizations. Production and consumption on the scale and tempo of today would be inconceivable without a well-developed and operated transport system forming a vital link in supply chain management logistics. The provision of safe, effective, efficient and affordable transport is the cornerstone of sustainable economic and social development.

An effective transport system can therefore increase the commercial and labor market efficiency of a city, and help

provide an attractive platform for investors, and thereby grow the economy and create jobs. Hence, mobility is critical for people to access jobs.

Being the “TRICYCLE CAPITAL OF THE PHILIPPINES”, with 25,000 tricycles plying on every streets of the city, Tricycle is in reality the main mode of public transportation in Cabanatuan. If in Metro Manila, the iconic Jeepney is fondly called as the “King of the Road”; in Cabanatuan, they have their “Heroes of the Street”. For decades up to this modern day, tricycles continue dominating the streets which is an indication of their vital role in the continuing progress of the City of Cabanatuan.

Amidst the huge operation of tricycles in most parts of the country, the Department of Interior and Local Government has repeatedly urged all LGUs to enforce the nationwide ban of tricycles in the national highways. As stipulated in the DILG Memorandum Circular 2007-001, “For safety reasons, no tricycle or pedicab should operate on national highways utilized by four-wheel vehicles greater than four tons and where normal speed exceeds 40 kilometers per hour.” However, these tricycles and pedicabs may be allowed to traverse on National Highways if only there is no other alternative route.

Transport system challenges can be economic, environmental or social in character but the bottomline is providing an efficient transport system in a city to enable the smooth mobility of people and goods does not come at no cost. Cities today are faced with many problems, many of which are arising from the transport system itself. Despite cities having different characteristics and individualities, however, it has been found that they share common problems and objectives. However, each city at the moment tends to be autonomous and act in response to its own political pressures, making it very difficult to build an overall picture of how transport policies are being used to provide solutions and how effective these are.

Focusing on road transport, the purpose of this report is to identify the main transport problems confronting Cabanatuan City where a huge number of tricycles are at stake, and thus create the basis for the formulation of local

public transport route plan that will safeguard the livelihood of tricycle operators and drivers.

**II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Nowadays, Tricycle like the popular Sarao Jeepney are the iconic transportation modes that symbolize the ingenuity of the Filipino people. Jeepneys and Tricycles serve as the backbone of the Philippine Public Transportation System, providing cheap and easily accessible transportation services to the masses.

The heavy reliance on Tricycles in Cabanatuan, however, do come at a cost. The three-wheeled vehicle is seen unsafe and poses hazards to other motor vehicles on the road; these are the same reasons why the government is strictly implementing the “Memorandum Circular 2007-001” of the DILG.

In line with the DILG directive on tricycle ban, the primary question that comes to our mind, is it really possible for the government to do so? If so, does that mean following the said memorandum circular is the implementation of intra-zonal route for “For Hire Tricycles” in their respective area of operation. Again, the same poses threat not only to the Tricycles Operators but directly affecting the riding public.

If it is really the safety that is the primary concern of the government for not allowing the tricycles to traverse our

National Highways, will a change in the overall tricycle structure may be done for them to be given a certificate of public conveyance.

**III. METHODOLOGY**

A survey was conducted to collect data on the actual Passenger’s Count per Barangay and actual Vehicle Volume Count on strategic areas of the Maharlika Highway, a major traffic exchange in Cabanatuan. Table 3.1 and 3.2 shown below are the forms that were used in conducting the surveys.

The data collected from the survey conducted on two areas of the main National Highway would give us the actual volume of vehicles traversing the highway and how much of that total number of road users are tricycles.

It is also important to quantify, at the very least, how many Cabanatuëños rely on tricycles going to and from their destination, on a regular basis. This survey will show the domino effect of the DILG’s directive on tricycle ban on National Highways.

By way of carefully analysing the data gathered and conducting an in-depth research on the operation of tricycles, this paper will give us a better perspective of how serious the problem of Tricycle Operators and Drivers are facing and how the local government shall respond.

**Table 3.1**

Classified Traffic Volume Count Survey																																																																																																																																																					
LOCATION: MAHARLIKA ROAD in front of SM City Cabanatuan																																																																																																																																																					
TIME	TRICYCLE															PUJ/PUV															PRIVATE VEHICLE															TOTAL																																																																																																							
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**Table 3.2**

Passenger Count Survey			
Barangay			
Household	School Trips	Work Trips	Total Passenger Demand

**IV. THEORETICAL/CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Apparently, most of us do not know that as early as 1985, tricycle operation was already legalized. A few months before the historic People Power Revolution, former President Ferdinand Marcos released Letter of Instruction No. 1482, which recognized “that the tricycle plays an important role, in the existing public transportation hierarchy in municipalities, where it is, in most cases, the primary means of transportation.” Yet, no one knows that in the same Letter of Instruction No. 1482, there was already a provision stipulated under Section 10, to wit;

“Generally, tricycles are authorized to operate on any road within the municipality. However, they are prohibited to operate along the national highway or on any road which allows a maximum speed greater than 40 KPH, especially on well-paved, high speed roads, unless special tricycles/bicycles lanes on the shoulder are provided, except to cross”.

“In the case of cities or densely populated centers, they may travel within the city or municipality subject, to the conditions set forth in the immediately preceding paragraph. However, the Sangguniang Panlungsod may limit and fix the routes by adopting a scheme of boundaries as they may heretofore impose”.

This was exactly what the present government is strictly implementing right now, nationwide. Unfortunately, the succeeding administrations after the Marcos regime just shelved it. Perhaps, no one anticipated that tricycles will soon be one of the most commonly used modes of public transportation in the Philippines. If and only the previous leaders of the country have seen the value of Marcos order during their times, tricycle operation would have been better regulated by this day.

According to reports from private organizations, tricycles have already outnumbered the combined total of for-hire cars, utility vehicles, buses, trucks, and trailers. As of 2018, about 4.5 million registered for-hire tricycles and motorcycles operating in the Philippines as against to 1.5 million Public Utility Jeeps (PUJs), accounting for nearly 67.9% of the total for-hire vehicle population.

Right in the heart of the Province of Nueva Ecija, approximately 117 kilometers North of Metro Manila situated is the city popularly known as the “TRICYCLE CAPITAL OF THE PHILIPPINES” – CABANATUAN. An information shared by the Office of the Legalization Division of LGU Cabanatuan, a total of 22,500 “For-Hire” and 5,000 “Private Use Only” registered tricycles are registered in their office and, about 5,000 more colorums are operating as well.

Today, Cabanatuan City is most developed city in Nueva Ecija, the center of commerce, trade, education,

industry. Cabanatuan boasts of modern business leisure, shopping, medical and transportation facilities. Its business-friendly atmosphere, relative peace, culture of professionalism and craftsmanship of the people, have drawn investors to locate their business operations.

The regulation of tricycles and other variants of motorcycle-propelled vehicles were initially under national agency particularly LTFRB prior to the implementation of the 1991 Local Government Code. The powers of LTFRB over tricycles technically ceased last 30 June 1992. A month after, the DOTC issued “Guidelines to Implement the Devolution of LTFRB's Franchising Authority over Tricycles-for-hire to Local Government Units Pursuant to the Local Government Code” (RA 7160).

It was in the Year 1992 when the operation of tricycles in the city was legalized through a City Ordinance, yet tricycles are already the primary mode of public transport in Cabanatuan as early as 1980. Through the years, tricycles have been the source of livelihood of many Cabanatuēños.

## V. FINDINGS

The Sangguniang Panglungsod of Cabanatuan has just passed City Ordinance No. 001-2019 otherwise known as “The Traffic Code of the City of Cabanatuan” and a Technical Working Group is on its final stage of completing the Local Public Transport Route Plan for submission to LTFRB. Both efforts of the City Government are towards having an efficient, innovative, coordinated and safe, Public Transportation & Traffic Management System that is consonant to the continuously changing & progressing Cabanatuan.

Apart from being the primary mode of public transportation, tricycles are also considered as major contributor to the traffic congestion in Cabanatuan. Table 1.1 & 1.2 are showing the number of tricycles traversing the Maharlika Road at different time of the day. About 50% of the total number of vehicles, using the highway are tricycles, quite huge enough to add to the problem of traffic congestion in Cabanatuan City.

**Table 1.1**

<b>CLASSIFIED TRAFFIC VOLUME COUNT SURVEY</b>			
<b>Area: MAHARLIKA ROAD corner DEL PILAR STREET</b>			
	<b>TRICYCLE</b>	<b>PUJ/PUV</b>	<b>PRIVATE VEHICLE</b>
<b>6 - 7 AM</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>313</b>
<b>7 - 8 AM</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>486</b>
<b>8 - 9 AM</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>376</b>
<b>11 - 12 NN</b>	<b>1147</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>621</b>
<b>12 - 1 PM</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>734</b>
<b>4 - 5 PM</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>574</b>
<b>5 - 6 PM</b>	<b>1325</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>602</b>

**Table 1.2**

<b>CLASSIFIED TRAFFIC VOLUME COUNT SURVEY</b>			
<b>Area: MAHARLIKA ROAD in front of SM City</b>			
	<b>TRICYCLE</b>	<b>PUJ/PUV</b>	<b>PRIVATE VEHICLE</b>
<b>6 - 7 AM</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>521</b>
<b>7 - 8 AM</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>883</b>
<b>8 - 9 AM</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>421</b>
<b>11 - 12 NN</b>	<b>980</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>467</b>
<b>12 - 1 PM</b>	<b>1056</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>822</b>
<b>4 - 5 PM</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>633</b>
<b>5 - 6 PM</b>	<b>782</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>766</b>

**Table 1.3**

	Barangay	School Trips	Work Trips	Total No. of Passengers Demand
1	<b>Aduas Centro</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>590</b>
2	<b>Aduas Norte</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>428</b>
3	<b>Aduas Sur</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>455</b>
4	<b>Bagong Buhay</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>45</b>
5	<b>Bagong Sikat</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>234</b>
6	<b>Bakero</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>326</b>
7	<b>Bakod Bayan</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>405</b>
8	<b>Balite</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>143</b>
9	<b>Bangad</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>651</b>
10	<b>Bantug Bulalo</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>865</b>
11	<b>Bantug Norte</b>	<b>736</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>1421</b>
12	<b>Barlis</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>225</b>
13	<b>Barrera District</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>866</b>
14	<b>Bernardo District</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>467</b>
15	<b>Bitas</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>650</b>
16	<b>Bonifacio District</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>442</b>
17	<b>Buliran</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>151</b>
18	<b>Caalibangbangan</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>1050</b>
19	<b>Cabu</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>992</b>
20	<b>Calawagan</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>134</b>
21	<b>Camp Tinio</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>1009</b>
22	<b>Caridad</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>267</b>
23	<b>Caudillo</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>99</b>
24	<b>Cinco-Cinco</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>232</b>
25	<b>City Supermarket</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>98</b>
26	<b>Communal</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>152</b>

27	<b>Cruz Roja</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>557</b>
28	<b>Daan Sarile</b>	<b>881</b>	<b>639</b>	<b>1520</b>
29	<b>Dalampang</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>289</b>
30	<b>Dicarma</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>460</b>
31	<b>Dimasalang</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>403</b>
32	<b>DS Garcia</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>667</b>
33	<b>Fatima</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>255</b>
34	<b>General Luna</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>283</b>
35	<b>H. Concepcion</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>396</b>
36	<b>Ibabao-Bana</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>331</b>
37	<b>Imelda District</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>331</b>
38	<b>Isla</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>509</b>
39	<b>Kalikid Norte</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>547</b>
40	<b>Kalikid Sur</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>388</b>
41	<b>Kapitan Pepe</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>733</b>
42	<b>Lagare</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>358</b>
43	<b>Lourdes</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>344</b>
44	<b>M.S. Garcia</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>323</b>
45	<b>Mabini Extension</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>1143</b>
46	<b>Mabini Homesite</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>1173</b>
47	<b>Macatbong</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>257</b>
48	<b>Magsaysay Norte</b>	<b>728</b>	<b>618</b>	<b>1346</b>
49	<b>Magsaysay Sur</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>875</b>
50	<b>Ma. Theresa</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>284</b>
51	<b>Matadero</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>330</b>
52	<b>Mayapyap Norte</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>623</b>
53	<b>Mayapyap Sur</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>478</b>
54	<b>Melojavilla</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>278</b>

55	<b>Nabao</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>217</b>
56	<b>Obrero</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>332</b>
57	<b>Padre Burgos</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>94</b>
58	<b>Padre Crisostomo</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>734</b>
59	<b>Pagas</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>576</b>
60	<b>Palagay</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>368</b>
61	<b>Pamaldan</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>919</b>
62	<b>Pangatian</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>767</b>
63	<b>Patalac</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>146</b>
64	<b>Polilio</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>377</b>
65	<b>Pula</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>489</b>
66	<b>Quezon District</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>403</b>
67	<b>Rizdelis</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>281</b>
68	<b>Samon</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>162</b>
69	<b>San Isidro</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>744</b>
70	<b>San Josef Norte</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>755</b>
71	<b>San Josef Sur</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>568</b>	<b>1037</b>
72	<b>San Juan Accfa</b>	<b>736</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>1259</b>
73	<b>San Roque Norte</b>	<b>728</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>1153</b>
74	<b>San Roque Sur</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>837</b>
75	<b>Samnbermicristi</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>395</b>
76	<b>Sangitan West</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>291</b>
77	<b>Sangitan East</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>596</b>
78	<b>Sta. Arcadia</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>276</b>
79	<b>Sto. Niño</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>85</b>
80	<b>Sapang</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>141</b>
81	<b>Sumacab Este</b>	<b>986</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>1506</b>
82	<b>Sumacab Norte</b>	<b>918</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>1327</b>

83	<b>Sumacab Sur</b>	<b>754</b>	<b>693</b>	<b>1447</b>
84	<b>Talipapa</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>219</b>
85	<b>Valdefuente</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>1169</b>
86	<b>Valle Cruz</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>453</b>
87	<b>Vijandre</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>350</b>
88	<b>Villa Ofelia</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>309</b>
89	<b>Zulueta</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>574</b>
			<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30777</b>

Table 1.3 as shown above, represents the number of commuters going to school or work, per barangay, using tricycles on a daily basis.

The overwhelming results of the survey only proves that indeed, tricycles play a vital role in the everyday lives of the people therefore, the banning of tricycles on National Highways would greatly impact the reliance of commuters to the three-wheeled vehicle. First, a lot of Cabanatuanños livelihood will be affected and on the other hand, the commuters would have think of other ways of commuting. If one has to be transferred from one tricycle to another public utility vehicle just to get to and from his destination, then that would mean additional expense to the riding public. It is also notable to consider is the fact that there are only 160 registered Intra-City Public Utility Jeeps (PUJs) operating and only on the Central Business District of Cabanatuan.

Cabanatuan is indeed a haven for Motorcycle dealers, as matter of fact such business has boomed overwhelmingly in the last 5 years. With just basic requirements to submit and downpayment for as low as P3,000.00, one can simply acquire a motorcycle unit. That is one of the reasons why tricycle operation in the city has grown enormously.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

The problem facing tricycles in Cabanatuan and to most parts of the country is something that can be addressed by a holistic approach, using a methodological framework that can address urban transport problems with simultaneous consideration of all the problem areas. The transport problems that cities are faced with can be broadly categorised in five areas: land use; congestion; car dependence; environment; and other issues, which include safety, political difficulties and economic prosperity.

The presence of huge tricycle operations in Cabanatuan shows that there exists a good relationship between the tricycle/driver's association and the riding public. Tricycle is a culture that can never be removed in the daily lives of Cabanatuanños. Restricting tricycles on highway may cause a possible transfer of ride which means additional expense on the commuter.

Undeniably, tricycles are causing congestion not only on National Highways but in most parts of Cabanatuan. Tricycle Drivers seem unaware of the DILG directive and are often times driving on the center lanes.

LGU Cabanatuan is doing its best efforts to address the issue by way of improving the public transport & traffic management system. Both Intra-City PUJs and Tricycles Associations are part in formulation of the local public transport route plan to ensure equal opportunities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the different data gathered and the analysis undergone during the entire study, it is highly recommended that the economic impact in the implementation of the DILG directive shall be of utmost consideration. The livelihood of the tricycle operators and drivers will be affected as well as the expenses of the commuters.

A training seminar shall be conducted among TODAs in Cabanatuan to further educate them of the general driving rules which are safe and legal practices.

The popularity of tricycles as a mode of transportation is greatly offset by the fact that passengers are thought to be unsafe, moreover on highways. Perhaps, the city government may consider looking at the possibility of introducing the "ergonomic design" for tricycle sidecars. The modification may give tricycle more stability making it more comfortable and safe for the riding public.

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