

2026 Buddy Rider Rules

18th Annual Mackinac Bridge Antique Tractor Crossing

(Revised March 21, 2026 – v4)

All participants must agree to and comply with these rules for the full duration of the event. Failure to comply may result in immediate disqualification from this year's event and/or future events, with **no refunds**. Entry fees are **non-refundable and non-transferable** for any reason, including cancellation, illness, weather, or COVID-related issues.

The Mackinac Bridge Authority (MBA) has authorized Buddy Riders to participate in the **Owosso Tractor Repair & Parts Antique Tractor Parade & Show 2026 / 18th Annual Mackinac Bridge Antique Tractor Crossing**. Participation is subject to strict safety requirements. All Buddy Riders are required to follow the rules established by **Owosso Tractor Repair & Parts** and approved by the MBA.

These rules **will be enforced** before and after the event; **September 10 - 13, 2026**

Event Contact Information

For questions, please use **one of the contact methods below**:

Email: tractorcrossing@owossotractor.com

Phone: Call or text **Rebecca** at **248-222-9123 (new number as of Jan 2026)**

Please **do not contact Owosso Tractor Repair & Parts directly** for event questions, as this may delay responses. Using the contact methods listed above helps ensure timely and accurate information.

Allow up to **48 hours** for a response. You may also contact your **club representative** for assistance.

Deadlines

All new Buddy Seats must be registered no later than **June 15, 2026**, with no exceptions. Any required changes or modifications must be fully completed by **August 1, 2026, in order to participate in this year's event**.

Buddy Rider Eligibility Requirements

NO INDIVIDUALS UNDER THE AGES SPECIFIED BELOW ARE PERMITTED ON A TRACTOR WHILE ON THE MACKINAC BRIDGE.

- Buddy Riders seated next to the driver must be **16 years of age or older**.
- Tractor drivers must be **at least 18 years old**, in accordance with the event Rules and Regulations.
- **Riders ages 13–15 may participate in the 2026 Crossing only if their club permits riders in this age range and only when seated on a bench seat behind the driver with an adult.**
- **All Buddy Riders must be registered members of a participating club and must complete online registration.**
- **The allowance of Buddy Riders is the decision of each individual club.** Check with your club to confirm whether Buddy Riders are permitted at all and what age restrictions apply, based on the requirements listed above.
- **No one under these ages may be on the bridge for any reason**

These rules are strictly enforced. Violations will result in disqualification from the event.

By signing the **Registration Form**, Buddy Riders acknowledge and agree to comply with these rules. Failure to do so will result in disqualification of both the Buddy Rider and driver.

Buddy Rider Seat Requirements

Pre-Approval Requirements

The following Buddy Seats **require pre-approval prior to registration**:

- Any **new Buddy Seat**
- Any **previously approved Buddy Seat that has been changed in any way**, including changes to the seat, mounting, location, or configuration
- Any Buddy Seat that has been **moved to or installed on a different tractor**

Pre-approval must be completed prior to registration using the designated pre-approval process. After review, applicants will receive an email providing either an **approval number (required for registration)**, a list of required modifications, or a reason for denial.

Pre-approval decisions may take **up to three weeks** after submission.

Buddy Seats requiring pre-approval **must complete the online pre-approval process. Do not email photos or bring them to the Owosso, MI store location.**

Photo Submission Requirements

A **minimum of six (6) photos** showing different angles of the Buddy Seat must be submitted at the time of registration. Photos must clearly show how the seat is mounted and include all applicable safety components, including but not limited to:

- Seat mounting points
- Fenders
- Grab handle
- Brake drum guards
- Footrests / foot platform

All Buddy Rider seats must be positioned facing forward.

Required Seat Modifications

In **some cases**, a Buddy Seat may be **approved with required modifications**. The following is a list of common reasons a seat **may need to be modified** prior to the event. This list is not all-inclusive.

- Minor safety concerns identified during the review process
- Required additions or adjustments to meet current safety standards
- Improvements needed to seat mounting, support, or stability
- Updates needed to guards, grab handles, foot platforms, or backrests
- Changes required to ensure the seat does not interfere with tractor operation or visibility

Applicants will receive an email, outlining the changes needed.

All required modifications **must be completed by August 1, 2026** in order to participate in this year's event.

Photos documenting the completed modifications must be emailed by August 1, 2026.
Do not resubmit a pre-approval form for required modifications unless specifically instructed to do so.

Failure to complete and document required modifications by the deadline **may result in the Buddy Rider not being able to participate in the event.**

Seat Denials

A Buddy Seat may be denied approval for any of the following reasons (this list is not all-inclusive):

- The application was submitted without a full review of the Buddy Rider Rules
- Required information or photos were incomplete, unclear, or missing
- The seat or mounting method is determined to be unsafe
- The seat does not meet the stated safety or construction requirements

Applicants will receive an email detailing reasons for denial.

Seats that are denied due to failure to review the rules **may not be resubmitted for the 2026 event.**

Seat Belts & Liability

The use of seat belts is **optional** and left to the discretion of the Buddy Rider. Riders who choose to use a seat belt are encouraged to **review current safety guidance** regarding seat belt use on farm tractors.

If a seat belt is used, it must be properly and securely installed on the tractor.

General Rules and Enforcement

- There are no refunds for buddy registration, for any reason.
 - All Buddy Seats will be **inspected at the event** and may be rejected if the setup differs from the approved configuration or if the seat is deemed unsafe.
 - If an issue is identified during inspection, **a card will be placed on the tractor seat** noting the concern.
 - **Failure to comply with Buddy Rider Rules may result in removal from the event and possible disqualification from future events**, at the discretion of **Owosso Tractor Repair & Parts** and/or the **Club President**
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Seat & Tractor Safety Standards

- Buddy Seats **should be installed beside the driver** **whenever** possible. Riders may not be positioned directly behind the driver unless a separate safety bumper is installed. Buddy riders next to the driver must also have a bumper. Bumpers protect the driver and the rider if they get bumped from the back. Buddy Riders are not permitted to sit in front of the driver or over a fender under any circumstances.
 - **All Buddy Seats must be structurally sound.** Seats may not be rusted through or repaired using patch welding. **Tractors must be equipped with fenders** to protect riders from the rear tires.
 - **Seat placement must not interfere with the driver's ability to safely operate the tractor.** This includes, but is not limited to, steering, braking, clutch operation, and the driver's field of vision. Buddy Riders are never permitted to operate or have control of the tractor.
 - Any exposed rotating components near the operator area, **including brake drums**, must be **properly guarded** to protect both the driver and Buddy Rider.
 - Buddy Seats may **not be mounted solely to a straight rear drawbar** and must be fixed in position. Seats may not be raised or lowered using a hitch mechanism.
 - All Buddy Seats **must include a secure backrest, even if the tractor was originally equipped with a factory passenger seat.**
 - For rider safety and stability, a secure grab handle must be installed, and a secure, non-slip platform must be provided for the Buddy Rider's feet.
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Liability & Authority

- Owosso Tractor Repair & Parts and the Mackinac Bridge Authority **accept no responsibility or liability** for Buddy Riders, drivers, or tractors at any time during the event.
- **Club officials** retain the authority to **deny participation** to any Buddy Rider or driver.
- Owosso Tractor Repair & Parts reserves the right to **modify, amend, or update** these rules at any time.