

HALIFAX

Vehicle for Hire Review

Transportation Standing Committee

February 5, 2019

Presentation Overview

- Council motions
- Recommendations
- Background
- Taxi survey overview
- Discussion
 - Recommendations – Hara Report and citizen survey
- Taxi survey results

Vehicle for Hire Industry Review Motion

Create a Request for Proposal (RFP) toward an in-depth industry review and jurisdictional scan including recommendations not limited to the following:

- Incorporating new industry technologies, e.g., in taxi video / audio recording systems,
- GPS real-time tracking systems, smartphone applications; etc.
- License restrictions;
- Sensitivity and Safety Training;
- Passenger/Driver safety measures, e.g., in car shields, emergency alarm buttons and
- passenger trip logs;
- Standards of professional, moral and ethical conduct of license holders; and
- Conditions that would result in an automatic suspension or revocation of a license

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Accessible Motion

Request a staff report to the Transportation Standing Committee that will, after consultation with the Taxi & Limousine Liaison Group, taxi operators, dispatch companies, accessibility groups, and the Accessibility Advisory Committee to present options for the development of a service delivery contract or other arrangements with taxi operators and dispatch companies that will support a sustainable framework to ensure the 24 hour provision of an accessible taxi service.

Gender Diversity Motion

That the Transportation Standing Committee request a staff report to assess options for improving gender diversity of taxi drivers in HRM, including the option of creating a new category of Taxi Owners Licences to be issued to females only with consideration to the following:

- That the proposed new category would offer owners licenses to females without requiring them to be placed on a wait list; and
- The completion of a jurisdictional scan and consultation with the Taxi and Limousine Liaison Group

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Recommendations

- By-law T-1000 and Administrative Order 39 amendments – Attachment A
- Supplementary report regulating Transportation Network Companies (Uber or Lyft)
- Request HRM Charter amendment to provide business grants

Background

- Vehicle for hire industry
- Licensing Authority role
- Hara Associates industry review
- Online citizen survey

Taxi Survey Overview

- Poor service especially during weather events, weekend nights, large events ie. sports, New Year's Eve
- Accepting cash only
- Not driving fares outside of the downtown core
- Rude drivers
- Poor quality of vehicles
- Too expensive
- Long waits for taxis
- Not feeling safe
- Wanting Uber

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Discussion / Recommendations

- Safety
- Taxi zones
- Supply vs demand
- Accessible service
- Preparation for Transportation Network Companies (Uber or Lyft)
- Gender diversity
- Housekeeping items for By-law T-1000 and AO 39

Safety

Staff recommends:

- Global Positioning System (GPS)
- Mandatory training - knowledge and cultural sensitivity, winter driving course
- English language - Canadian Language Benchmark level 5, to apply

Taxi Zones

Staff recommends:

- Elimination of Halifax, Dartmouth, and County zones

Supply vs. Demand

Staff recommends:

- Increasing taxi owner license limitation from 1,000 to 1,600

Accessible Service

- Accessible licenses currently
- On-demand accessible 24-hour service
- Operating costs
- Programs of support historically
- Option of procuring accessible taxi services to supplement Halifax Transit Access-A-Bus

Staff recommends:

Amendment to the HRM Charter

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Preparation for Transportation Network Companies (Uber or Lyft)

- 88% want Uber or Lyft according to the citizen survey with 73% citing safety as the main reason

Staff recommends:

A supplementary report to explore regulation

Licensing Brokers

Staff recommends:

- Licensing brokers
- Increasing license fees

Gender Diversity

- 25 female taxi license owners
- 13 female taxi drivers on waitlist
- No municipality has a female only category
- 66% from citizen survey would feel safer with an all-female taxi service

Staff recommends:

Increase limitations from 1,000 – 1,600

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Housekeeping Items for By-law and AO 39

- Criminal offense or major driving offense in the last 10 years
- Child Abuse Registry
- Criminal Record Check/Vulnerable Sector Check 30 days – four months
- All vehicles accept credit card / debit
- Vehicle age no older than 7 years
- No talking with cell phones / headsets while operating vehicle for hire
- Motor Vehicle Inspection valid 30 days from expiry at minimum
- Require a staff report for taxi meter increase only
- Upgrade limousine standards

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Housekeeping Items for By-law and AO 39 cont'd

- Remove hotel standards
- Add cannabis and vaping to non-smoking section
- Halifax International Airport Authority shall set the rates from the airport
- Medical letter on file before service animal refusal
- Remove crossed out images in AO
- No limitations on accessible licenses – individual or corporation

Taxi Survey - Results

- 70% access to a car and 65% expense
- 71% not enough taxis, especially after 6 p.m.
- 90% use a dispatcher for service
- 88% would use Uber or Lyft
- 88% downtown Halifax
- 68% not pleased with the level of service in a taxi
- 66% would like an all-female taxi service

Taxi Survey – Results con't

Feel safer:

- 54% GPS systems
- 54% in-car cameras
- 73% Uber or Lyft

Recommendations

- By-law T-1000 And Administrative Order 39 amendments – Attachment A
- Supplementary report regulating Transportation Network Companies (Uber or Lyft)
- Request HRM Charter amendment to provide business grants