

## **The Taxicab Industry Review – Final Report**

<b>Date:</b>	January 8, 2014
<b>To:</b>	Licensing and Standards Committee
<b>From:</b>	Deputy City Manager, Cluster B and Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Reference Number:</b>	P:\2014\Cluster B\MLS\LS14001

### **SUMMARY**

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Guided by the City Council adopted *Principles for Regulating the Taxicab Industry* of consumer protection, the health and safety of passengers and drivers, the well-being of the City of Toronto, and the economic viability and sustainability of the taxicab industry, this report presents a series of recommendations, described in Attachment 1, which are intended to improve Toronto's taxicab industry and its' service to the public.

The Taxicab Industry Review commenced in December 2011 and since that time, the City of Toronto has, through extensive consultation and research, conducted a review of Toronto's taxicab industry.

In total, the Review has engaged more than 4,500 stakeholders, through more than 40 consultations, 100 stakeholder meetings and three issue-based surveys which have collectively had over 3,000 responses. Staff have also received and analyzed thousands of emails, phone calls, written proposals, and letters containing issues and recommendations as a part of the Review. This stakeholder engagement has been the foundation of the final recommendations.

In June 2013, the Framework for Change with preliminary recommendations for additional consultations was presented. During the summer and fall of 2013, staff held 15 consultations to specifically discuss and gain input on the Framework recommendations.

This report provides direction for modifications within the taxicab industry to address issues including accessibility, the licensing structure, driver safety, and technology.

As the culmination of the past two years of consultation and research, this final report presents a series of recommendations that include opportunities to be taken immediately to remedy industry identified issues, and some that provide for a phased implementation of initiatives to permit the industry to adjust and/or modify its business practices to accommodate.

This report also contains recommendations, and phased implementation approaches, to accommodate long-term strategies that enhance public safety, customer service, industry viability through efficiencies, and accessibility, through continued industry engagement with issue-specific focus.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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### **The Deputy City Manager, Cluster B, and the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards, recommend that:**

Toronto Taxicab Licence:

1. City Council adopt the creation of a new taxicab licence called the Toronto Taxicab Licence, including the properties as described in Attachment 1, beginning July 1, 2014 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 1)
2. City Council amend the properties of the Accessible Taxicab Licence by permitting Accessible taxicab owners to voluntarily surrender their current licences and be issued Toronto Taxicab Licences, subject to the applicable conditions and fee, effective July 1, 2014 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 2)
3. City Council amend the properties of the Ambassador Taxicab Licence by permitting Ambassador Taxicab owners to voluntarily surrender their current licences and be issued Toronto Taxicab Licences, subject to the applicable conditions and fee, effective July 1, 2014 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 4)
4. City Council amend the properties of the Ambassador Taxicab licence by permitting Ambassador Taxicab owners to sell their current Ambassador Taxicabs, where a Toronto Taxicab Licence may be issued to the purchaser, subject to the applicable conditions and fee, effective July 1, 2014 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 5)
5. City Council amend the properties of the Standard Taxicab Licence to transition the Standard Taxicab, at time of transfer, to the Toronto Taxicab Licence, subject to the applicable conditions and fee , effective January 1, 2019 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 6)
6. City Council direct the creation of a Toronto Taxicab Licence new owners training and refresher course by July 1, 2014 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 29)

7. City Council adopt amendments to Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 441, Fees and Charges, Appendix C, Schedule 12, to enact that the current fees for "Standard Taxicab Owner Licence" be applicable to the "Toronto Taxicab Licence"

Accessible Taxicab Strategy:

8. City Council direct that all new taxicab licences issued by the City, will require a wheelchair accessible vehicle (Attachment 1 – Rec. 8(1))
9. City Council endorse the goal that 6% of the Toronto taxicab fleet, representing 290 taxicabs, are available for metered on-demand wheelchair accessible taxicab service by 2015 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 8(2))
10. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to engage with Taxi Brokers to provide that passengers who require accessible taxicabs can receive service in the same amount of time as passengers who do not require accessible taxicabs, by January 1, 2019 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 8(3))
11. City Council authorize the issuance of up to 290 new taxicab licences for the provision of metered on-demand wheelchair accessible taxicab service, as required, to advance the Accessible Taxicab Strategy, commencing July 1, 2014 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 17)

Taxicab leasing including licensing of Fleet Operators:

12. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to conduct further consultation, and report back to the Licensing and Standards Committee by June 1, 2015, on the appropriate regulatory regime and necessary by-law amendments to facilitate common management of taxicabs, eliminate the role of designated agents and create a new licence category called "Fleet Operator". (Attachment 1- Rec. 7)

Addressing industry concerns, public safety interests and improving working conditions of taxicab drivers:

13. City Council direct the modification of the properties of the Ambassador Taxicab Licence by permitting a second driver to operate the taxicab for hours above the owner operated minimum hours and for no greater than the 84 eligible service hours of the taxicab, and to amend the owner's minimum driving hours from 36 hours per week to be 156 hours per month to enable operational flexibility, effective July 1, 2014 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 3)

14. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to undertake a review of flat rate wheelchair accessible transportation providers and report back to the Licensing and Standards Committee (Attachment 1 – Rec. 9)
15. City Council amend the vehicle regulations in the by-law to allow all approved alternative fuel and hybrid vehicles an extension from five (5) to seven (7) model years (Attachment 1 – Rec. 10)
16. City Council adopt the recommendation to maintain the current number of issued non-accessible taxicab licences (Attachment 1 – Rec. 11)
17. City Council endorse the adoption of a ‘passenger service level’ approach to determining when new licences should be issued, effective January 1, 2015 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 12)
18. City Council adopt the Taxi Research Partners’ Taxicab Demand Model, as outlined in Attachment 1 - Appendix B, to be used to project demand growth in the number of annual taxicab trips, every three (3) years, beginning in 2015 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 13)
19. City Council engage the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing regarding the impact of the Airport Exemption in the City of Toronto Act to the Toronto Taxicab industry (Attachment 1 – Rec. 16)
20. City Council adopt the recommendation to allow taxicab drivers to charge a \$25 cleaning fee if a passenger soils the taxicab (Attachment 1 – Rec. 23)
21. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to conduct a passenger survey in 2014 to understand the impacts and public opinion of mandating taxicab shields in Toronto taxicabs, and to report back to the Licensing and Standards Committee (Attachment 1 – Rec. 24)
22. City Council adopt the recommendation to allow taxicab drivers to request payment of a fare in advance, up to a maximum of \$25, when they deem necessary, and direct a review of its effects be undertaken in 2016 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 25)
23. City Council endorse the recommendation and commitment to improve the City’s ability to investigate fare jumping (Attachment 1 – Rec. 26)
24. City Council endorse the recommendation and partnership with Crime Stoppers to aid in the deterrence and solving of taxicab-related crime (Attachment 1 – Rec. 27)

25. City Council adopt the replacement of the current Passenger Bill of Rights, with the Taxicab Bill of Rights, which will enhance both passenger and driver rights (Attachment 1 – Rec. 28)
26. City Council direct that all taxicab drivers be required to complete a simulated defensive driving training as part of the new driver and refresher driver training courses, to aid in addressing public safety related to driver conduct, effective January 1, 2015 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 30)
27. City Council direct that enhanced accessibility training be included in all new and refresher taxicab driver and owner training courses, effective July 1, 2014 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 31)
28. City Council direct that all taxicab licensees who operate wheelchair accessible taxicabs be required to take an accessibility refresher course every four (4) years (Attachment 1 – Rec. 32)
29. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to undertake an evaluation and a pilot program, if feasible, of using fire hydrants as cabstands in the downtown core (Attachment 1 – Rec. 33)
30. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to undertake an evaluation and a pilot program, if feasible, of implementing Hail Spots (Attachment 1 – Rec. 34)

Continued industry engagement and consultation on issue-specific basis:

31. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to create a working group to review taxicab vehicle regulations, focused on ensuring taxicab regulations enable inclusive use, including wheelchair accessibility, and the feasibility of mandating accessible vehicles for all of Toronto's taxicabs in the future (Attachment 1 – Rec. 8(4))
32. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to undertake further consultation with Taxi Brokers on the mandating of brokerages to keep additional records of the date and time of pick-up for each taxicab trip and submission of records to the City (Attachment 1 – Rec. 14)
33. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to undertake further consultation with Taxi Brokers on the mandating of brokerages to keep additional records of the date and time of each wheelchair accessible taxicab dispatch and pick-up and submission of records to the City (Attachment 1 – Rec. 15)

34. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to create a working group and report back to the Licensing and Standards Committee in respect to technical specifications and the implementation of mandated passenger information monitors, to empower passengers and support accessibility, by January 1, 2016 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 18)
35. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to create a working group and report back to the Licensing and Standards Committee in respect to technical specifications and the implementation of mandated vehicle information technology, capable of generating operator logs unique to each vehicle and operator, by January 1, 2016 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 19)
36. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to create a working group and report back to the Licensing and Standards Committee in respect to mandating that all taxicabs, be equipped to accept debit and credit card payment using approved electronic payment technology, by January 1, 2016 (Attachment 1 – Rec. 20)
37. City Council direct that the current fare rates be maintained and that they be reviewed every two (2) years (Attachment 1 – Rec. 21)
38. City Council request the Taxicab Advisory Committee to review relevance of flat fees, discounts and maximum processing surcharges (Attachment 1 – Rec. 22)
39. City Council approve amendments to the City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 545, Licensing, to delete obsolete sections and terms as described in Appendix D of Attachment 1, subject to such technical and stylistic amendments as required by the City Solicitor and the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards
40. City Council approve amendments to the City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 545, Licensing, to reflect the recommendations above, subject to such technical and stylistic amendments as required by the City Solicitor and the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards and that in the event that in preparation of the by-law, additional issues arise which should be brought to the attention of Council, that a supplementary report be prepared for the consideration of Council.

### **Implementation Points**

Recommendations contained within Attachment 1 are subject to different effective dates as noted within the report and summarized in the implementation section of the attached report.

## Financial Impact

It is anticipated that there will be additional labour and non-labour expenses in the implementation of the numerous initiatives within this report and those arising through continued engagement with the industry.

These recommendations will be implemented over time and additional expenses will be absorbed within the gross 2014 Recommended Operating Budget for Municipal Licensing and Standards (ML&S) and are anticipated to be offset by the new fees. The additional expense to implement the recommendations is expected to be recovered through the associated new taxicab licensing fees.

In addition, ML&S is undertaking a comprehensive user fee review in 2014 for all of its user fees which will be addressed in the 2015 Operating Budget and reviewed for full cost recovery. **All fees, including those related to taxicabs will be included in this review.**

The proposed fees for the new Toronto Taxicab Licence are \$4,666.59 for the initial issuance and \$1,216.49 for annual renewal thereafter, based on the set rate for a similar business licence, the Standard Taxicab Owner Licence fees.

The projected issuance of the Toronto Taxicab Licence in 2014 is 145, with estimated revenue of \$0.675 million. For 2015, new issuance of licences is projected at 145, with estimated revenue of \$0.675 million plus renewal revenue of \$0.176 million, for total estimated revenue of \$1.53 million.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

## DECISION HISTORY

May 31, 2011, Licensing and Standards Committee requested that the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards, report back to the Committee on a plan for reviewing the taxicab industry.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2011.LS4.7>

September 9, 2011, the report "Industry Review Plan" was brought forward to the Licensing and Standards Committee by the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards. This report initiated what is now "Toronto's Taxicab Industry Review".

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2011/ls/bgrd/backgroundfile-40347.pdf>

October 2, 2012, City Council adopted the preliminary report from Toronto's Taxicab Industry Review and gave direction to report back ahead of the final report on the Taxicab Advisory Committee, Driver Bill of Rights and the complaints and compliments process.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.LS15.1>

February 20, 2013, City Council directed the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards, to open the Taxicab Advisory Committee meetings to the public and provide updates on its activities to the Licensing and Standards Committee as well as the Disability Issues Committee.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.LS18.5>

June 27, 2013, the Framework for Change, with 44 preliminary recommendations for improving the taxicab industry, was presented to the Licensing and Standards Committee. The committee directed the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to engage the industry on these recommendations and prepare a final report.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.LS22.1>

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

There are 4,849 licensed taxicabs operating in the City of Toronto and it is estimated that 65,000 trips are taken in taxicabs every day. Residents and tourists alike depend on taxicab service to get them where they need to go.

Toronto's Taxicab Industry Review began in 2011 and included three phases: consultation, research and production of the final report. The review has focussed on extensive consultation with direct and indirect stakeholders, related industries, the public and appropriate City divisions. The consultations and research informed the Framework for Change, which made preliminary recommendations for improving the taxicab industry.

Major issues arising from the consultations and through research have provided insight and identified opportunities for improvements to the industry.

Major issues identified during the review have included:

- Lack of metered on-demand accessible taxicab service in Toronto
- Concerns for the safety and working conditions of taxicab drivers
- Shortcomings of safe driving practices by Toronto taxicab drivers
- Perceived inequities between Ambassador and Standard taxicab owners
- Impacts of non-driving industry participants such as 'briefcase' agents
- Ambiguity in the by-law relating to the City's role in regulating the industry

Since the release of the Framework in June 2013, staff have held 15 consultations, stakeholder meetings and conducted surveys to gain input on the preliminary recommendations that address the major issues as identified through the consultations. The findings of this engagement process have shaped the final recommendations for improving the taxicab industry in Toronto.



## COMMENTS

After extensive consultation, it became apparent that there are several opportunities for improving Toronto's taxicab industry.

Guided by the City Council adopted principles of consumer protection, health and safety of passengers and drivers, well-being of the City of Toronto and the economic viability of and sustainability of the industry, staff have prepared recommendations to address the issues as heard through the consultations.

Attachment 1 of this report outlines 35 recommendations that aim to create an accessible, fair and sustainable industry that is viable for participants and delivers a high level of customer service for all consumers.

Key recommended changes are:

- Phased in and long-term implementation of an inclusive and accessible taxicab fleet for the provision of metered on-demand taxicab service for all
- Require new taxicab owners to drive their taxicabs in a more cost effective model
- Mitigate the impact of operating layers to keep fares affordable
- Create a new licence category for Fleet Operators to facilitate common management
- Improve driver safety and rights
- Implement technology which will empower passengers, and provide for evidence-based regulation

## Report Highlights

A balanced approach to regulating taxicabs ensures a safe, equitable and healthy industry that meets the needs of Toronto's residents and visitors.

### Long Term Goal of 100% Accessible Taxicabs

People with disabilities, including those who rely on wheelchair accessible transportation, face significant challenges in obtaining affordable and on-demand taxicab service in Toronto. During the review, it became apparent that people who require a wheelchair for mobility cannot access Toronto's taxicab service.

Only 3.5% of all Toronto taxicabs are currently wheelchair accessible. Most of these taxicabs are not readily available for on-demand taxicab service because they are contracted to deliver public transportation service through TTC Wheel-Trans. This means that residents and visitors who are in wheelchairs cannot expect on-demand taxicab service in Toronto as is available to other passengers.

The City of Toronto is committed to building an inclusive society and providing an accessible environment which ensures that all individuals have access to the City's services and programs in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with

disabilities. Ensuring access to accessible taxicab service, including wheelchair accessible, is part of the City's commitment to being an inclusive place to live and visit.

To ensure the same level of service is provided for passengers who have mobility issues, including requiring the use of a wheelchair, it is recommended that Toronto set a long term goal of 100% accessible taxicabs, including wheelchair accessibility. This would mean that at a point in the future, all people, regardless of mobility or disability, would be able to obtain inclusive, accessible and equitable taxicab service, including the ability to hail a taxicab on the street.

This goal would be implemented through a measured approach.

The Pan American and the Para-Pan American Games will be hosted by Toronto in 2015. Ten thousand athletes, coaches and officials from 41 countries across the Americas and the Caribbean, and 250,000 visitors will be in Toronto during the Games. As part of the economic, social, cultural and community benefits that the Games will bring for Toronto residents and businesses, the City should ensure there are wheelchair accessible taxicabs to serve visitors, spectators and volunteers, which will then become part of the Games' legacy.

Currently the City does not have metered on-demand wheelchair accessible taxicab service, so, it is therefore recommended that all new licences issued, or licences transferred, will require a wheelchair accessible vehicle.

A goal of 6% wheelchair accessible taxicabs in Toronto has been set as a preliminary benchmark, to enable wheelchair accessible taxicabs in time for the Pan Am and Para-Pan Am Games. This is the equivalent of 290 wheelchair accessible taxicabs available for metered on-demand taxicab service by July 2015. This goal should be achieved either through the transfer of existing licences or new incremental licence issuance.

It is recommended that ML&S engage with taxicab brokers and other stakeholders to ensure the attainment of service equivalency by 2019. This would mean that passengers requiring wheelchair accessible taxicabs would be able to access accessible taxicabs in the same amount of time as people who do not require an accessible taxicab.

It is further recommended that an accessible vehicle working group including industry stakeholders be created to review vehicle regulations to ensure they are inclusive, and to make recommendations on the feasibility of mandating that all taxicab vehicles be made accessible, including wheelchair accessible, and including the consideration of a dedicated accessible vehicle with a report back to Council at a later date.

### **Toronto Taxicab Licence**

Many taxicab industry stakeholders were adamant during consultations that there is an imbalance in the industry that prevents Toronto's taxicabs from delivering the best level

of service. Inequity in licensing regimes, unnecessary ‘middlemen’, and prohibitive regulations were identified as key issues.

To address these issues, staff evaluated several licensing approaches suggested by the industry. Bolstered by international case studies and research, it is recommended that the City create a new licence and harmonize all existing licences to the new Toronto Taxicab Licence over time.

The Toronto Taxicab Licence is a transferable licence that must be driven full-time by its owner, but can also be rented out to other drivers for a second shift. This licence will require a wheelchair accessible vehicle.

The Toronto Taxicab Licence will:

- minimize the impact of operating models that encourage absentee ownership;
- limit the role for non-driving participants, which add operating costs and impact fares;
- enable owners to cover their operating costs without compromising driver or passenger health and safety; and
- provide opportunities for individuals wishing to enter or advance from a driver to an owner, and provide an exit strategy for owners wishing to leave the industry at a time of their own choosing.

### **Amendments to Existing Licences**

In the interim, the City will revise properties of the current Standard, Ambassador and Accessible licences to address issues that have been identified and align them more closely with the principles of the Toronto Taxicab Licence.

Recommended changes to the current owner’s licences include:

- Ambassador taxicab owners will continue to drive their taxicabs; however, they will be able to rent to one other driver providing the taxicab continues to operate for only one shift per day. Their driving hour requirement will change from 36 hours/week to 156 hours/month, to permit operational flexibility.
- Ambassador and Accessible taxicabs are to be made transferrable to a Toronto Taxicab Licence.
- Standard taxicab owners will continue to operate under the same conditions, except that they will only be able to relinquish operation of their taxicab to either a Fleet Operator or a lessee, not both, thereby reducing the number of operating layers. This will be included in the review of leasing and licensing of Fleet Operators, and subject of a future report.

The Toronto Taxicab Licence will replace the current Standard, Ambassador and Accessible taxicab owner’s licences as the taxicabs are sold and the licences are transferred, pursuant to a phased implementation plan.

### **Fleet Operator Licence**

Standard taxicab owners may only own one taxicab licence. However, 76% of Standard taxicabs are managed by someone other than the owner. Designated Agents currently manage 50% of Standard taxicabs through fleets and in conjunction with taxicab garages that maintain vehicles. The role of the Designated Agent has been utilized to facilitate these fleet operations, but without sufficient oversight. It has also resulted in the evolution of the "briefcase" agent, which the industry almost unanimously opposes.

The fleet operator plays a significant role in the industry, and was also identified as an area of concern, particularly by taxicab drivers. The role of these operators is currently unregulated, as the common management of Standard licensed taxicabs has not been adequately addressed. The final report makes a recommendation to consult further on the creation of a new business licence that recognizes and appropriately regulates the role of common management of taxicabs. It is anticipated that these Fleet Operators will also play a role in the new Toronto Taxicab Licence, as a conduit between owners and drivers.

The Fleet Operator Licence would allow for enforcement and regulation of the daily operations of Standard taxicabs. It would allow the City to audit and inspect records, and would require a place of business and operation, in compliance with land-use controls.

The new business licence would bring transparency to this role and assists in improving the working conditions for shift drivers. Permitting and regulating the common management of these fleets, may also benefit their procurement of fleet insurance.

Further consultation on the creation of this licence and the necessary by-law amendments necessary to enable common management of taxicabs will be reported back to the Licensing and Standards Committee by June 1, 2015.

### **Improve Driver Safety**

Driving a taxicab is not always a safe job. Long hours spent working alone, often at night, carrying large sums of cash and dropping passengers off in unfamiliar or unsafe locations can put drivers at risk.

In order to permit that drivers are enabled to manage their own risk within their workplace, the taxicab, a recommended amendment to the By-law would permit drivers to ask passengers for payment in advance, at their discretion, up to a maximum of \$25. The effect of this on passengers, would be subject to review in two (2) years time.

The mandatory requirement for credit and debit machines in all taxicabs is also being recommended in an effort to decrease the amount of cash taxicab drivers carry, as a strategy to lower their risk of being a target of robbery. Further work on this is being recommended, as a part of the working group to review vehicle technology, and will be subject to a future report.

Taxicab owners are currently permitted to install an in-car partition commonly called a "shield", to create a physical barrier between passengers and drivers. Currently, only one (1) taxicab in Toronto has opted to install a shield.

The opinions of Toronto's taxicab industry participants and passengers are varied when it comes to taxicab shields. Many experienced drivers claim that shields are not necessary and that drivers can and should manage customers using their own judgment and actions. Other drivers argue that a shield is the only physical safety protection measure available to them. In addition to debates over the effectiveness of a taxicab shield in deterring violent crime, drivers express concern over who would be responsible for paying for the installation of a shield and the impact a shield may have on customer service due to the physical barrier taking up space in the vehicle.

In order to gather a more fulsome understanding of industry participants' views on shields and other safety measures, a short, anonymous survey on taxicab driver safety was mailed to every licensed taxicab driver, owner and broker. More than 14,100 surveys and self-addressed stamped envelopes were sent. More than 3,600 completed surveys were returned to ML&S. Results show that approximately 56% of drivers were in favour of mandatory shields.

This report recommends that a survey of the public be conducted regarding the installation of mandatory shields, along with further consultation with the industry.

### **Improve Driving Training**

All taxicab drivers are currently required to attend in-class training. During the review, staff heard that despite this, some taxicab drivers still engage in risky driving behaviours.

Training enhancements would require all taxicab drivers to complete a simulated in-car driving course to better equip them with defensive driving skills. The course would become part of the initial taxicab driver training and then be required every four (4) years thereafter. A significant advantage of simulator training is that scenarios can be tailored for taxicab specific issues such as driving in high traffic conditions with cyclists and pedestrians. Improved training has been identified as beneficial to risk ratings by insurance providers.

Subject to the endorsement of this recommendation, City staff will conduct further analysis to determine the most appropriate manner in which to integrate this component into the new taxicab driver and refresher course curriculum.

### **Enhance Customer Service with Technology**

Technology enhancements in Toronto's taxicabs can increase the accessibility of taxicab service, protect driver and passenger safety, improve customer service, and strengthen the City's ability to conduct evidence-based regulation.

It is being proposed that the City develop a working group to review the technical specifications and make recommendations in respect to implementing mandated taxicab vehicle technology, including:

- Passenger Information Monitor: a digital screen that is connected to the meter and is able to communicate the fare, the taxicab number, the driver's picture, the location of the taxicab and other information to the passenger both audibly and on-screen.
- Vehicle Information Technology: will allow for the collection of data by the City, to determine the operator of a taxicab, ensure adherence to the owner driving provisions, and to assist in the assessment and determination of future licence issuance.
- Mandatory debit/credit terminals: to enhance driver safety and customer service

### **Summary**

The Municipal Licensing and Standards Division is committed to ongoing industry engagement, to ensure the appropriate and necessary improvements to the regulations governing the industry will continue to be made over time.

The recommendations contained within this report are designed to enable operational flexibility, ensure the appropriate level of regulation to meet public expectations, contribute to a higher calibre of service for all consumers and improve working conditions for the participants.

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### **SIGNATURE**

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### **SIGNATURE**

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### **ATTACHMENT**

Attachment 1: Taxicab Industry Review Final Report