



## CITY COUNCIL REFERRAL OF MEMBER MOTION

### Fairness for Toronto Taxicab Licence Holders

**Date:** May 25, 2018  
**To:** Licensing and Standards Committee  
**From:** City Council  
**Wards:** All

#### CITY COUNCIL DECISION

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City Council on May 22, 23 and 24, 2018, referred Motion MM41.13 to the Licensing and Standards Committee.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

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Councillor Janet Davis, seconded by Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to develop a plan for the completion of the review of accessible ground transportation and Toronto Taxicab Licences, in consultation with affected parties, as approved by Council in 2016, and to report to the July 6, 2018 Licensing and Standards Committee meeting with an outline and schedule for completion of the review in early 2019.

#### SUMMARY

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In 2014, the City approved the final report of the Taxicab Industry Review. The changes moved the Taxicab Industry further toward an owner-operated accessible taxi system by creating a new licence called a Toronto Taxicab Licence. Council adopted a policy that all new licences would be accessible, and approved issuing Toronto Taxicab Licence licences to achieve 6 percent accessible vehicles (290) in 2015 and service equivalency by 2019.

All Standard and Ambassador plate-owners were required to convert to Toronto Taxicab Licence licences overtime, which was expected to take 30 to 40 years. Standard plates could be transferred and sold to another licensed driver; but not passed on to family upon death. There would be new provisions to license Fleet Operators and 'middlemen' or agents would be eliminated.

In 2016, City Council reversed its taxi reforms and approved a new Vehicle for Hire By-law. The new by-law introduced a new licence class called a Personal Transportation Company, and a Personal Vehicle for Hire Licence. The policy and by-law authorized an open market for Personal Transportation Companies and licences and allowed for price surging and other unregulated fares; allowed for the conversion of Ambassador plates, not Toronto Taxicab Licence plates, to Standard Plates; allowed all licences to again be sold and transferred to family members, and re-established corporate ownership, paid agents, garages and other middlemen to be involved in the industry. It eliminated requirements for City training and inspections and promised a report back on requirements for in-car cameras. Council also called for several reports back on the roll-out and outcomes of the new system after one year.

The taxi plate owners who converted to the Toronto Taxicab Licence have experienced hardship and believe the complete reversal of the 2014 reforms were discriminatory and unfair. They have been trying to raise their issues with Municipal Licensing and Standards, and have brought forward their concerns to the Ombudsman.

We have met with Toronto Taxicab Licence drivers and have heard their concerns. They believe action is needed to increase fairness if Toronto Taxicab Licences are going to survive as a viable operation in the taxi business. Issues they want addressed are: ability to transfer Toronto Taxicab Licence to standard plates, waiving of annual licence fees which was not applied fairly; ability to replace vans with sedans possibly on a rotational basis at the end of 7 years; assistance with the costs of purchasing and operating accessible vans; finding ways to communicate that Toronto Taxicab Licences are for everyone, not just for people with disabilities; inability to lease licences; accessible ridership and fares are very low, and most Toronto Taxicab Licence drivers are losing money or leaving the cars off the road; Toronto Transit Commission Wheel Trans will not use the services of these vehicles; and Personal Transportation Companies do not appear to be meeting their requirements.

On May 3, 4, and 5, 2016 City Council approved the following:

98. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to report back to the appropriate standing committee in the third quarter of 2016 on a strategy to collect funds from all non-accessible vehicles-for-hire to provide incentives to increase the number of on-demand, metered accessible taxicabs available to the public as well as creating a working group composed of stakeholders (such as staff in the Equity, Diversity and Human Rights Office) and accessibility experts and advocates to, amongst other issues, develop a funding program and process that will advance inclusive on-demand ground transportation for all users and an Accessibility Strategy which includes access and service standards, car design, training, etc.

This report has not been done, and there is no indication if and when it will be. The outcome of the most recent taxi-cab changes have resulted in an unfair, and unsustainable burden on Toronto Taxicab Licence owner-operated drivers. We are therefore requesting that Council support this report request.