

Accessibility Feedback on Vehicle-for-Hire Accessibility Strategy

Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee

Presentation by Director, Business Licensing and Regulatory Services
Municipal Licensing and Standards





Presentation Outline

1. Overview of Vehicle-for-Hire Review
2. Background and General Information
3. Accessibility Strategy: approaches being considered
4. Proportion of wheelchair-accessible taxicabs in Toronto

Acronyms Used

MLS: the City's Municipal Licensing and Standards division.

PTC: Private Transportation Company, such as Lyft and Uber.

TTC: Toronto Transit Commission.

TTL: Toronto Taxicab Licence; these are wheelchair-accessible taxicabs licenced by the City.

WAV: Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle.

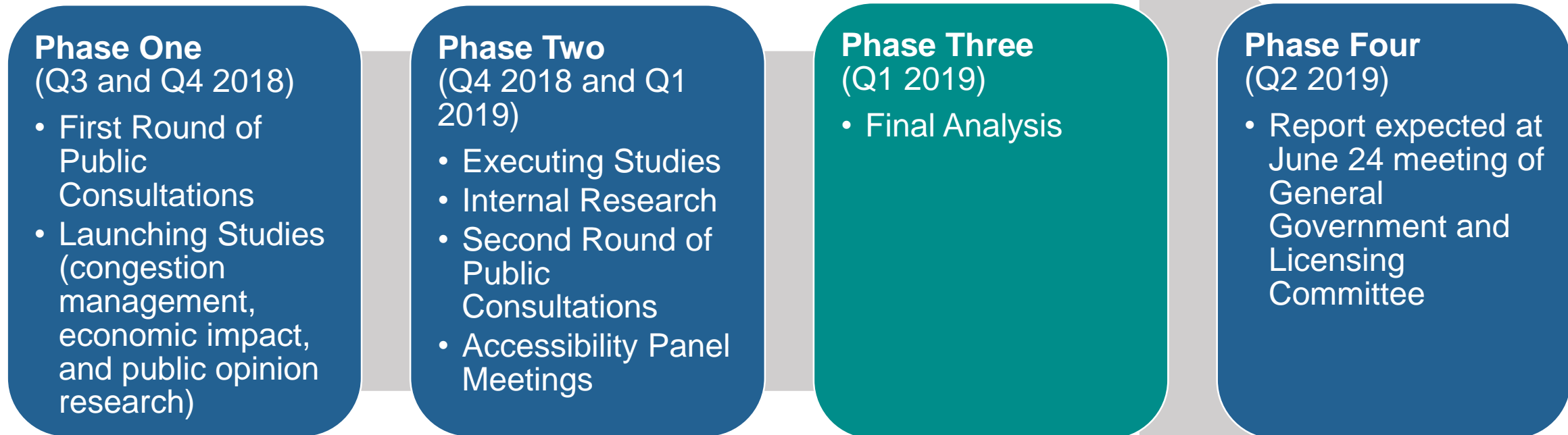
Purpose of Review

The Vehicle-for-Hire Bylaw came into effect in July 2016 to establish a set of rules and regulations for taxicabs, limousines, and private transportation companies.

City Council has directed MLS to review and report on:

- how to proceed with an accessibility strategy;
- results of a congestion management study and an economic impact study; and
- new and/or outstanding issues, such as training, mandatory equipment and other considerations related to licensing and public safety.

Vehicle-for-Hire Review Timeline



Accessibility Context and Directives

City Council has endorsed the “goal of achieving an inclusive and accessible vehicle-for-hire industry that will ensure that all Toronto residents and visitors have equal access”.

- Committee and Council have also directed staff to report on options to advance accessibility in the industry, including:
 - considering the creation of an accessibility fund;
 - promoting side-entry accessible taxicabs; and
 - creating a working group to advance accessible vehicle-for-hire service.

AODA Requirements

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* requires the City to:

- Consult with TAAC to determine the proportion of on-demand accessible taxicabs required;
- Identify progress made toward meeting the need for on-demand accessible taxicabs; and
- Ensure that owners and drivers are prohibited from charging a higher fare for people with disabilities, are prohibited from charging a fee for the storage of assistive devices, and adhere to other accessibility requirements.

Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles

- The City of Toronto licenses **682** wheelchair accessible taxicabs:
 - **579** Toronto Taxicab Licences (TTL) Each TTL must be associated with a licensed brokerage
 - **103** standard plates that are wheelchair accessible
- Approximately 13% of the City's licensed taxicabs are wheelchair accessible.

PTC Accessible Service

- Private transportation companies (PTCs) with more than 500 drivers must provide WAV service.
- This service must be available when requested within the average wait time for non-accessible taxicab service (11 minutes) and the fare cannot be higher than the fare charged for the lowest-cost non-accessible ride.

Accessible Trips in Toronto

- Staff compiled 2018 data from TTC, brokerages, and PTCs to better understand the volume of accessible trips in Toronto.
- For on-demand WAV service, staff contacted five large brokerages for data (these have approximately 75% of TTLs)
- Combined, these brokerages serviced approximately 500,000 WAV taxicab trips in 2018 and 760,000 sedan-specific requests.
 - The majority of WAV trips were done by a brokerage that uses only wheelchair accessible taxicabs and not all of their trips would be for people requiring accessible service
- These values should only be considered an estimate due to the challenges of collecting and verifying the data.

Public Consultations

- **September and October 2018:** staff hosted nine public consultation meetings on the vehicle-for-hire bylaw.
 - Staff heard concerns about the higher cost of providing accessible service, that sedan taxicabs are more accessible for some individuals, and that metered, on-demand wheelchair accessible service is not always available.
 - Suggestions heard included considering a dedicated accessibility fund to subsidize the cost and maintenance of accessible vehicles-for-hire and updating training requirements drivers.
- **March 2019:** staff hosted a second round of public consultations. Staff are in the process of compiling feedback and will include this in the staff report to Committee in June 2019.

Vehicle-for-Hire Accessibility Panel

Staff convened an Accessibility Panel comprised of users, advocates, experts, and providers of accessible service. Staff consulted on potential approaches and received the following feedback:

- **Data Collection:** staff heard that the City should be collecting more data to assess wait times, service delivery, and demand for service.
- **Accessibility Fund:** staff heard general support for an accessibility fund and the need for accountability.
- **Service Standards:** staff heard an accessible fund should consider tying funding to service standards to encourage vehicles to be on the road
- **Driver Training:** staff heard that staff should consider accessible training content, method of delivery, and opportunities to centralize training.

Vehicle-for-Hire Accessibility Strategy

- To promote equal access to Toronto's vehicle-for-hire industry for all residents and visitors;
- To enhance the delivery of high-quality accessible vehicle-for-hire service in Toronto; and
- To build capacity for the City to monitor accessible vehicle-for-hire service and respond to unmet accessibility needs.

Accessibility Strategy Considerations

- Creating an accessibility fund to be disbursed to owners and drivers of wheelchair accessible taxicabs based on service standards.
- Updating training requirements to ensure consistent and relevant training.
- Monitoring delivery of accessible vehicle-for-hire service, evaluating effectiveness of the accessibility fund, and identifying unmet accessibility needs.

Proportion of Wheelchair Accessible Taxicabs in Toronto

- The Accessibility Strategy being considered focuses on encouraging, through financial incentives, accessible taxicabs to be on the road delivering service and does not include the issuance of more accessible taxicab licences.
- Staff plan to collect data from the industry to better assess demand and monitor accessible service delivery.
- If more TTLs are required, staff would first consult with the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee and report to Council with recommendations.



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Appendix A: Previous Committee and Council Items



Work Plan for the Review of Chapter 546, Vehicles-for-Hire

(June 2018)

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.LS26.3>

A New Vehicle-for-Hire Bylaw to Regulate Toronto's Ground Transportation Industry

(May 2016)

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.LS10.3>

The Taxicab Industry Review – Final Report

(February 2014)

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.LS26.1>

Appendix B: Links to Vehicle-for-Hire Review Webpages



Vehicle-for-Hire Review General Information

<https://www.toronto.ca/vehicleforhirereview>

Link to Subscribe to Email Updates

<https://www.toronto.ca/home/social-media/e-updates/>