

Attachment 3: Summary of Public Engagement for Vehicle-For-Hire Net Zero Emissions by 2030

September 2023

Background

To inform the proposed approach for transitioning the vehicle-for-hire (VFH) industry to net zero emissions by 2030, MLS staff conducted public engagement from March 31, 2023 to April 21, 2023. A summary of the draft approach was available on the City's "Vehicle-for-Hire Bylaw Updates" webpage for respondents to review prior to participating in a survey and two virtual information sessions on April 17 and 19. This attachment provides a summary of these engagements.

Staff promoted these engagement opportunities through:

- The City's website (including alerts on relevant webpages).
- The City's various corporate social media accounts.
- Outreach to Councillors, and relevant stakeholders, such as TAF, members of the VFH industry, the VFH Net Zero Working Group, and those who applied to participate in the VFH Net Zero Working Group.
- An email to those who have signed up for VFH updates on the City's e-Updates webpage (approximately 300 subscribers).

Online Public Survey

Staff held a public online survey to better understand the level of support for the proposed regulatory approaches and to inform the staff report's recommendations. In addition to seeking feedback on the draft approaches, survey respondents were also asked optional socio-demographic questions. Survey results were separated between self-identified members of the VFH industry and the general public. Feedback from both groups is separately summarized below.

The survey was advertised through the City's internet site, the City's various corporate social media accounts, outreach to Councilors, communication to relevant stakeholders, and emails to those who signed up for VFH updates through the City's e-updates page (approximately over 300 subscribers). The survey was open from March 31 to April 21, 2023. In total, 63 individuals took the survey, with 45 completing it in full.

Key survey responses and feedback from members of the VFH industry:

- 23 individuals from the industry took the survey, with 16 reaching the end.
- The demographic profile of industry respondents for those who answered the optional socio-demographic questions:

- 67% of respondents lived in the City of Toronto
 - The most common household income response was \$30,000-\$49,999
 - More respondents were renters rather than homeowners
 - The average household size was 3.5 members
 - The majority of respondents were Canadian citizens
 - Roughly half of these respondents self-identified as racialized
- Respondents were split on their support for the proposed approach: 50% were in support, 36% were not in support, and 14% were neutral.
 - For those who indicated they were unsupportive of the proposed regulatory approach, the top concerns were:
 1. Cost of installing a home vehicle charger;
 2. Availability of public vehicle charging; and
 3. Availability of zero-emission vehicles.
 - 61% of respondents were supportive of removing the seven-year vehicle age limit for zero-emission vehicles.
 - Just over half of respondents were unsupportive of only plug-in hybrid vehicles being permitted until 2032.
 - Suggestions for expanding the vehicle charging network included prioritizing high population density areas, including shopping malls, specific charging locations for VFH only, and near gas stations.
 - Just over half of respondents were supportive of reducing some licensing fees for those who operate with a zero-emission vehicle.
 - Respondents were split on how likely they were to purchase a zero-emission vehicle before 2030 after hearing the proposed changes. 50% responded with neutral or likely.

Key survey responses and feedback from members of the general public:

- 40 individuals took the survey from the general public, with 29 reaching the end.
- The demographic profile of general public respondents for those who answered the optional socio-demographic questions:
 - 86% of respondents lived in the City of Toronto
 - The most common household income response was \$150,000 or more
 - More respondents were homeowners rather than renters
 - The average household size was 2.4 members
 - All respondents were Canadian citizens
 - Slightly more than half of these respondents self-identified as White
- 74% of respondents were supportive of the proposed regulatory approach.

- 76% of respondents were supportive of removing the seven-year vehicle age limit for zero-emission vehicles.
- 62% of respondents were supportive of only plug-in hybrid vehicles being permitted until 2032.
- Suggestions for expanding the vehicle charging network included converting existing parking lots and Green P parking for electric vehicles, increased availability at high population density areas (e.g., transit terminals, shopping malls, and healthcare facilities) and near major event spaces and schools.
- 76% of respondents were supportive of reducing some licensing fees for those who operate with a zero-emission vehicle.

Virtual Public Information Sessions

Staff held two virtual public information sessions on April 17 and April 19, 2023 to present the proposed approach and hear feedback from participants. The feedback from the virtual information sessions informed the report and its recommendations. Approximately 30 people in total attended the sessions with a large majority being from the VFH industry, including drivers and representatives from taxi brokerages and private transportation companies. Participants from advocacy organizations, the Canada Safety Council and the Toronto Region Board of Trade also attended.

While there was general support for transitioning the VFH industry to net zero, concerns and additional considerations from the participants are noted below.

Key feedback from virtual public information sessions:

- Concerns with financing and insurance costs related to zero-emission vehicles, as well as the industry being unable to purchase zero emission vehicles until closer to the 2030 deadline.
- Concerns around the cost for both the City of Toronto and VFH drivers.
- Concerns that the financial benefits and incentives to purchasing an electric vehicle will not go to the driver and whether the City will consider any requirements or restrictions to the funding.
- Consideration for capping emissions and the number of licenses permitted.
- Consideration for further allowances for other low-emission vehicles.
- Potentially including information on the City's net zero approach and fuel efficiency standards in education and training for drivers, or at least when licenses are being renewed.

- Some questions on the ability of the City and the VFH industry to meet the 2030 deadline, while some other participants questioned if the goal was aggressive enough.