

Vehicle-for-Hire Public and Stakeholder Consultation

Virtual PTC Industry Town Hall Meeting:

June 25, 2024

Staff Attendance

Municipal Licensing and Standards, City of Toronto:

- Josh Cho, Policy Development Officer
- Tobiah Abramson, Policy and Planning Advisor
- Marcia Stoltz, Manager, Vehicle-for-Hire & Road Allowance
- Joanna Hazelden, Director, Policy and Strategic Support (Acting)
- Fiona Chapman, Director, Business Licensing and Regulatory Services
- Thurka Sinnathamby, Stakeholder Engagement Lead, Policy and Strategic Support

Gladki Planning Associates Inc.

- Natalie Barcellos, Planner and Engagement Specialist
- Weston Smith, Planning Intern

Background

The City of Toronto is holding public and industry stakeholder consultations as part of an ongoing review of the vehicle-for-hire framework and by-law, in response to multiple directives from City Council. Gladki Planning Associates Inc. (GPA) has been retained by the City of Toronto to facilitate a series of public and stakeholder engagement meetings that will inform a staff report from the Municipal Licensing and Standards (MLS) division on vehicle-for-hire services within the City of Toronto.

Vehicle-for-hire (VFH) services, which includes taxicabs, limousines and private transportation companies (PTC), are regulated by Chapter 546 of the Toronto Municipal Code. The by-law establishes regulations for:

- Licensing and regulatory requirements;
- Limits on the number of taxicabs;
- Fares for taxicabs;
- Eligibility criteria for the City's Accessibility Fund Program; and
- Vehicle safety and service standards.

The intent of the by-law is to provide public safety and consumer protection. The vehicle-for-hire industry has undergone a series of changes since 2016, when the current by-law was introduced, in order to regulate PTCs. The evolving social, political, and economic context, as well as direction from City Council has prompted the City to consider updates and additions to the by-law to ensure that the regulations remain responsive to the overall intent of the by-law.

Public and stakeholder consultation programmes were executed in both 2019 and 2023 to solicit feedback on public safety, driver and vehicle requirements, limousine regulations, cost of delivering accessible vehicle-for-hire service, and net-zero vehicle-for-hire initiatives, respectively. The feedback from these rounds of consultations informed the vehicle-for-hire licensing by-law updates in 2019 and the 2023 zero-emissions vehicle-for-hire policy. This current phase of public consultation seeks to build upon the previous amendments to the vehicle-for-hire by-law and rounds of consultation.

Meeting Promotion

City of Toronto staff were responsible for promoting consultation activities. The consultation was advertised widely. Promotional content and communication materials were shared using a variety of communication channels including:

- A dedicated webpage;
- Social Media Advertisements;
- Advertisements on navigation and gas applications (e.g. Google Maps, Waze, Petro Canada, etc.);
- Advertisements on Taxi News;
- BusinessTO June 11th Newsletter;
- Monthly Newsletter to Councillors; and
- Vehicle-for-Hire By-law public mailing list.

The City also conducted targeted outreach with stakeholder groups, described below.

- **Taxicab Industry.** Details about the consultation meetings and the online survey were sent via email to over 6,000 drivers/owners/operators and 25 brokerages.
- **Accessibility Organizations & Community.** Details about the consultation meetings and online survey were sent via email to over 160 recipients, Mailers were sent to over 700 recipients. Information about the consultation meetings were also shared with the City of Toronto's Accessibility Unit in the People & Equity division.
- **Private Transportation Companies (PTCs).** Details about the consultation meetings and online survey were sent by email to over 70,000 currently licensed PTC drivers.

Meeting Overview

On June 24, 2024, the City of Toronto's Municipal Licensing and Standards division hosted a virtual town hall meeting to present and receive feedback on emerging policy directions for the by-law review. Approximately **110** people attended the event, representing a diversity of public and industry interests on vehicle-for-hire (see Figure 1).

Gladki Planning Associates (GPA) convened the meeting and provided an overview of the meeting agenda and described their role as a third-party, independent facilitator. City of Toronto Staff delivered a presentation that included:

- an overview of the context and purpose for consultation;
- potential regulation and programmatic updates to improve wheelchair accessible service;
- potential options for a licensing limit;

- an update on the Zero-Emission Grant Remittance Plans; and
- the City's approach to studying and reporting on the mayoral directive to explore driver wages in Toronto.

Following the City's presentation there was a discussion period where attendees were invited to share feedback. This feedback has been organized in a thematic summary in the following section. A complete record of *all* of the feedback received has been included in *Appendix A*. *Appendix B* includes a list of all organizations with a representative in attendance. This list only includes representative that identified themselves during the meeting.

Poll Results

Participants were invited to respond to four poll questions during the meeting. These poll questions were intended to get a sense of who was attending the meeting (e.g. driver, brokerage, wheelchair-accessible vehicle user, etc.), and also get a preliminary and high-level sense of what attendees' level of support or satisfaction was with existing and proposed City initiatives. Notably, approximately 52% of attendees did *not* respond to the poll questions. Therefore, the results discussed below are not necessarily an accurate depiction of the opinions and preferences of the entire group.

A majority of the people who responded to the first poll were PTC drivers (see Figure 1). 66% of respondents indicated that they believed that a licensing limit would benefit Toronto's transportation services. Respondents expressed an equal mix of approval and uncertainty as to whether they would be interested in participating in a city-run central dispatching service.

Figure 1: What is your relationship to the private transportation company (PTC) industry?

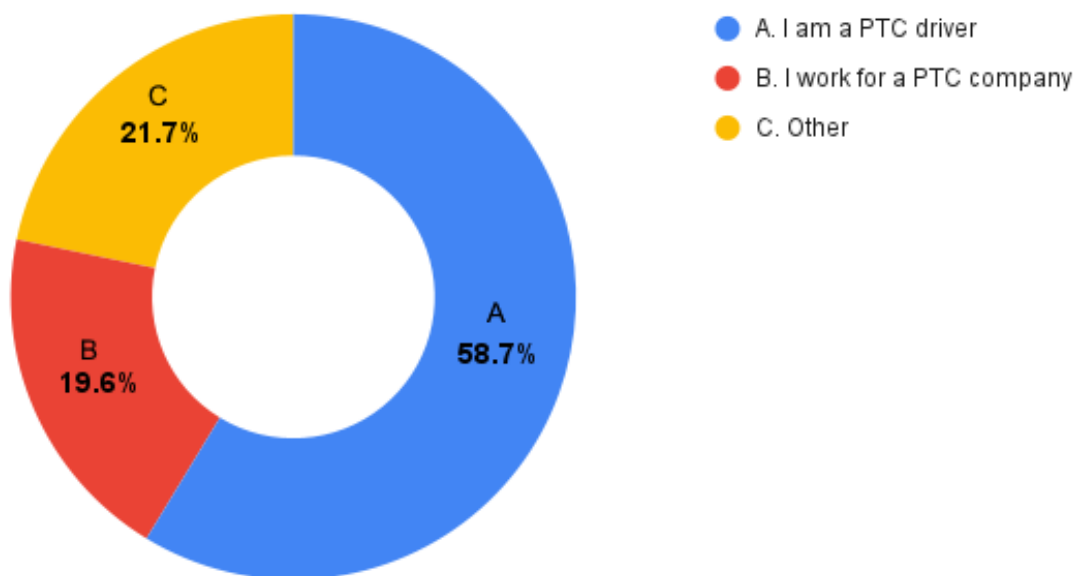


Figure 2: Do you believe a licensing limit on PTC and VFH drivers would benefit Toronto's on-demand transportation services?

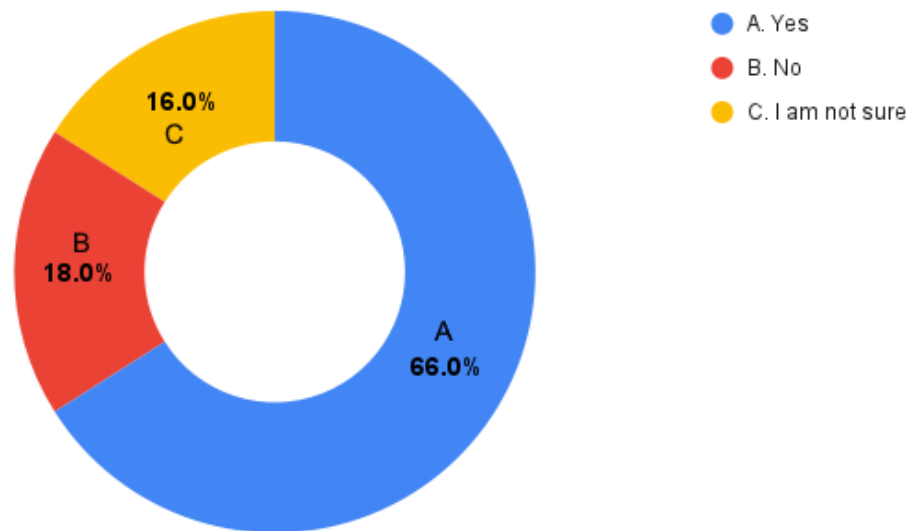
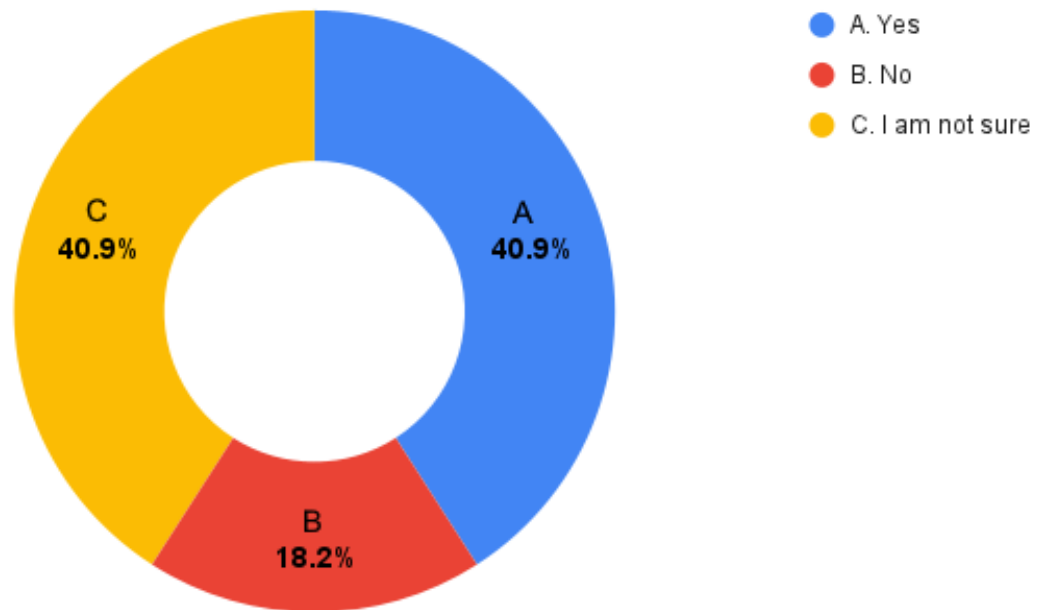


Figure 3: If you were to provide wheelchair accessible service, would you be interested in participating in a central dispatching service as a PTC driver?



Thematic Summary

This section organizes and summarizes all of the feedback received according to five main topic areas. These are:

- Licensing Limit

- Driver Wages
- Accessibility
- Miscellaneous

144 pieces of feedback were submitted during the meeting. Participants were invited to share a comment or a question by raising their virtual hand and volunteering to speak, or by submitting one using the Q&A box.

20 responses were addressed live (those which attendees shared verbally or were read aloud by the lead facilitator) during the course of the meeting. Another **124** responses were received via the Q&A box. All **144** pieces of feedback are considered as part of the public record and have been organized, analysed, and summarized in the summary.

The thematic summary is not intended to be a verbatim account of what was said during the meeting. The summary provides an overview of the main themes and key pieces of feedback received by attendees during the meeting. The feedback summarized does not represent the opinions of GPA. *Appendix A* includes a complete record of comments/questions.

Licensing Limit

Meeting attendees made **48** comments related to a licensing limit on the number of vehicles-for-hire in the city. The following points summarize the key feedback attendees shared.

Limiting the number of vehicle-for-hire licences could improve earnings for PTC drivers.

Drivers attributed many of the economic hardships that they face to the large number of vehicles-for-hire on the road. They remarked that the unlimited number of PTC drivers has led to increased congestion and increased competition for a limited number of customers, both of which drivers recognized as having negative impacts on their businesses. Drivers expressed that a limit could therefore increase how much they earn. While most drivers indicated that a limit could be beneficial, representatives from HOVR and Hopp (PTCs) distinguished the importance of limiting the number of PTC drivers and not the number of PTC licences. As new entrants to the PTC market, they shared concerns that a limit may prevent them from entering the market, fearing that a limit on licences would allow corporations such as Uber and Lyft to possess a majority of licences, therefore reducing competition in the industry.

Drivers expressed a desire for PTC licences to be distributed directly through the City rather than through the PTCs. Drivers said that PTC decisions regarding the administration of their licences sometimes feels arbitrary and unfair. Some drivers provided personal stories of having their licence revoked by the PTC with no justification provided. Other drivers expressed frustration at how difficult it is to get PTCs to rectify licensing errors. Participants reflected on poor experiences with driver support services, sharing that it sometimes it seems as if the companies do not have a good understanding of the City's by-law. Additionally, some participants argued that allowing PTCs to distribute the licences to their platforms (as is done under the current licensing framework) gives PTCs too much power. There was agreement by both drivers and PTC reps that a licensing framework where the City directly distributes PTC licences to drivers would allow for more oversight of the PTC industry, contributing to more fairness and consistency in the VFH industry.

If the City introduces a licensing limit, it needs to be implemented in a way that is fair to existing, licenced drivers. PTC drivers had varying opinions regarding how licences should be distributed in the case of a licensing limit, but all broadly agreed that fairness was important.

Some full-time drivers voiced their support for limiting the number of part-time drivers on the road, arguing that an excess supply of part-time drivers takes the opportunities away from people who drive as their full-time job. However, other meeting participants disagreed. Those who identified as part-time drivers stated that they drive for a PTC part-time because they need the additional income, and often have multiple jobs in order to sustain themselves and their families. There was a sentiment expressed by part-time drivers that restricting the number of licences available to part-time drivers would be unfair because it would create more financial hardships for them. There was a consensus that any driver who was inactive for an extended period of time should have their licences given to someone willing to drive. Participants asked the City to consider whether it would be responsible for tracking driver inactivity under a licensing limit or whether revoking a licence driver inactivity would fall under the administrative purview of PTCs.

Driver Wages

Meeting attendees made **52** comments related to driver wages in the city. The following points summarize the key feedback attendees shared.

PTC drivers report working longer hours for less compensation in recent years. Several drivers shared personal stories and expressed exasperation at how difficult it has become to earn a living in their profession. Multiple drivers indicated that they are having to work more hours to earn the same amount that they used to earn when PTCs first came to Toronto. They also claimed that the amount they are earning per hour is below minimum wage. They expressed that this felt unfair. Participants requested that the City pursue interventions that would increase earnings, namely through the implementation of a licensing limit and establishing a set rate for driver compensation based on per kilometer and/or per minute metrics. This rate refers to a calculation that would determine what a driver earns and is different than a meter rate which determines what a customer pays.

Drivers report that their earnings have decreased in recent years because Uber and Lyft have been keeping a higher proportion of the trip fare. Multiple drivers shared that Uber and Lyft have begun keeping a greater proportion of their fares in recent years. The amount these companies were reportedly keeping was inconsistent and varied from driver to driver, with some drivers claiming that Uber was keeping between 25-30% of fares, while others claimed that Uber and Lyft were taking 55%, 60% or 70% of fares. Despite the varied claims about the specific proportion, all drivers agreed that Uber and Lyft were retaining more of the fares than they used to, resulting in lower driver earnings.

PTC drivers want the City to introduce regulation for PTCs to compensate their drivers using set rates. Many drivers shared that when they accept a ride through the Uber or Lyft app, it is not clear how much of the trip fare they will receive. Additionally, drivers shared that trip fares fluctuate based on demand – “surge pricing” – as opposed to distance or time. Some drivers articulated that this felt arbitrary and therefore unfair. They stated that the lack of transparency and inconsistency contributes to feeling like they are being exploited for the profit of the corporations for which they drive. Multiple drivers requested that the City introduce regulation that would require PTCs to pay their drivers either a fixed per kilometer rate, a fixed per minute rate, or both, with the goal of providing increased clarity and stability when it came to PTC driver wages.

PTC drivers should be compensated for all of the time that they are active on the app and not just the time when they have a passenger in the car. PTC drivers claimed that they are

not being compensated for the time they spend on the app waiting for an assignment (“P1 time”) and for the time they spend driving to pick up a passenger (“P2 time”). Drivers argued that all of the time they spend logged into and active on the app should count as time spent working for the PTC, entitling them to compensation for that work. They asked the City to enact regulation that would require PTCs to pay their drivers for P1 and P2 time.

Accessibility

Meeting attendees made 7 comments related to providing accessible VFH service in the city. The following points summarize the key feedback attendees shared.

The amount of the proposed grant would have to be increased to encourage PTC drivers to convert their vehicles to be wheelchair accessible. Participants agreed that the cost of providing wheelchair accessible service was too high to make it financially desirable to convert their vehicles. They reiterated that PTC drivers are already in a precarious financial situation and emphasized that they are unable to provide this service unless it becomes profitable for them.

Miscellaneous

Drivers are frustrated with the City’s road network and the congestion caused as a result of construction. Multiple complaints were made regarding the City’s road infrastructure, including comments expressing frustration that: construction is seemingly always done during rush hour; CafeTO is continuing to take road space away from cars; passengers request pick-ups in the middle of a busy roads where drivers are not supposed to / cannot stop; PTC drivers are charged for using Highway 407; and drivers have nowhere to park their cars downtown while waiting for jobs without receiving tickets.

Drivers had various concerns related to insurance. There were 2 comments from drivers asking why insurance rates were not the same for all drivers. Specifically, there was concern that services like Uber Black are required to have commercial insurance and therefore pay higher insurance rates than standard PTC service. Drivers also remarked that it is frustrating that they are required to have personal insurance when they are already covered by the master insurance policy of the PTC that they drive for.

A participant asked how they could submit additional feedback following the meeting. Additionally, a driver wanted to know whether Uber and Lyft would take action against drivers in attendance. Other comments that were not directly related to the topics for consultation include: City regulations regarding zero emission vehicles; driver opinions on HOVR; rental car eligibility for a PTC license; and the PTC licence renewal process. Participants asked two questions about the engagement process.

Next Steps

Public feedback is vital to the by-law review process. Feedback from this meeting, other meetings in this series of consultation, and the online survey will be included in an engagement report to be prepared by GPA. This report will be submitted to City Staff and will be included as an attachment to the staff report. The engagement report will be publicly available once the staff report has been submitted to Council. City staff will consider this report along with other inputs as they prepare a staff report with recommendations for Council. The staff report is expected to go to City Council by the end of 2024. For more information and updates on this review process please [visit the City's website](#).

Additional questions and comments can be submitted to vehicleforhirereview@toronto.ca.

Appendix A: Participant Questions and Comments

All of the questions and comments that were made by participants over the course of the meeting have been included below. This includes both the questions and comments read aloud by Natalie Barcellos (lead facilitator, GPA) during the meeting, as well as the questions and comments received via Q&A box that were not read aloud during the meeting due to time constraints. The questions and comments included have been edited for brevity and clarity and have organized by the same themes used in the thematic summary for consistency. They are documented here as part of the public record.

The feedback captured below is a record of what was shared during the meeting. The feedback does not represent the opinions of GPA.

Licensing Limit

1. Have you conducted any research to determine how limiting the number of drivers would improve vehicle-for-hire services for customers?
2. Limiting the number of drivers is something HOVR agrees with as a valid solution, but limiting the number of licences is not something we can support because it would eliminate competition in this space. There needs to be a distinction between limiting the number of drivers and limiting the number of licences.
3. Uber drivers are not making money because there is a lack of jobs. However, even if it is not paying well, this job is what we have. Drivers feel like they have to do it. I see people out there with licensing issues who are having their cars removed and cannot get them back. If the City is going to be in control of licensing, they should look into how people are getting their car and how they are financing it. The City should make Uber remove the bad reviews that people give for no reason. Those are the things that I want the City to look into. If you do not want to give a licence to newer drivers anymore, then that's fine.
4. I think when a licensed driver doesn't go online with their PTC for 6 months to a year, their licence should expire.
5. The numbers of drivers or the size of fleet absolutely impacts driver earnings and efficiency. Increases the amount of time drivers spend running around empty without a passenger.
6. My company agrees with the mayor that control is needed to prevent unrestricted growth in the market. In our view, the two capping proposals [from the City presentation] are not really viable. We want Toronto itself to licence the drivers. We think that's better to allow drivers to cancel or renew their own licences and give them that dignity. We would also like to see MLS with significantly more resources to enforce on this. In the interim, capping the number of drivers and allowing for competition for platforms is important. We should let drivers operate for as many PTCs as they want. With more competition in the PTC market, we think it leads to benefits across the board for everyone here.
7. Before introducing a cap, you need to review the process. It is complicated and inconsistent: PTC licences get removed randomly, need to be submitted separately for

platforms, drivers need their own vehicle, etc. If an account is inactive or does not meet a certain # of rides per quarter they should lose their license. There could be a way to differentiate between full time and part time drivers as well as manage/monitor the inactive PTC licences.

8. Why there is no cap on Uber and Lyft when the taxi industry has a cap?
9. The amount of drivers should be capped. Drivers should have one year of Canadian driving experience.
10. What number will the City use for the driver's cap after City put it to 52k? Now it's 65k. It should be updated.
11. How does the City of Toronto aim to solve the super saturation of PTC licences & rideshare drivers in the city?
12. There used to be 150 drivers at Pearson Airport and it used to take around 30 minutes to get a ride. Now there are around 400 drivers and wait for a ride is around 90 minutes. There needs to be a licensing limit. It's too many drivers.
13. Regarding the licensing limit: in B.C. drivers must be licensed in the province for three years to be able to drive. This restriction works just as well as a licence limit.
14. What would the procedure be for PTC licence renewal? Would it renew automatically?
15. I am concerned with the distribution of licences if a limit is put in place. Right now, drivers are dependant on the companies to submit a license. I have experienced situations where these companies are not fair and not treating drivers well. I have no way of knowing the status of my PTC licence at any point in time. Also, if I work for Uber & Lyft & HOVR then I would have 3 PTC licenses, which is a lot of hassle.
16. From personal experience, 52k drivers vs 65k makes big difference. We were busier back when there were fewer drivers on the road. Right now, we spend more time driving without passengers because we have to go back and forth to busier areas to get a customer.
17. The city should enforce a limit but also should look 1-2 times per year to see how many drivers are needed in the city. The limit should be on the people, not the licenses.
18. People who do this as a full-time job should support a licensing limit. An excess supply of part-time drivers takes the opportunities away from people who do this as their full-time job and business.
19. It would be helpful to understand the demand vs number of drivers. Right now, we only have the data to compare to other cities like New York, which has substantially less PTCs than Toronto based on population size.
20. A driver limit affects the bonuses that Uber gives to us and indirectly increases our pay.
21. The word "licence" is the wrong word. Limit the number of drivers – makes it more accurate to the model of PTC companies where one driver can have multiple licences.

22. Assign one PTC licence per driver. Allow drivers to apply for their PTC and bring control to the driver.
23. Have you conducted any research to determine how limiting the number of drivers would improve vehicle-for-hire services for customers?
24. The City should immediately stop issuing PTC licenses. Ride sharing companies have used this increased number of drivers to exploit them – more drivers means less rides for drivers.
25. Why should I believe limiting PTC licensing benefits the city?
26. If you introduce a cap, how do you monitor / manage the amount of drivers with PTC licences that are no longer using it or have decided to pursue other ways of earning an income? Will these inactive people be allowed to block new applicants?
27. Under a limit, how will the city ensure that one company isn't in control of a high # of licences under the limits (e.g. Uber holding 70% of PTC licenses)?
28. If you limit "licenses", then the drivers should own their PTC licence and have one licence to work across all platforms. This is better than the current state of driver licensing for PTC, where drivers need a separate licence for each platform, which is fundamentally the wrong way to do it.
29. I am also a full-time driver. I cannot receive [ride] requests in Toronto and I have to drive around the city with no passengers in the car. Please try to give priority to full-time drivers by allowing full-time drivers to have their own licence.
30. This is why City should handle licensing — having one party that is responsible for all licensing is the way to go.
31. Barriers to entry are in place for every occupation. Why not this one?
32. We must have a cap on PTCs. Issuing different classes of PTC licences based on whether the driver is full-time vs part-time should be a priority for the City. The number of hours drivers can drive per any given day should be limited.
33. Along with the PTC cap, there should be a limited window where part-time drivers are allowed to provide service. For all drivers there should be limit to how many days per week one can drive.
34. An appropriate level of service is not about adding more drivers but giving existing drivers choice. Competition drives better standards, better driver conditions and better passenger service. The licensing pause and 2023 licence cap do not achieve these goals within Toronto's current licensing system — they would make them worse. If existing drivers had a universal licence for all PTCs, then limiting the number of drivers would control the growth of the market while permitting competition for the existing pool of drivers.

35. There were studies done by urban planners for the City about the licensing limit in the past. They determined the appropriate number of taxis for our population. Are these same studies being done now?
36. We believe the city should consider "one driver, one licence". MLS should licence [PTC] drivers directly, allowing drivers to have more control over their work and facilitating better communication with these drivers.
37. An unlimited number of drivers means zero wait times for customers, but this is ridiculous. If there was a PTC driver in front of every house, drivers would make about a dollar a day and streets would be permanently gridlocked. I have heard there are more Uber drivers in Toronto than there are in New York.
38. Does the city consider that a lot of drivers work part time and it's a crucial part to supplement their income with the rising living cost?
39. The PTCs should ask the City for PTC licences and if the City approves, then drivers can work with PTCs. I think the City should also intervene if rideshare companies block drivers on their platforms without listening to them.
40. The City should not have ended the cap they put in place last year. It should have remained. That way there would not be so much congestion.
41. Instead of requiring a licence for each PTC, a driver should only require one licence that is valid for all PTCs. This would be one way to decrease the number of licences without negatively affecting drivers.
42. There are too many drivers on the road, which is why I agree with limiting new licences. I sometimes have long waits between trips, which means demand is low and/or there are too many drivers. It's only busy during morning and afternoon rush hour.
43. With the proliferation of Uber drivers, it is imperative that full-time drivers are prioritized over part-time drivers. As a full-time driver, Uber is the primary source of income for most. Please address this issue for employment and earnings stability
44. This is the key point where these ride sharing companies are exploiting. I wrote a thorough report addressed to the City in 2021. They exchanged correspondence and the end result was zero, as they were not clear about the domains of this ride share operations. There is no clarity regarding the laws for these companies [PTCs] (i.e. role of city, province and federal governments).
45. I'm at a point where I would prefer to have my own PTC licence and not have it affiliated with Uber. I want to be able to renew it and know the status through my City account. I want to be able to upload that licence to the ride sharing app I want to use.
46. We are told to contact our PTC when we have issues with our licensing, but their support services do not have this information. Their call centre is international and they don't know Toronto rules or information. Getting a local appointment is nearly impossible.

Driver Wages

47. Does the City have control over Uber or not? Tell PTCs that if they don't like the City's regulations, then they can leave. I started driving for Uber in 2012, but most of the money I make ends up in their pocket. Uber takes most of the money from all of its drivers. That's why I'm asking: how can we control them? They are taking too much of the money.
48. I will suggest that the City look at the fees PTCs are charging their drivers. If the City can reduce these fees, then more money will go to driver's pockets which means less drivers on the road and people can spend more time with their family. Nowadays, I have to spend more time on the road to make the same amount I used to, which means that I have to spend more time working. This leads to more congestion on the road. Put a cap on the service fees that rideshare companies collect. The fees are changing. Tie the meter rate for PTCs to the taxicab rate so that our fares can be more consistent. Do this so that drivers can spend some time with their families. The City should have control over drivers, not the big companies.
49. We started driving with Uber years ago and the wages keep going down. Even if the driver is just sitting in traffic and doesn't go anywhere, Uber is still taking some of the driver's cut for that. When you are going from inside the city to somewhere outside of the city you can't pick up passengers from the other city. This makes these trips difficult. Surge pricing should be tied to the time spent on the trip. The pricing per metre should not be 18 cents but 40 cents, at a minimum. This would be helpful because when we are not going anywhere we are still making money.
50. I've been driving for several years. The issue that I've been facing is there are so many drivers in the city that no one is able to make a livable wage. Additionally, we are allowed to drive on both Uber or Lyft even after driving for 14-16 hours, which I think is a big safety concern. When you're driving that long it becomes dangerous — especially for pedestrians in the downtown.
51. All other industries are bound by rules. Only in this industry [vehicle-for-hire] is there no minimum wage and the companies can do whatever they want. The companies are using their power to remove other players from the market. Lyft has been reducing prices so that HOVRR cannot even come into the market. I think there should be a city-wide guideline to pricing. This is better for customers as well.
52. Sometimes drivers sit around for a couple of hours waiting for a trip and get nothing. In this case, there is zero salary for the driver.
53. There should be minimum wage for drivers.
54. Address wages by introducing a minimum rate per kilometer and paying for driver waiting time. This will improve the situation around wages. Lyft has recently introduced upfront pay [drivers can now see ride information and what they'll earn before accepting a ride], but I am concerned upfront pay opens the door for companies to pay drivers wages that do not accommodate for unknowns like traffic or other interruptions.
55. Uber and Lyft take 30% of our profits, which is too much. Which other business does this?

56. Why can't the City regulate Uber and Lyft? We don't get any benefit from these companies. For new services such as Premier and Comfort Uber takes 28% of our wage, or 25% for Uber X. Please have a conversation with Uber about this.
57. Uber and Lyft both are taking a larger portion of the amounts paid by riders. Riders are being gouged by the companies especially when demand is high and supply is low (e.g. Uber surge pricing). The drivers do not get paid an equivalent increase in these surge situations. The percentage of the fare paid to the driver is less than 30%.
58. Before COVID drivers used to get around 60% of the fare of a ride. Uber has started to take around 50% of the driver's share. A similar change has been recently made by Lyft. They also take around 50% of the driver's share.
59. Drivers make far less than a minimum wage rate.
60. Is there any compensation if a driver becomes unemployed because of illness or accident?
61. Can the City make Uber and Lyft pay a minimum per kilometer and per minute rate?
62. Drivers are not involved in decisions about how fares are split. There does not seem to be any mechanism of monitoring of PTCs. We need to check on fare distribution among these companies.
63. I can share the images of what a passenger is charged and what is being paid to driver.
64. Uber is cutting their costs but clearly not passing any of these savings to drivers. It would be nice for the City to limit the amount of a fare that a PTC gets to 20%, like it was when they [PTCs] first came to Toronto.
65. There should be a guaranteed minimum of \$25 hourly to cover the costs of fuel and vehicle maintenance. The provincial government should be compensating the drivers because they have jurisdiction over the transportation.
66. Since we are independent contractors with PTCs, why can't we change the contract we have with Uber and Lyft so they only take 10-15% of our fares? Uber & Lyft don't provide cars to drivers – our cars are own investments in the business, so we should have more say in how much we're able to make.
67. Why is the City is adjusting their charge from \$0.40 to \$0.44 but not adjusting the fare? The fare is still \$0.81 per kilometer and needs to be higher.
68. There needs to be more transparency around the fare split between driver and Uber/Lyft. The City needs to check on these rideshare companies.
69. Is the city aware of the court ruling against Uber in the UK? TFL (Transport for London) told the court that any corporation with a worker working more than 40 hours a week is considered an employee of the company and should benefit from pensions and holiday pay.

70. The fare compensation of \$0.60/km is from 2012, whereas current Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) per km compensation is \$0.70/km. Fundamentally, Uber's fare is completely unfair considering cost of living and inflation. Uber has no transparency of pay for a trip – they don't tell you the distance or anticipated traffic, and/or the location ID is hidden until you accept the job.
71. Does the City benefit from personal income tax or an HST rebate from Uber or Lyft drivers? If yes, why has the City not checked if income from the province is from a living wage? The City should also regulate wages of gig workers and not just the province.
72. Uber should pay minimum wage per hour even if a driver is unable to get any rides.
73. Is the City aware that drivers do not know their destination and transport fare when they accept a ride? This is something that only exists in Canada and it's very unfair. Drivers are driving blind all the time. You don't know if you are accepting a profitable ride or not.
74. What is the role of the City in fare distribution between driver and corporation?
75. Who is responsible for safeguarding the financial interest of drivers?
76. If you work full-time at Uber you get to be Diamond level in the app, which comes with associated perks. However, Uber only reports wages from Diamond level drivers. This results in Uber claiming that all its drivers are full-time employees.
77. Decisions made by Uber and Lyft are negatively impacting driver earnings. They tell us that "if we don't like it we can leave." They [Uber and Lyft] do what they want in this city. I had a ride yesterday that was 24 minutes, 4.8km, and only paid \$7.10.
78. The business model for all taxi and VFH companies has always been based on the fact they know that many newcomers are willing to work for less than minimum wage. Many newcomers from developing countries will drive for \$5 - \$10 an hour, much more than they would have made in their home countries. Many sleep on mattresses in basements, etc. By calling these people "independent contractors" there is no need for minimum wage.
79. There needs to be transparency for PTC fares. Drivers should see how much they will get paid for a trip before they accept it. The apps should calculate the kilometers and time took to complete the trip and calculate the amount paid based on that. There should be a waiting charge when drivers have to wait for a passenger to complete a stop in the middle of the ride. 407 toll receipts should be automatically sent to Uber, or the drivers should get the exact amount that the 407 would charge us. Driver wages needs to be calculated based on time online rather than active time. Drivers should get paid to pick up the rider when it's a long-distance pickup.
80. Driver earnings are at the whim of these companies. Previously, Lyft introduced what was effectively a 10% reduction in earnings through introducing Priority Mode [a mode on the app that would funnel more customers to drivers]. Most of the time only drivers using Priority Mode will receive rides, but to use Priority Mode you have to give 10% of your fare to Lyft. Similarly, on May 20th Lyft introduced upfront fares which, while providing more information to the driver about what their earnings may be, resulted in a

19-25% earnings reduction to drivers because the upfront fares don't account for delays while driving.

81. Uber started operating in Toronto in 2013. Since then, Uber increased fees but decreased the fare drivers received. A part of those increased fees come from the City, but what has the City done so far to improve drivers' pay?
82. Uber announced upfront fares in the US and stated that the same thing will happen here in Canada by end of 2024. The impact of upfront fares has been a severe reduction in rates paid to drivers.
83. Drivers in Toronto are the lowest paid in the country. Other than Ottawa we have the lowest rates. All other cities in southern Ontario have higher rates.
84. Drivers need to be paid per km and minute and not some AI assigned flat rate. There are impacts to driver from congestion. Drivers are not paid for additional time they could incur due to congestion when there are flat rates.
85. Drivers are being paid less than CRA rates for vehicle operation
86. The Lyft upfront fare system is a big scam. They will charge the rider a lot and give you an upfront fare. Despite saying it is transparent, it is not. Also, the living wage in city of Toronto is about \$30-40 per hour. Will the City and Uber/Lyft commit to that kind of wage for drivers?
87. There should be a mechanism to provide at least the basic minimum wage to drivers.
88. I track my Uber earnings carefully every week. On Jan.1 2024, my Uber wages fell by 15% and have since remained 15% below last year's rate. I may have been warned by this in one of Uber's fine print legal updates that I agreed to quickly, without reading. Who knows what it actually said. If anyone has access to these, perhaps the hidden reason is in there.
89. I am failing to meet everyday needs due to earning from driving for Uber. Drivers are working 18-20 hours without any rest, which is a huge safety concern and also a health hazard to the driver. It's increasing the risk of accidents.
90. Rideshare companies [PTCs] should share the same fare information with riders and drivers. Riders should know that how much drivers will get and how much will go to the company.
91. Ride sharing companies [PTCs] are taking advantage of drivers because there is no representation. There is no forum which can represent the drivers. They have no way to raise their concerns, and ridesharing companies know this.
92. For long trips the fares are not good.
93. Lyft and Uber take at least 55 percent of the fare. Please help us with that!
94. The City has to do something. The fare is too low. Traffic is bad. There are a lot of drivers. The streets are bad.

95. Uber is robbing the drivers taking more than 60% of the fare.
96. Subsidies should not go through the companies! They will just pocket it!
97. So many drivers have explained that there is no transparency with these companies, and now you give us a subsidy through them? The companies will keep pocketing our money. This will not work.

Accessibility

98. In a nutshell, the City could solve a lot of problems by creating an organization with unfettered access to all the data that PTCs collect. As far as this grant goes, I don't see any driver doing it unless the grant covers 100% of the cost for accessible vehicle, including the conversion. At a certain point you have to ask yourself as a driver – is this a community service or this a business? There are extra complications when it comes to providing accessible service – what if I drop them off and it's snowy out and they weren't expecting to walk through the snow? I know it's just a question of cents, but when you add that up over all of the trips it adds up us. We should establish a guaranteed, minimum per hour and per kilometer earning.
99. Uber Assist allows me to take passengers with folding wheelchairs, but if it doesn't fold I can't fit it in my car.
100. A central dispatch makes sense given the difficulty for them [people who use wheelchairs] to get rides. Having riders request a ride through multiple sources would result in cancellations once a ride has been confirmed. Improved rider experience and less cancellations is a good thing.
101. As a PTC driver I probably wouldn't convert my vehicle. The companies are simply not providing fair compensation that would support the additional cost, time & effort. Sorry to say...
102. We 100% recognize that accessibility is a huge gap that needs to be filled in the VFH industry, especially on the PTC side. We would love a more meaningful discussion about this topic. I'm not sure how I feel about the centralized dispatch, just because I'm confused about how it's structured and instituted. If we were to retain the fee from accessible service for every trip, then we might be able to build out our own fleets so that we can have a holistic approach.
103. PTC drivers cannot foot the bill on below poverty earnings for an accessible fleet.
104. When it comes to accessibility vehicles or EV/ZEV vehicles, the drivers will require an income that matches the added costs of these vehicle upgrades or a meaningful subsidy to help them afford this transition. HOVR has clear pathways for each of these initiatives for drivers, starting with driver earnings, by taking no commissions from the driver fare. We are a Toronto company, looking to work with the city to meet collective goals.

Miscellaneous

105. In terms of the City, two things the City can improve: one, they're setting up construction at 5am and 6am so that when people are going to work it's very congested. Construction crews should work at different time. Two: my PTC licence has been removed randomly from my Uber app several times in the last couple of years. My issue with the PTC licence is that it was valid up to March 2025, and not having it affects me a lot. I think that this should be a City issue that I am facing with Uber and Lyft, but I just wanted to highlight that one. PTCs are not being fair to driver.
106. I just want to make a request to the City. I have been driving Uber for over four years. The majority of the time that we take a ride out of the City area, we have to take an empty car to come back again. If the City can make an exception or make some kind of adjustment so that we can get a ride to come back into the City, it will be great.
107. Most of the traffic in Toronto downtown is because all the drivers from other cities come to downtown Toronto for work.
108. How do we know that speaking out against Uber/Lyft here won't get our accounts banned on their apps?
109. There should be one insurance for all drivers. Why is Uber Black paying double insurance costs?
110. Lyft especially needs to align the 407ETR bill to the trip fare...it is not profitable to have a ride of \$22 to pay ETR bill of \$10.
111. Is there Employment Insurance (EI) available in Uber/Lyft?
112. If a driver refuses service (even for a legitimate reason) the rider can complain to Uber and Uber will send a notice that rider complained without listening to the driver.
113. Would it be a driver responsibility to have a car seat for kid? Isn't it a safety feature similar to seat belt?
114. Why roads are so bad in the city? It's really bad for the drivers. No planning goes into the road closures.
115. I also believe that drivers should have rights. I got dropped by Uber for an error on their part and they are not obligated to provide their reasoning or to have a discussion.
116. Please address the Uber practice of providing more rides to new drivers, so called bait and switch. It should not keep happening.
117. Educate the riders on the pickup spot and drop off spots. They shouldn't be able to add a pickup in the middle of a busy road where we are not supposed to stop. Also educate them about smoking, drinking, and child seat issues.
118. Can the City start all construction setup after 10:00am so the rush hour office-going people can go to work better?

119. Rush hour construction setup is another huge cause of city congestion.
120. Why aren't PTC licences revoked for not meeting the provincial guidelines?
121. Uber should limit part-time rental car drivers. They don't face leasing costs, which benefits Uber and rental companies while increasing traffic. Full-time drivers with leased cars suffer under these caps. For example, I've driven 102,000 kilometers for Uber in two years, exceeding the 21,000 km/year lease limit. Living in downtown Toronto, the cap would financially burden me, forcing me to pay for extra mileage and potentially leave the GTA without income. Please consider Toronto drivers living in the city.
122. Is it true that you guys [the City] will be deciding our schedules for Uber? If so, then what's the difference between Uber a contract job and working for McDonald's where you have a schedule you are supposed to be attending?
123. This is the key point where these ride sharing companies are exploiting drivers. I wrote a thorough report to City in 2021. They exchanged correspondence and the end result was zero, as they were not clear about the domains of this ride share operations. There is no clarity regarding the laws for these companies (i.e. role of city, province and federal governments).
124. Sometimes I rent because my car is older than 7 years and its hard to tell if the rental car has a PTC Licence or not. I want to buy a new car but I can't get an answer if the car will be able to get a PTC licence, if it needs to be electric, or if the regulations going to change midway through its lifespan. And I can't decide or commit to a car without knowing the City's intentions.
125. The infrastructure for the city of Toronto was not made for such a large population. The population increased but the roads remain the same. Most of the construction sites have no workers present at any time of day.
126. I know that as per law we [drivers] are not allowed to stop in rush hour, but how else can we pick up a rider during rush hour? Secondly, we have to wait somewhere when waiting for our next ride. Where should we stop? One night I stopped on Simcoe Street around 11:30pm and got a ticket.
127. Uber asks drivers to have commercial insurance for Uber Black service. I think this is not fair. When Uber has their own commercial insurance, then Uber commercial insurance should also cover the Uber black service too.
128. There is always a problem with the public transportation in this city. From an Uber driver's point of view, we are here to keep people moving when this happens.
129. There is no commercial insurance available for EV (electric vehicle) Taxis.
130. With the goal of achieving zero emissions, shouldn't the City focus on improving public transportation, including the TTC's safety, reducing closures, and addressing issues with new non-operational lines? Encouraging people to use public transportation more effectively is key to reducing emissions, isn't it? I understand this may not be the topic of the current public consultation, but it is still crucial to consider.

131. I drive with Uber. I have a 2016 zero-emissions vehicle. There is an extension for 2015/16 vehicles and no age limit for ZEVs (Zero Emissions Vehicles). I tried to apply with Lyft, and they claim my vehicle is too old to drive in Toronto. They are not following by-laws and Council.
132. Taxicabs are not required to provide a car seat for their kids, but for Uber drivers it is required. Most of the time these parents are going to visit friends, shopping or to the airport and it is difficult for them to carry a car seat with them. However, it is not possible for Uber drivers to be expected to provide a car seat.
133. I pay more for my own personal insurance because I drive for PTC even though I am covered by their master policy. There needs to be regulations that prevent insurance increases my own personal insurance if I am already covered by a PTC with their own master policy
134. If Uber objects to a requirement that VFH drivers be licensed drivers in Ontario for at least three years, draw an analogy with Air Canada. Airlines would love to employ inexperienced pilots and pay them less, but passengers would be outraged if their pilot didn't know how to fly.
135. 6.5k taxi driver licences vs 65k PTC drivers and we have only two hours in the meeting to discuss it. Please address this and explain.

Appendix B: Organizations in Attendance

The following organizations had representatives identify themselves during the meeting:

- HOVR
- Hopp