

Vehicle-for-Hire Public and Stakeholder Consultation

**Accessibility Focus Groups:
June 18, 2024**

Staff Attendance

Municipal Licensing and Standards, City of Toronto:

- Josh Cho, Policy Development Officer
- Marcia Stoltz, Manager, Vehicle-for-Hire & Road Allowance
- 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. Participation in the focus groups were by invitation only. The City conducted targeted outreach with users of accessibility service, members of the taxicab industry who provide wheelchair accessible service (i.e. drivers, brokerages, plate owners), and accessibility support and advocacy organizations. Details about the consultation meetings and online survey were sent via email to over 160 organizations that focus on accessibility issues, Mailers were sent to over 700 recipients. Information about the focus groups were also shared with the City of Toronto's Accessibility Unit in the People & Equity division. A list of all of the organizations that were invited as been included in *Appendix B*.

Meeting Overview

On June 18, 2024, the City of Toronto's Municipal Licensing and Standards division hosted 2 focus group meetings to present and receive feedback on emerging policy directions on accessible vehicle-for-hire service as part of the by-law review. In total, there were **8** people who attended the focus groups.

- In the first session there were **6** people. **4** taxicab drivers who drove a wheelchair accessible vehicle and **2** users of accessible vehicle-for-hire service. One of the users also came on behalf of Spinal Cord Injury Ontario.
- In the second session there were **2** people. There was **1** taxicab driver who drove a wheelchair accessible vehicle and **1** user of accessible vehicle-for-hire services.

Gladki Planning Associates (GPA) convened both meetings 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, and the potential regulation and programmatic updates to improve wheelchair accessible service. Participants were invited to ask any clarifying questions to the City. Following this the City left the room.

GPA facilitated a discussion, asking participants questions about their experience with wheelchair accessible vehicle-for-hire service and their ideas about how to improve it. Participant feedback has been organized in a thematic summary in the following section. A complete record of *all* of the feedback received during both meetings has been included in *Appendix A*. *Appendix B* includes a list of all organizations that were invited to participate in the focus groups.

Thematic Summary

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

- Cost Associated with Providing Wheelchair Accessible Service
- Central Dispatching Service
- Accessible User Experience
- Driver Training
- Miscellaneous

The following summary considers all comments that were given over the course of both of the focus group meetings. The thematic summary is not intended to be a verbatim account of what was said during the meetings. The summary provides an overview of the main themes and key pieces of feedback received by attendees. The feedback summarized does not represent the opinions of GPA. *Appendix A* includes a complete record of comments/questions.

Cost Associated with Providing Wheelchair Accessible Service

It is very costly to provide accessible taxicab service, and it has therefore become increasingly difficult for drivers to operate wheelchair accessible vehicles. All drivers who participated in the focus group agreed that providing accessible taxicab service was expensive. Drivers cited the price of buying and converting an accessible vehicle as a major barrier to providing service. Additionally, drivers also cited a lack of customers who are willing to ride in accessible vehicles, as the average customer prefers to ride in a standard sedan rather than an accessible van. The extra time spent per accessible trip was also brought up as an additional expense associated with providing accessible service. All drivers also stated that it has become more difficult to make ends meet in recent years. Several drivers spoke about their personal financial situations and the difficulties they have in providing for their households, indicating that things have gotten harder in recent years due to the increased cost of living.

The \$20,000 upfront grant that the City proposed to offset the cost of converting a vehicle to be wheelchair accessible would not be sufficient. All of the drivers agreed that the grant amount that City proposed during their presentation was too low to incentivize vehicle conversion. Two drivers indicated that buying and converting a vehicle would cost between \$100,000 and \$120,000 total. For a grant to be sufficient, drivers thought it would need to cover most, if not all of that amount. Members of the focus group with accessibility needs were also generally supportive of increasing the grant amount. One participant indicated that the City should consider all options to get more accessible vehicles on the road.

The increased cost of insurance for wheelchair accessible vehicles is disincentivizing drivers from providing wheelchair accessible service. One driver suggested that even if the grant were to cover the full cost of conversion, they would not choose to convert their vehicle due to the increased cost of insurance for wheelchair accessible vehicles. Other drivers agreed that insurance rates were too high for accessible vehicles and this is a significant barrier to increasing the number of accessible vehicles on the road.

The idea of a per trip incentive for accessible trips would be helpful, though the proposed amount of \$10 is not enough. All of the taxicab drivers agreed that \$10 per ride would not be sufficient to incentivize and offset the cost of providing wheelchair accessible

service. The accessible service users agreed that there should be increased compensation for drivers taking accessible trips, recognizing that their trips often took more time for the driver to complete. However, both users highlighted that costs should not be passed on to them and they should not be charged extra. They shared concerns with charging accessible users more, arguing that because individuals with disabilities more frequently face economic disadvantages, to raise the fare would limit their mobility. One driver responded to this with a suggestion that, rather than the City providing a per trip incentive to taxi drivers, the City should provide a \$40-\$50 per trip subsidy to users who require a wheelchair accessible vehicle, arguing that a subsidy for riders to cover service would be more effective than subsidizing the drivers.

Central Dispatching Service

A centralized dispatching service would be helpful for those with accessibility needs.

Accessible service users were generally supportive of a centralized dispatching service, stating that it would make getting a ride more convenient. One participant said that while they were supportive of the idea, it was hard for them to conceptualize how a dispatch would work given Toronto's large size and population. Another accessible service user said that the centralized dispatch service in Ottawa was very effective when they used it on a recent trip, because being able to call a single number to receive accessible service made it easier to use. They also noted that the customer service for the centralized dispatch was very good, and were exceptionally accommodating to them when they needed to change their trip itinerary.

There are varying opinions about the role Wheel-Trans could play in a centralized dispatching service. One driver voiced their opinion that the role of Wheel-Trans should be expanded and they should be the only accessible VFH service provider in Toronto - all centralized dispatching for the city could be done via Wheel-Trans. Accessible service users disagreed, stating that Wheel-Trans cannot be considered an on-demand service due to the requirement to register for the service and the fact that Wheel-Trans rides need to be booked in advance. They stated that access to an on-demand service is important for those with accessibility needs and Wheel Trans, while helpful some of the time, cannot be a full substitution for on-demand service. One accessible service user shared how the registration process for Wheel Trans can be onerous on users. Multiple accessible service users affirmed that a central dispatch service should be easy to use and should not require a complex registration process. Another accessible service user liked the idea of a central dispatch service, and said that having a single number to call to request accessible service would be more convenient for them. Participants also shared that a central dispatching service could be particularly helpful to those with accessibility needs who are visiting Toronto that cannot use/register with Wheel Trans.

There was no consensus from drivers on how effective a centralized dispatching service would be at improving wheelchair accessible VFH service. One driver shared his concern that implementing a centralized dispatch would result in drivers ignoring calls from the dispatch center to continue picking up people without accessibility needs, because non-accessible service is more profitable than picking up those with accessibility needs. Other drivers were more supportive of the centralized dispatch. One driver thought that limited oversight for current dispatching systems could result in unfair dispatching of drivers, based on factors other than proximity to the user. This driver felt that a central dispatching service, even just for accessible service, would provide more City oversight and would be more fair to drivers. Another driver said that he was supportive of the centralized dispatching service, but that there must be enough accessible vehicles on the road in order for it to work.

Accessible User Experience

Users have experienced a decrease in the availability of on-demand accessible service from PTCs since the pandemic. Multiple accessible service users stated that, while the quality of accessible PTC service used to be good, it has suffered post-pandemic due to the low number of accessible PTC vehicles in operation. There was frustration expressed by multiple participants that PTCs are not meeting the requirements for providing accessible service under the by-law. Several drivers in the room stated that enforcement between PTCs and taxicabs, as it relates to accessibility, is not consistent. Multiple participants expressed a desire for the City to bring PTCs into compliance, arguing that such action was long overdue. One user complained that Uber's app would lock them out of requesting accessible service after a specific time, even if there was a vehicle available on the road that could accommodate them. They shared a story of how hard it was for them as a wheelchair user to get home safely after a night out with their friends.

Accessible vehicle-for-hire service is an essential service for an equitable city. All participants agreed on the importance of having reliable and accessible vehicle-for-hire service for all people. Several participants indicated everyone, at some point in their lives, could need wheelchair accessible type of service. Participants emphasized that accessible service is not something that should be thought of as only affecting a small percentage of those in the city. There was consensus that City should be employing an equity lens and doing more to ensure that on-demand VFH service is an option for everyone.

Driver Training

Drivers are perceived as needing more training in order to successfully meet the accessibility needs of users. All users of accessible service in the focus groups expressed a desire for better driver training. One such participant expressed their irritation that many drivers do not understand the regulations regarding service dogs and sometimes refuse them service if they try to bring their service dog in the car. Another participant emphasized the importance of drivers verbally confirming the user's destination as soon as they enter the car to ensure that the user is being taken to the right location. This is particularly important to users who may have vision impairments. They also stressed that drivers may sometimes need to help the user even after completing the ride, especially if they have communication difficulties. Drivers agreed with users that better training was needed, with one driver sharing anecdotes of poor training he had received in the past.

The number of drivers who provide accessible service is declining, with many being older adults. The City should explore ways to encourage younger drivers to provide wheelchair accessible VFH service. One driver highlighted that providing accessible service as an older adult is increasingly difficult due to their own physical limitations. This comment resonated with multiple other drivers. There was an agreement on the need to revitalize the industry in order to attract more new drivers.

Miscellaneous

There should be more leniency for accessible vehicles when it comes to ticketing. One driver expressed annoyance regarding ticketing of accessible vehicles, stating that he has been ticketed for idling his car while he is assisting customers with disabilities to their destination (e.g. helping a customer check-in to their doctor's appointment). He suggested that there should be

something accessible drivers could put in their windshield to indicate to police that they are currently helping a customer with accessibility needs, thereby preventing a ticket.

There should be more regular communication between the City and vehicle-for-hire stakeholders. Participants suggested that the City could gather feedback from stakeholders on VFH issues by incorporating a survey into the licence renewal process. Another idea involved introducing a VFH accessibility committee to discuss the quality of accessible VFH services within Toronto.

Reducing the cost of owning taxicab plates would help drivers of wheelchair accessible vehicles. Several drivers requested that the City reduce the overall cost of owning and maintaining taxicab plates. This reduction in cost could help offset some of the costs associated with operating an accessible vehicle. Additionally, drivers brought up other issues related to taxicab plates including the formula used to determine the number of taxicab plates and the onerous administrative requirements for taxi plate owners who have expired plates.

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 vehicleforhire@toronto.ca.

Appendix A: Participant Questions and Comments

All of the questions and comments that were said by participants during the meeting have been included below. 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.

Cost Associated with Providing Wheelchair Accessible Service

1. Even if the City contributes \$100,000 for people to upgrade to an accessible vehicle, I still won't upgrade because of the ludicrously expensive insurance rates. I bought a \$124,000 car and had to return it because the insurance was too much and I was losing money.
2. In Ottawa, where they had a central dispatch service, I talked to a driver who said that he didn't take any calls, and that he would just pick up people on the street because it was more lucrative. The accessible vehicles costs are four times as much as the regular cars. Do you expect them to charge the same rate as they would otherwise?
3. The cost of accessible vehicles are being downloaded onto the driver. If you really want accessible vehicle-for-hire, the entire fleet would have to be accessible. But the problem is that that does not economically make sense for the City. We need to charge accessible rides more for their service if this is going to make sense.
4. The \$20,000 is a waste of money. They should subsidize Wheel-Trans more rather than trying to fix the VFH side of things.
5. The proposed grant is a waste of money. The driver never benefits. The dues go up and the insurance goes up if they see that we are getting this grant money.
6. The \$20,000 is like \$20 for me. If the City wants to propose things, it must be done in a more realistic way. It should be closer to \$100,000 and include additional compensation. The people who are crafting this by-law need to know the maintenance cost of the car. Maintenance of the car costs thousands and thousands. Sometimes I feel like I subsidize the City.
7. People forget the history of what's happened over the years. In the 80s, accessible service in Toronto would be a minimum charge of \$40. Even if you were crossing the road, then you would have to pay that. Instead of giving \$10 per ride, then give a minimum of \$40 or \$50 per ride to people. I know that people with disability cannot afford higher rates. So you can subsidize the users rather than subsidizing the drivers.
8. I understand what the providers are saying. With the increases in cost for insurance and car ownership, the \$20,000 is not going to do much, especially if the businesses that they rely on see that money and think they can take it from them. I don't know how to solve that problem, but it's a problem.

9. I'm cognizant of the issues that drivers face, but at the same time accessible users need to get places. If they increase the price of the trip then we won't be able to get anywhere.
10. The problem here is that we need a different formula. The \$20,000 is not enough to cover the rising costs of living. When I see \$10 or \$20 per ride, it seems like a joke. My standard Tim Horton's order has become \$5.
11. I think that the important thing for the story is that the service is similar to Wheel-Trans. That means that the government was subsidizing it.
12. I think that Uber also subsidizes accessible service out of their pocket. They pay closer to \$30 out of pocket. Other cities did not require them to provide accessible service.
13. If I want to upgrade my vehicle, but the money I have is not enough, then would this grant be able to help me?
14. \$20,000 is not enough for me to buy an accessible vehicle, but it's a start. It depends on what kind of vehicle you can afford. If you are buying second-hand \$20,000 will not be enough, even \$50,000 might not be enough to buy a new vehicle. A real accessible vehicle costs \$75,000. To get it fit for the road and wheelchair accessible service will cost an additional \$40,000.
15. I'm kind of assuming that it would be easier for larger brokerages to get a discount on accessible taxicabs. If we can get more people operating accessible service through this program, then I'm all for this. We have an aging population. There's going to be more and more need for this as the years go on.
16. If you come to Canada as an adult like me, then you don't have a lot of money put into retirement. The car itself is very expensive and prohibitive.
17. I absolutely think that the \$10 per trip incentive is very reasonable. I think that there should definitely be compensation for drivers who are spending extra time helping people who have accessibility needs, but the amount needs to be checked every year to make sure it's competitive.
18. The vehicle fund is a first step. To renew my licence costs more money. If the City can help pay for the price of the vehicles, it would be good. The \$10 would be very nice too.
19. If I'm driving downtown, where I know all the streets where passengers are waiting, places like Bay, Yonge or Lakeshore, there are constantly passengers wanting a ride. When the trips are short I don't make any money. The trip length determines more about how much I make than the amount of wait-time.
20. Give people access to buy their own vehicle. That would make it easy. People don't drive accessible vehicles because the cost of the vehicle is high. Helping me is helping all of the passengers on the street.
21. It's really frustrating when you show up for someone's Wheel-Trans appointment and they're not even dressed yet, which holds the other passengers up as well. It's going to happen because people are like that, so I'm not sure what you do about it, but I feel for

the drivers who have to deal with that. That's why I'm in support of the \$10 incentive. The guy's sitting there the whole time with his taxi on.

22. We don't have savings. We are suffering. We can't retire. We have to work. That's why we're doing this job.
23. The insurance rates are way too high. Let's eliminate these real problems with providing accessibility on demand. If the City wants accessible service on demand, then all accessible cars must be self insured by the City.
24. I want to be able to go home and feel like I did a good day's worth of meaningful work and still have food on my plate.
25. There needs to be more access to get into the business. It's not easy at all to get into the business right now. I don't think that they have many accessible vehicles because people don't want to do it. They're not patient enough. If you're doing a normal taxi, people will flag you on the street. But if you're in a van, you won't get flagged because people either don't want to take the van away from someone who needs it, or they just don't like it.

Centralized Dispatching Service

26. I like the central dispatch service. I think it's a good idea, but we must have cars on the road if it's going to work.
27. Accessible service is provided by only a few people. We're going to lose all of those providers in the near future.
28. I recently visited the City of Ottawa and was able to use their central dispatching service and it was excellent. I had a good experience. I think a central dispatching service could work if you have cooperation between the vendors.
29. I'll be honest, it's hard to visualize what the dispatch would be like. Toronto has way more people than Calgary.
30. I don't like having to preregister for accessible service. A lot of people we serve in our community have difficulty with preregistering. You have to prove your disability. I had to reregister for Wheel-Trans after years of using it. It can be overwhelming. The process for registering is super onerous. It's not on demand if we're talking about that. It's not guaranteed then.
31. Make the City self-insured. We have a common interest here in taking on the insurance rates. The insurance can gauge us if they think we're making more money.
32. Sometime dispatch gives the driver wrong information. It depends on where you are, where they call you to go. The dispatch can confuse the information and it causes a headache for everyone involved.
33. Would the central dispatch eliminate Wheel-Trans?
 - o *City Staff Response:* No, this would be an additional service.

34. The current dispatching system can be described in one word: corruption. We're supposed to have the same treatment, but the dispatchers have their favourite drivers. Even if you're first in the queue, it doesn't matter. I know people who have paid extra money to the dispatching service in order to receive priority. It's not fair. If the City engages with this, then it would be better. Something I've observed in Canada, is that when the government engages then it's fair. If the dispatch is more fair, and does not send some drivers to Hamilton for no reason, then I would be in favour. There cannot be corruption.
35. I think a centralized dispatch is a good idea. With Wheel-Trans, having one system works really well. If I could have a system where I could phone in to one number rather than trying to track down multiple brokerages, then I think it would be great. Hopefully it would be set it up so that it would be fair, since it would be more centralized. I think the one thing that would concern me would be if the information about my destination was misunderstood. If I ended up in the wrong location, then the driver would need to be adaptable, and I'm not sure how the dispatch service would relate to that.
36. The dispatch might be a good solution for wait times. Going back to my experience with Wheel-Trans, it's certainly helpful to know that the driver is going to be there at a certain time. I mean we do live in Toronto, so it's never going to be perfect, but it's generally pretty consistent. There are days where Wheel-Trans is late, but it's rare. Normally that happens when there is especially bad traffic. You have to live with that.

Accessible User Experience

37. After 10 or 11pm, Uber is no longer available to be booked. I had to get an Uber XL and use the manual feature on my wheelchair. It's even worse because there are vehicles available, but the Uber app will lock you out of requesting them after a certain time in the night.
38. Uber is supposed to be 10% accessible. It's not and it never will be.
39. It doesn't feel like the City regulates Uber and Lyft the same way that they regulate taxis when it comes to this. They're not following the by-laws.
40. Uber is supposed to have 10% accessible service too, so why isn't the City enforcing that as much?
41. Wheel-Trans and taxi companies that are providing accessible service are pretty consistent. Uber and Lyfts, on the other hand, could use a lot more work.
42. There used to be a part of Uber's service that was dedicated to people with disabilities, but that apparently has disappeared. Standard Uber drivers won't help me sometimes because they are scared of potentially damaging the car as he's putting my walker in.
43. PTCs played a game. I don't know if the City knows this. PTCs don't have a meter. There's no fixed price. It changes based on the situation. But we need that stability as drivers.
44. It seems that Uber and Lyft don't have any accessible vehicles available.

45. I won't say anything about wait times because I know so many different things that could happen. Especially during the winter when the weather is bad. Wait times aren't always in the hands of the driver. There's a lot of time where it's the passenger who I have to wait for because they're very sick. That's why the \$10 incentive would help, because that's time that I don't have control over. It depends on what's going that makes you have to wait more.
46. In 2018-2019, I was able to get an accessible ride in 20 minutes top. I was always out and about. It was fantastic. I was using Uber all the time. Now it's nearly impossible. It's not even a matter of waiting a long time. It's impossible to get a ride.
47. There are people who see me coming with my service dog and drive away. Both PTCs and taxicabs. I think that accessible service is in a bad place right now for that. One guy made me open the window with the dog while it was snowing because he thought the dog was going to contaminate the car.
48. During the nighttime, people with accessibility needs are waiting for such a long time, sometimes up to multiple hours.
49. All humans will face some type of disability at some point in the future, even if they are not today. I am sixty years old. In the future, I will be a customer of these accessible services. We need to give real solutions to these problems.
50. You go on a waitlist if you're on Wheel-Trans. It's not the same as on-demand service for accessible users. There will always be a need for some kind of service like that [on-demand] for accessible users.
51. People with accessibility needs need to be respected and drivers need to be respected.
52. Whenever I need to go somewhere outside of Toronto it's a huge pain. On the way out of Toronto you can usually get service, but on the way back? Forget it. If there's some way to get cross-regional service, then that would be a huge help.
53. The bylaw enforcement is very strict for taxis in Mississauga. I can't pick people up there.
54. Providing accessible service requires you to have a good heart and lots of patience. If you don't have that, then it's hard. It's expensive for the users to get a taxi. It takes a long time for the driver to provide accessible service. There's a lot of drivers who don't care about these people and only care about the money. You have to have a good heart and love the people you're serving. You have to put yourself in their shoes.
55. I don't want the City to give tickets to drivers who are helping people. There should be something a driver can put in the window to show to enforcement that they are helping the passenger and that's why they've left the car there.
56. Will the \$10 per trip incentive be paid by the customer?
 - *City Staff Response:* No, it would be paid for by the City.

57. I am in this industry because I love the public. Lots of people in this industry do not have the patience for people, because patience costs money. I'm incentivized because I care, but not everyone feels that way.
58. When transporting people with little communication skills, it is important that a driver comes into the building.
59. I would like to see more accessible cabs – more of the vans as opposed to the sedan taxis. The sedan taxis are more set up for the driver, making it difficult for a person with a mobility issue. If there's a driver who's tall that has all of his seats pulled back, then it's hard for me to get into that seat behind him. The vans have so many nice features that the sedans do not. If the vans were easier to access, I would choose the vans every time.
60. The City used to have a formula for giving out plates. They always used that formula every year to give out plates. This was several years ago. MLS would advise about how many plates that should be given out based on recommendations from consultants. Under what formula does the City issue more than 16x the licences to PTC companies? What was the logic behind it? Was it something about the population growing? There didn't seem to be a rationale for the PTC licences in the same way there was a rationale for how taxi plates were distributed. Instead of having unlimited licences for VFH, it should be pegged to a specific formula.

Driver Training

61. The first course I took on accessibility was wonderful. However, newer trainings are not as good.
62. The older you get, the worse that the service that you give becomes. The City needs to be encouraging younger drivers.
63. I see a lot of drivers who don't know what the guideline is regarding service dogs. The problem is that they are trained by private corporations.
64. Back when licensing was more valuable, the threat of reporting to the licensing authority was a real threat. You had to give good service so people didn't report you. Nowadays you can get a licence super easily. There's no more money or risk involved in the business anymore, which means there's no consequences to drivers who are acting improperly. We don't expect good service from cab drivers anymore because there are so many of them and it's so easy to get a licence.
65. Improve standardize training and make sure that drivers understand the guidelines for providing service.
66. There is a lack of knowledge among drivers. We have two types of drivers. Those who bought their licence and those who earned their licence. That leaves us with different types of drivers who have different levels of training. Those drivers who bought their licence from someone else have to go to training and they don't know why they're going. They fail the training because they bought their licence without doing it before.

67. Sometimes I have more experience than the people who are supposed to be training me. It makes me feel guilty because I know that that person is going to be training someone and the person they are training is not going to know what's going on.
68. The City should buy the plates off of people and then act as the broker for training new cabs and training people.
69. Why do you make it difficult for people with plates who are expired? It is super hard for some drivers to fill out the online forms since you don't allow them to do it in person anymore. There are some people who would be accessible drivers that are not because of the hassle regarding licensing. People don't enjoy driving taxis in Toronto because the licensing system doesn't feel fair.
70. Plates are worthless. I buy the plate and return it with a loss. Insurance companies and brokerages says that they need/prefer "owner-operators". I drive 12 hours, 6 days a week. Now the insurance company tells me that they need an "owner-operator." I am going to be expired soon at this rate.
71. Drivers need to be prepared to provide assistance. My wife who is legally blind has had issues with getting to specific addresses.
72. Taxicab drivers need to be able to ensure that the addresses they're navigating to are correct. For the most part taxicabs and Wheel-Trans are good about saying where they're taking the person, but that type of information should always be said.

Miscellaneous

73. What kind of outreach was done for this meeting? There are lots of people with valuable opinions who should be in this room but are not.
74. If a driver has to choose between putting food on the table or attending a meeting, they are not going to attend the meeting.
75. The first language of many drivers is not English, which makes it hard to participate.
76. Feedback could be collected as part of the licence renewal process. For example, send out a survey with the licence renewal that goes out every year so they can regularly collect feedback.
77. The first course I took on accessibility was wonderful. However, newer trainings are not as good.
78. Most drivers don't want to go downtown because of the fear of tickets. For me, I take my chances.
79. I'm not sure if this would work, but perhaps a standing council of both services and people with disabilities so that there's constantly feedback coming in. It would be an advisory type of thing that met on a fairly consistent basis – maybe quarterly or so. People from different disability organizations could contribute their own perspectives that would have their own needs. This is a situation where you need to be in constant contact with the people who are the users.

Appendix B

The following organizations had representatives identify themselves over the course of the meeting:

- Spinal Cord Injury of Ontario

The following organizations were invited to participate in the focus group meetings:

- 8-80 Cities
- AccessNow
- Access Independent Living Services
- Accessible MediInc.
- Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians (AEBC)
- Alzheimer Society Ontario
- Anxiety Disorders Association of Ontario
- AODA Alliance
- ARCH Disability Law Centre
- Arthritis Society Canada
- ASE Community Foundation, for Black Canadians with Disabilities
- Autism Alliance of Canada (AAC)
- Autism Canada
- Autism Ontario
- Autistics for Autistics (A4A Ontario)
- Balance for Blind Adults
- Baycrest
- Betty Dion Enterprises Ltd.
- Bob Rumball Canadian Centre of Excellence for the Deaf
- Brain Injury Canada
- Brain Injury Society of Toronto (BIST)
- Bridgepoint, Sinai Health
- Canadian Abilities Foundation
- Canadian Accessibility Network at Carleton University
- Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH)
- Canadian Angelman Syndrome Society
- Canadian Association of the Deaf (CAD)
- Canadian Cancer Society
- Canadian Association for Retired Persons (CARP)
- Canadian Association for Supported Employment (CASE)
- Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence
- Canadian Centre on Disability Studies (CCDS)
- Canadian Congenital Heart Alliance (CCHA)
- Canadian Council of the Blind (CCB) Toronto Visionaries
- Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW)
- Canadian Deafblind Association
- Canadian Disability Participation Project (CDPP)
- Canadian Down Syndrome Society (CDSS)
- Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons (CFPDP)
- Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA)

- Canadian Hearing Services (CHS)
- Canadian Helen Keller Centre (CHKC)
- Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) – Ontario
- Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)
- Canadian Pain Society (CPS)
- Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)
- Empowerment Council (CAMH)
- University of Toronto - Scarborough, Centre for Global Disability Studies
- Centre for Independent Living in Toronto (CILT)
- Chronic Pain Association of Canada (CPAC)
- Citizens With Disabilities – Ontario
- Civic Plan Studio
- Community Head Injury Resource Services (CHIRS)
- Community Living Ontario (CLOntario)
- Community Living Toronto (CLToronto)
- Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD)
- Crohn's & Colitis Canada
- Cystic Fibrosis Canada
- The Disabled Women's Network of Canada (DAWN Canada)
- Deafblind Network of Ontario (DBNO)
- DeafBlind Ontario Services
- DesignABLE Environments
- Diabetes Canada
- Disability Awareness Consultants (DAC)
- Disability Justice Network of Ontario
- Disability Solutions
- Diversability Development Organization (DDO)
- Down Syndrome Association of Toronto (DSAT)
- Easter Seals Ontario
- Epilepsy Toronto
- FlashAbility Access
- Guide Dog Users of Canada
- Harmony Place Support Services
- Heart & Stroke
- Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation
- Human Space
- Huntington Society of Canada
- Hydrocephalus Canada
- Inclusion Canada (formerly Canadian Association for Community Living)
- Institute for Disability and Rehabilitation Research (IDRR)
- Kerry's Place Autism Service (Toronto Region)
- Learning Disabilities Association Toronto (LDACT)
- Lupus Canada
- March of Dimes Canada
- Margaret's Housing & Community Support Services
- Marsha Forest Centre (MFC)
- Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC)
- Meta Centre

- Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre Accessibility & Inclusion programs
- Millennium Support & Care Group
- Mood Disorders Association of Ontario (MDAO) and Toronto
- MS Canada (formerly MS Society of Canada)
- Muscular Dystrophy Canada
- North Yorkers for Disabled Inc.
- Obesity Canada
- Ontario Association on Developmental Disabilities (OADD)
- Ontario Association of the Deaf (OAD)
- Ontario Brain Injury Association
- Ontario Disability Coalition (ODC)
- Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN)
- Ontario Federation for Cerebral Palsy (OFCP)
- Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC)
- Osteoporosis Canada
- PACE Independent Living
- Parkinson Canada
- Pegasus Community of Adults with Special Needs
- People First of Canada
- ProHara
- Race and Disability Canada
- REACH Canada
- Reena
- Rick Hansen Foundation
- Rooted in Rights
- School of Disability Studies, Toronto Metropolitan University
- School of Deaf and Deafblind Studies, George Brown College
- Safehaven Project for Community Living
- Schizophrenia Society of Canada (SSC)
- Seniors for Social Action (Ontario)
- Social Planning Toronto
- Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario
- Spinal Cord Injury Ontario
- SPH Planning and Consulting
- StopGap Foundation
- Toronto HIV/AIDS Network (THN)
- Toronto Metropolitan University, School of Disability Studies
- Tourette Canada
- University of Toronto, International Centre for Disability and Rehabilitation
- University of Toronto - Scarborough, Centre for Global Disability Studies
- Unitarian Commons
- Urbe Studio
- Walk Toronto
- War Amps
- WoodGreen
- Working for Change
- York University, Critical Disability Studies
- Access Ryerson, Equity and Community Inclusion

- Canadian Association for Community Living
- Communication Disabilities Access Canada
- Ethno-Racial People with Disabilities Coalition of Ontario
- Extend-A-Family
- Metrolinx, Accessibility Unit
- OCADU: Inclusive Design Research Centre
- ParaSport Ontario
- Scadding Court Community Centre
- The Arthritis Society
- Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Variety Village