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City Council, at the June 27, 2018 meeting, approved the following report entitled Financial Incentives for Taxi Operators to Provide Accessible Taxicab Trips (PED18082)

As part of the recommendations in the report, a copy was to be forwarded to the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities, for their information.

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CITY OF HAMILTON
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Licensing and By-law Services Division

TO:	Chair and Members Planning Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	June 19, 2018
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Financial Incentives for Taxi Operators to Provide Accessible Taxicab Trips (PED18082) (City Wide) (Outstanding Business List Item)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Dawn Johnson (905) 546-2424 Ext. 5809
SUBMITTED BY:	Ken Leendertse Director, Licensing and By-law Services Planning and Economic Development Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That the Licensing and By-Law Services Division create a one year pilot program to provide a subsidy for accessible taxicab trips to further support the provision of accessible taxicab services for the accessible community;
- (b) That, subject to the approval of Recommendation (a) of Report PED18082, Financial Incentives for Taxi Operations to Provide Accessible Taxicab Trips, the following be approved:
 - (i) That a one year pilot program be created within the Licensing Section to provide a \$5 flat subsidized rate to all qualified accessible taxicab drivers for each accessible taxi trip dispatched with Hamilton Cab and Blue Line Taxi Brokers, at an estimated cost of \$115,000;
 - (ii) That \$20,000 be allocated from the Tax Stabilization Reserve to support the funding of the pilot program. The \$20,000 represents the “in lieu of accessibility” voluntary annual revenue received in 2017;
 - (iii) That in support of achieving compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O, 2005, c.11 (AODA)* standards and to support

- the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities with the on-demand accessible taxicab initiative, the results of the pilot program be referred to the 2019 budget process for further consideration;
- (iv) That Report PED18082 respecting Financial Incentives for Taxi Operators to Provide Accessible Taxicab Trips be brought to the next Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities meeting for information only;
 - (v) That 0.25 temporary full-time equivalent (FTE) be approved for program administration, to be funded from the Personal Transportation Providers revenues generated from new licences;
 - (vi) That the Director of Licensing and By-Law Services and/or designate be authorized and directed to negotiate and execute a new agreement with Blue Line Taxi and Hamilton Cab, in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor, for the provision of accessible taxicab subsidized payments in the amount of \$5.00 per dispatched trip;
- (c) That the item respecting Financial Incentives for Taxi Operators to make replacement vehicles accessible be identified as complete and removed from the Planning Committee Outstanding Business List.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff has met with the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities (ACPD) Transportation Working Group and have had discussions with the two taxi brokers in the City of Hamilton, Hamilton Cab and Blue Line Taxi, regarding the need for improved on-demand accessible taxicab service.

This Report proposes a pilot program to provide a \$5 subsidy for each dispatched accessible trip, providing each qualified accessible taxicab driver with additional earnings per accessible dispatched trip, fully funded by the Licensing and By-Law Services Division, utilizing funds generated from Personal Transportation Provider (PTP) "in-lieu of accessibility" voluntary annual revenue. This proposal increases the potential of meeting the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) mandate of on-demand accessible trips and will provide the City with a good indication as to how to support the on-demand accessible transportation mandate (AODA) for our community.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: The pilot project will be funded through revenue collected through the "in-lieu of accessibility" payments made by PTP license holders and will not be

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funded through licensing fees. As a result, there is no impact to the levy or business licensing fees.

Currently the “in-lieu of accessibility” funds amount to \$40,000, however staff anticipates an additional \$40,000 to \$60,000 will be collected during the course of the pilot program. This revenue would support 8,000 to 20,000 accessible trips under the pilot program.

Staff is also requesting that \$20,000 from the Tax Stabilization Reserve be allocated to this pilot project. This \$20,000 represents the “in lieu of accessibility” payment made in 2017 and would support 4,000 additional accessible trips, for a total of up to 24,000 accessible taxicab trips that may be supported under the pilot program.

In the event of higher demand for accessible taxicab trips, staff will seek approval for an additional funding source for the pilot.

As this is not a sustainable option, Licensing intends to report back to Council as part of the 2019 Budget process for next steps.

Staffing: The addition of 0.25 temporary FTE, at a cost of \$21,000, to support program administration, be funded by the PTP per trip fees generated from existing and new PTP under Schedule 24 of Licensing By-Law No. 07-170.

Legal: The City has the authority to implement the proposed approach to funding the cost of accessible taxicab trips.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

On October 24, 2012, Council approved Planning Committee Report 12-016, Item 10, directing staff to issue 16 accessible taxicab plates in 2013 to deliver taxicab services in accordance with the AODA.

On December 14, 2016, Council approved Planning Committee Report 16-021, Item 2, directing staff to issue a total of 18 accessible plates equally over three years commencing with the first six in 2017.

On April 27, 2016, Council approved General Issues Report 16-011, Item 9, directing that the ACPD Report 16-002, Item 1, respecting Financial Incentives for Accessible Taxi Services, be referred to staff for a report back to the Planning Committee.

On May 10, 2017, Council approved General Issues Committee Report 17-010, Item 8, directing the City’s Director of Licensing to review and address the lack of on-demand accessible taxicabs in full consultation with members of ACPD and that staff be directed

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to report back to ACPD on steps to be actively taken to ensure full and equitable access to the City's taxi system for all persons with disabilities.

On February 28, 2018, Council approved Planning Committee Report 18-002, Item 7, directing staff to issue 18 additional accessible taxicab plates and create an accessible priority list.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O, 2005, c.11 O. Reg. 191/11
INTERGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS Part IV, s. 79(1)*

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Finance and Administration, Legal Services, Hamilton Cab, Blue Line Taxi and the ACPD Transportation Working Group were consulted in the preparation of this Report.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Taxicab driver earnings can be significantly lower for accessible vehicles because of the additional time required to load and unload passengers and equipment. With less accessible taxicabs, drivers also have to travel further distances to pick-up and return clients, including wait times in some cases. Taxicab drivers must charge the same rate for accessible rides as for regular rides.

The accessible community requires additional qualified accessible drivers willing to take/carry-out trips for persons with disabilities. In consultation with the Taxicab Industry and the ACPD Transportation Working Group, it was determined that there was a need for additional accessible taxicab trips, which can only be achieved with additional qualified and willing accessible taxicab drivers.

To support the above goal, and to support the implementation of the pilot program, staff recommend entering into agreements with Hamilton Cab and with Blue Line Taxi to require each Broker to provide the City with monthly data documenting the number of accessible trips dispatched through its company for the relevant period. Pursuant to the agreement, the City would then pay to the Broker, quarterly, the proposed subsidy for each accessible trip dispatched through its service and reported to the City, and require the Broker to distribute the \$5.00 per trip subsidy amongst its drivers who made the dispatched accessible trips.

The subsidized pilot program will provide performance measures, such as statistics relating to the number of accessible trips and the number of drivers making accessible trips, to determine if the City is able to properly support the accessible community with more readily available accessible taxicab drivers.

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Accessible Taxicab Statistics

- An average of 22,000 accessible taxicab rides take place per year;
- Numerous complaints per month related to access to available accessible taxicabs;
- Average of 45 driver no-shows per month; and,
- With the release of the additional 18 plates this year, the ratio of accessible plates will increase from 22 (4.9% of the total taxicab fleet) to 40 (8.9% of the taxicab fleet).

Although this is still a relatively small number of accessible taxicabs in relation to the 449 regular taxicabs servicing our community, the additional plates to be released almost doubles the existing accessible taxicab fleet. The focus now is on increasing the number of willing accessible drivers and providing a financial incentive for qualified accessible taxicab drivers to make accessible trips. Currently there is no incentive for accessible plates as accessible rides tend to take longer to complete or lack the financial incentive to carry out.

As part of an ongoing initiative to support the accessible taxicab service within the industry, we will continue to monitor and work with the Brokers and the ACPD Transportation Working Group to bring forward continuous improvements and work towards providing on-demand service.

The subsidized pilot program will support the improvement of the accessible transportation needs of our community, as well as working towards compliance with the regulations outlined in the AODA.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

N/A

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Community Engagement and Participation

Hamilton has an open, transparent and accessible approach to city government that engages with and empowers all citizens to be involved in their community.

Healthy and Safe Communities

Hamilton is a safe and supportive city where people are active, healthy, and have a high quality of life.

Economic Prosperity and Growth

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Hamilton has a prosperous and diverse local economy where people have opportunities to grow and develop.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

N/A

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