



# INFORMATION REPORT

<b>TO:</b>	Chair and Members Planning Committee
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	January 15, 2019
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	Equitable Access to City's Taxi System for All Persons with Disabilities Update (PED16232(c)) (City Wide)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
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<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Ken Leendertse Director, Licensing and By-law Services Planning and Economic Development Department
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

## Council Direction:

At its meeting of February 28, 2018 Council approved Item 7 of Planning Committee Report 18-003 directing staff to report back in six months on the status of the accessible taxi plate applications including the number applied for and the number in service.

## Information:

On February 28, 2018 Council approved Item 7 of Planning Committee Report 18-003 approving the issuing of 18 accessible taxi plates. Licensing and By-Law Services consulted with industry stakeholders and established a transparent process to ensure a fair distribution of these plates.

The release of the plates was done by lottery held on August 20, 2018. Successful applicants were selected at random by electronic database. Applications for accessible plates were received from 117 licensed taxicab drivers. Subsequently an Accessible Priority List was established. Those that were successful in obtaining plates were given time to purchase new vehicles and have the new vehicles outfitted to be put on the road.

With support from the Taxi Brokerages, deployment of 80% of the accessible vehicles was possible within the first 90 days. At the present time 15 of the 18 plates are active and on the road, to support the accessible community. The remaining three applicants are awaiting modifications and safety enhancements; these vehicles will be ready for deployment in the first quarter of 2019. The total licensed taxicab fleet currently has 40

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*OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.*

*OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.*

*OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.*

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licensed accessible vehicles and 431 licensed non-accessible vehicles. This is 10% of the overall fleet, which is an unprecedented number in any of the surrounding municipalities.

On June 27, 2018 Council approved Item 9 of Planning Committee Report 18-010 approving Financial Incentives for Taxi Operators to Provide Accessible Taxi Trips. The Financial Incentive Pilot Program began on September 1, 2018 and allows accessible taxicab drivers to earn an additional \$5 per accessible trip for the duration of the pilot. To date over 1,500 rides have been subsidized, with total pay-outs estimating over \$7,500.

On September 1, 2018, Licensing implemented the Financial Incentive Pilot Program. At that time there were 135 licensed accessible taxicab drivers. Eighteen (18) new drivers were added to the taxi industry in 2018, now totalling 153. Since the commencement of the pilot, 14 additional accessible taxicab drivers became licensed and enrolled in the incentive program. Licensing and By-Law Services is averaging one new accessible driver per week since the implementation of the pilot program.

Licensing works closely with the taxicab brokers and understand that as a result of the pilot more taxicab drivers are in pursuit of their accessible licence. Under the pilot, accessible taxicab drivers must submit required documentation to meet the eligibility requirements of the program, the documents are then audited internally for compliance. The City of Hamilton also facilitates the practical testing, in coordination with the brokers, to ensure public safety, consumer protection and supporting the industry with customer service.

Since the implementation of the Financial Incentive Program for Accessible Taxis, Licensing and By-law Services have received no complaints in relation to failed pick-up for accessible clients.

Licensing staff have met with the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities, who have expressed their support of the release of the 18 plates and the Financial Incentive Pilot to support on-demand accessible transportation in our community.

Results of the one-year Financial Incentive Pilot Program will be reported to Council at the end of the summer in 2019 for consideration.

**Appendices and Schedules Attached**

N/A

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