

INFORMATION REPORT

TO: Chair and Members Planning Committee	WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE
COMMITTEE DATE: March 1, 2011	
SUBJECT/REPORT NO: Taxicab Inspection and Enforcement (PD05141(b)) (City Wide)	
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SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction:

On May 17, 2005, the former Economic Development and Planning Committee approved report PD05141 (Taxicab Inspection and Enforcement) including the following recommendation:

“That staff be directed to consult with the Taxi Industry, including stakeholders on the development of an expanded comprehensive policy manual for the inspection of taxicabs.”

The recommendation was approved by City Council May 25, 2005.

Information:

The City licenses certain classes of businesses in the interest of promoting public health or safety, consumer protection and/or nuisance prevention. Taxis are regulated through the Licensing By-Law for the benefit of the public who use this form of transportation (e.g. vehicle standards, driver training and performance, meter rates, number of licences, etc.).

Every licenced taxicab owner submits the taxicab for mandatory inspections to ensure compliance with the By-Law. Such inspections include but are not limited to;

- meter accuracy

- visual exterior and interior inspections
- assessment of mechanical fitness and safety
- submission of an Ontario Ministry of Transportation Vehicle Inspection report or a Safety Standards Certificate issued under the Highway Traffic Act

For taxicabs less than three years old an inspection is required annually. Taxicabs 3-6 years old require two inspections per year. Taxicabs can also be checked on a complaint or proactive basis.

Following a proactive multi-agency inspection of licensed taxicabs in 2005 by the Hamilton Police Service, the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of the Environment and City staff, staff reported in depth on the issue of taxicab inspection and enforcement in PD05141 (Taxicab Inspection and Enforcement).

In approving report PD05141, Council directed staff to develop a comprehensive taxicab inspection manual, in consultation with the taxicab industry, to clarify what is included in visual exterior and interior inspections and assessment of mechanical fitness and safety to assist the industry, stakeholders and licensed motor vehicle garages.

While some progress was made in developing an inspection manual, it was not completed and little, if any, consultation took place before 2007 when there was a complete Divisional management changeover, and an operational review which identified, among other things, deficiencies in enforcement.

As staff have addressed the operational deficiencies and has become more proficient in enforcing by-laws, some in the taxi industry are concerned that there is now a higher level of scrutiny of their vehicles. Therefore, more than ever, a comprehensive taxicab inspection manual would assist in clarifying expectations. Accordingly, staff intends to begin industry consultation and to finalize the development of a comprehensive policy manual for the inspection of taxicabs for consideration of Committee/Council.

MH/dt