

**Janzen, Heather**

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**Subject:** FW: Email - Request to Speak - Ray Bourner - Temporary Taxi Licence Review - CK 7000-7  
**Attachments:** SPCT March 27.pdf

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**From:** Web NoReply <[web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca](mailto:web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca)>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 25, 2024 9:29 AM  
**To:** City Council <[City.Council@Saskatoon.ca](mailto:City.Council@Saskatoon.ca)>  
**Subject:** Email - Request to Speak - Ray Bourner - Temporary Taxi Licence Review - CK 7000-7

--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED] ---

Submitted on Monday, March 25, 2024 - 09:24

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

**I have read and understand the above statements.:** Yes

**I do not want my comments placed on a public agenda. They will be shared with members of Council through their online repository.:** No

**I only want my comments shared with the Mayor or my Ward Councillor.:** No

**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024

**To:** His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

**Pronouns:** He/him/his

**First Name:** Ray

**Last Name:** Bourner

**Phonetic spelling of first and/or last name:** BOR-ner

**Phone Number :** [REDACTED]

**Email:** [REDACTED]

**I live outside of Saskatoon:** No

**Saskatoon Address and Ward:**

**Address:** [REDACTED] Avenue B North

**Ward:** Ward 2

**Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable):** Riide Holdings Inc

**What do you wish to do ?:** Request to Speak

**If speaking will you be attending in person or remotely:** In person

**What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known)::** City Council Regular Business Meeting

**What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?:** 8.2.1

**Comments:**

Requesting to speak to agenda item 8.2.1, specifically to recommendation 2.

**Attachments:**

- [SPCT March 27.pdf](#)57.12 KB

**Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting?:** No

His Worship, Mayor Charlie Clark  
Councillor Block  
Councillor Davies  
Councillor Donauer  
Councillor Dubois  
Councillor Gersher  
Councillor Gough  
Councillor Hill  
Councillor Jeffries  
Councillor Kirton  
Councillor Loewen

I attended the Transportation Committee Meeting on Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>/2024 at City Hall. Listed below are the original recommendations made by Community Standards.

#### Original Recommendations

1. Renew the terms for the existing 21 temporary wheelchair accessible taxi licences for 8 years; continue to grant the licence to the vehicle owner.
2. Issue 14 additional temporary wheelchair accessible taxi licences for a 8 year term, to taxi brokerages, proportionate to fleet size. Term would start on April 25.
3. Do not renew the Enterprise Taxi Licence Program; allow the terms to expire on June 28.

Distributing these 14 wheelchair plates would have a significant impact on the city's non-ambulatory transportation landscape. With the brokerages managing these plates, they would guarantee a considerable presence on the roads, thereby notably improving wait times and aligning them more closely with standard taxi service intervals. Currently, while 89% of regular taxi wait times are 10 minutes or less, accessible taxi users experience wait times within the first 15 minutes only 60% of the time and can wait much longer at times, due to the scarcity of wheelchair-accessible vehicles. During that meeting, I submitted a letter affirming the merit of this proposal for the city. Over the past several weeks and weekends, we witnessed customers enduring wait times exceeding an hour due to the insufficient number of wheelchair-accessible vehicles on the road. While it's understandable that our drivers require time off, we find that Sundays are typically designated for rest. However, if brokerages were issued these plates, we would have the ability to schedule and provide round-the-clock operations, seven days a week, providing a much-needed service to the community.

The Committee who consists of Councillor Dubois (Chair), Councillor Kirton (Vice-Chair) and members His Worship Charlie Clark, Councillor Donauer, Councillor Gersher (Absent) and Councillor Hill (Absent). Several speakers addressed the Enterprise plate program. This program is slated to end in June of 2024. Yet no one addressed the wheelchair plates other than myself, again in full support.

Mayor Clark's attention was primarily fixed on the enterprise plate program, with minimal consideration given to the pressing issue of wheelchair plates. Despite efforts from the Community Standards division to articulate the concerns regarding wait times and the broader service benefits of having more wheelchair-accessible taxis, their appeals seemed to go unnoticed. Mayor Clark

proposed a motion to amend the suggested recommendations, suggesting the addition of 6 wheelchair plates while retaining 8 enterprise plates. Furthermore, Mayor Clark challenged the Community Standards division to explore possibly incorporating more enterprise plates. Surprisingly, there was no discourse concerning the augmentation of wheelchair plates.

We collaborate closely with numerous seniors' homes, hospitals, and fellow non-ambulatory service providers to fulfill these critical services. This accessible license shortage affects not only our brokerage but the entire taxi industry, limiting our collective capacity to serve the community. There have been distressing incidents where individuals are left waiting in the cold for a vehicle that cannot arrive within a reasonable timeframe. This situation is unacceptable, especially considering a thoroughly researched and reasonable recommendation was disregarded. Instead, a select few who appealed for an extension to the Enterprise program were prioritized over those reliant on accessible transportation. We currently have an oversupply of ambulatory transportation capacity that includes taxis and Uber, which is a serious issue in itself. The current recommendations that are coming before this Council will not address the accessible transportation capacity problems.

These community members deserve a significantly improved outcome, and I urge this council to acknowledge their needs rather than limiting their independence and freedom of mobility, which was completely overshadowed by the enterprise plate program.

I remain profoundly disheartened by the previous outcome. This collective had a chance to stand behind our community members grappling with mobility challenges and insufficient transportation options. I'm committed to continuing to voice my concerns at upcoming meetings, aiming to shed significant light on what feels like a hasty decision. Our non-ambulatory citizens and visitors rely heavily on taxi services, and this decision underscores the tendency of local government to prioritize the concerns of a small group over the needs of a larger population struggling with mobility transportation issues.

I will leave you with a quote. "My disability exists not because I use a wheelchair, but because the broader environment isn't accessible" – Stella Young

Ray Bourner  
General Manager  
Riide Holdings