

Proposed Enterprise Taxi Program – Capacity to Address High Demand Periods

There are currently 210 taxis licenced to operate in Saskatoon, comprised of 160 permanent taxi licences, five permanent wheelchair accessible taxi licences, 21 temporary wheelchair accessible taxi licences, and 24 temporary Seasonal Taxi Licences.

The Enterprise Program proposes to replace the 24 Seasonal licenses with 35 Enterprise taxis licenses, increasing the total number of licenced taxis to 221 and resulting in a net gain of 11 taxi licences. Taxis licensed under the Enterprise Program Taxicab would be restricted to one driver. This approach will help to ensure more vehicles are available during higher demand periods, while minimizing the number of taxis being driven during lower demand times.

The rationale in choosing 35 as the optimal number of Enterprise licenses is based on the following considerations.

In 2018, the Administration collaborated with the Saskatchewan Taxi Cab Association to analyze taxi wait time data over a 10 month period from September 2017 to June 2018, a total period of 7272 hours. The data analysis showed that, based on an agreed upon standard of providing service to 95% of customers with a wait time of 10 minutes or less, the existing 210 licensed taxis could not be achieve that standard for over half of the hours in the study period.

The proposed 35 Enterprise License is based on the finding that a total of 221 taxis would have been sufficient to meet demand for all but 145 hours in the 7272 hour study period. An increase to provide a net gain of 11 licences will significantly improve the number of trips that the taxi industry can provide with a wait time of 10 minutes or less.

The data analysis also showed that there were hours during the study period where demand for taxi service was significantly lower than the average, and fewer taxis were needed. Assuming a fleet utilization of 90%, the lowest demand period required only 12 taxis to serve demand with a wait time of 10 minutes or less. By increasing the number of taxi licences but limiting Enterprise Taxi Licences to one driver, the number of taxis available for dispatch can fluctuate more widely in relation to demand. Drivers licensed under the Enterprise Program who want to maximize profits will choose to be available for dispatch during peak times, rather than operate during low demand periods.

When asked to select their preferred hours of operation, 94% of drivers surveyed said that if they were awarded a licence, that they would operate from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays, and 79% said they would operate from 12 a.m. to 2 a.m. on weekends. These times coincide with weekend night life demand and weekday rush hour demand. Only 24% said that they would operate from 12 a.m. to 4 a.m. on weekdays, and 21% said that they would operate from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on weekends.