

Additional Items for Inclusion in The Vehicles for Hire Bylaw

ISSUE

The Vehicles for Hire Bylaw is anticipated to be considered by City Council at its meeting on September 30, 2019. The purpose of this bylaw is to consolidate Bylaw No. 9070, The Taxi Bylaw, 2014 (the "Taxi Bylaw") and Bylaw No. 9548, The Transportation Network Company Bylaw, 2018 (the "TNC Bylaw"). Administration has identified additional operational items related to taxi and ridesharing service which require direction from City Council to include in the proposed Vehicles for Hire Bylaw.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation recommend to City Council that the City Solicitor be requested to include the additional items, outlined in this report, in the proposed Vehicles for Hire Bylaw.

BACKGROUND

City Council, at its Regular Business meeting on July 23, 2018, resolved to request that the City Solicitor prepare The Vehicles for Hire Bylaw, as outlined in the Administration's report.

The Standing Policy Committee on Transportation, at its meeting on June 10, 2019, received an Information Report prepared by the Administration advising the proposed Vehicles for Hire Bylaw was substantially complete and that minor amendments to address operational items had been identified for inclusion in the proposed bylaw.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The Administration has identified four operational items related to the Taxi Bylaw and TNC Bylaw which could be improved when the bylaws are consolidated into one Bylaw, The Vehicles for Hire Bylaw.

1) Lost Property

Section 35(1)(p) of the Taxi Bylaw and Section 14(1)(j) of the TNC Bylaw require drivers to take care of all property delivered or entrusted to them, or left in the vehicle by any passenger. There have been several incidents where drivers have returned articles left behind by their customer and charged a fee for this service. In order to address this, the Administration is recommending that the proposed Vehicles for Hire Bylaw include a requirement that, at the end of the trip, a driver take all reasonable steps to identify if a passenger has forgotten any personal property and return these items to them. If the passenger cannot be located, then the property will be delivered to the Saskatoon Police Service, Lost and Found Department.

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2) Tampering with In-Car Cameras

The Taxi Bylaw requires all taxis to be equipped with in-car cameras. Several incidents have occurred where drivers have been caught tampering with the cameras, which is not explicitly listed as a bylaw offence. The Administration is recommending that the proposed Vehicles for Hire Bylaw include an offence prohibiting a driver from blocking, obstructing, tampering, interfering with or disabling the in-car security camera.

3) Improved Trip Data Reporting

The Taxi Bylaw and TNC Bylaw require that trip data be reported to the City. Trip data is defined under both bylaws to include: the time a request for dispatch is received, the time a driver accepts the dispatch, the time the trip begins and the time the trip concludes. Taxi brokerages are also required to report whether the trip involved the conveyance of a person with a disability related to mobility and the number of trips per month per wheelchair accessible taxi. This data is used in bylaw enforcement and in analysis. In order to improve the quality of data analysis, the Administration is recommending the proposed Vehicles for Hire Bylaw contain additional trip data reporting which will include wait time, cancelled trips and calls for trips where the customer did not show up.

4) Reporting Replacement Vehicles

Section 18(2) of the Taxi Bylaw requires that taxi license holders notify the City within three business days of transferring the license to another vehicle. The purpose of this time period is to accommodate circumstances where a taxi requires repair and must be taken off the road. This allows the license holder to continue to operate in a temporary vehicle while the licensed vehicle is being repaired. However, this also creates enforcement challenges with temporary replacement vehicles being found operating without being reported. Through the use of a published webmail account, the Administration is able to receive notice and appropriate documentation from license holders of the use of a temporary vehicle at all times and no longer requires drivers to submit documentation only during regular business hours. The Administration is recommending the proposed Vehicles for Hire Bylaw require that the use of a replacement vehicle be reported immediately.

NEXT STEPS

If the recommendation in this report is adopted, the four operational items will be included in the proposed Vehicles for Hire Bylaw, which is anticipated to be considered by City Council at its meeting on September 30, 2019.

Report Approval

Written by: Mark Wilson, Licensing and Permitting Manager, Community Standards
Reviewed by: Jo-Anne Richer, Manager of Community Standards
Approved by: Lynne Lacroix, General Manager, Community Services Department