

Accessibility Community Advisory Committee

Report

4th Meeting of the Accessibility Community Advisory Committee
June 22, 2023

Attendance PRESENT: J. Menard (Chair), M. Bruner-Moore, U. Iqbal, N. Judges, P. Moore, M. Papadakos, J. Peaire, B. Quesnel, P. Quesnel and C. Waschkowski and J. Bunn (Committee Clerk)

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor J. Pribil; D. Baxter, S. Corman, S. Cowan, A. Cunningham, C. DeForest, D. Dobson, R. Morris, N. Musicco, P. Singh, S. Spring and M. Stone

ABSENT: A. Garcia Castillo, S. Mahipaul, A. McGaw, K. Pereyaslavskaya and D. Ruston

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 PM; it being noted that M. Bruner-Moore, U. Iqbal, J. Menard, P. Moore, M. Papadakos, J. Peaire, B. Quesnel, P. Quesnel and C. Waschkowski were in remote attendance.

1. Call to Order

1.1 Disclosures of Pecuniary Interest

That it BE NOTED that no pecuniary interests were disclosed.

2. Scheduled Items

None.

3. Consent

3.1 3rd Report of the Accessibility Community Advisory Committee

That it BE NOTED that the 3rd Report of the Accessibility Community Advisory Committee, from its meeting held on March 23, 2023, was received.

3.2 Notice of Planning Application - Zoning By-law Change - New Comprehensive Zoning By-law - ReThink Zoning

That it BE NOTED that the Notice of Planning Application, dated June 5, 2023, from the ReThink Zoning Project Team, with respect to a Zoning By-law Change related to a New Comprehensive Zoning By-law - ReThink Zoning, was received.

3.3 Notice of Planning Application - Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments - 50 King Street and 399 Ridout Street North

That it BE NOTED that the Notice of Planning Application, dated June 14, 2023, from S. Wise, Senior Planner, with respect to Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments related to the properties located at 50 King Street and 399 Ridout Street North, was received.

3.4 Public Meeting Notice - Zoning By-law Amendment - 568 Second Street (at Oxford Street East)

That it BE NOTED that the Public Meeting Notice, dated May 31, 2023, from C. Parker, Senior Planner, with respect to a Zoning By-law Amendment related to the property located at 568 Second Street (at Oxford Street), was received.

3.5 Northridge Neighbourhood Connectivity Plan

That it BE NOTED that the Northridge Neighbourhood Connectivity Plan, dated May 26, 2023, from J. Dann, Director, Construction and Infrastructure Services, was received.

3.6 Huron Heights Neighbourhood Connectivity Plan

That it BE NOTED that the Huron Heights Neighbourhood Connectivity Plan, dated May 26, 2023, from J. Dann, Director, Construction and Infrastructure Services, was received.

3.7 2022-2026 Accessibility Plan - 2022 Status Update

That it BE NOTED that the 2022-2026 Accessibility Plan 2022 Status Update, as appended to the Agenda, was received.

4. Sub-Committees and Working Groups

None.

5. Items for Discussion

5.1 Accessible Taxis

That the attached presentation, from K. Al Tarhuni, MyGREEN Taxi, with respect to Accessible Taxi Cabs, BE FORWARDED to the Civic Administration for review and a report back to a future meeting of the Accessibility Community Advisory Committee and the Community and Protective Services Committee with options related to vehicles for hire and accessible transportation; it being noted that the above-noted presentation, as well as the communication, as appended to the Agenda, from K. Al Tarhuni, with respect to this matter, was received.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:16 PM.

ACCESSIBLE TAXI CABS

Prepared By: Huruy Woldemicael

Fleet Profile

- ▶ Launched 10 accessible taxi cab vans in Q2 of 2016.
- ▶ First vehicle for hire company to offer booking options via:
 - ▶ Chat
 - ▶ Mobile App
 - ▶ SMS Messaging
 - ▶ Web Booking

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Accessibility icon

Fleet Profile: 2018 vs 2023

- ▶ Total Accessible Vans: 10 vs 6 (-40%)
- ▶ Total Accessible Drivers: 16 vs 7 (-56.25%)
- ▶ Monthly Average Accessible Bookings: 2000 vs 1000 (-50%)
- ▶ Booking Types
 - ▶ On-Demand Bookings: 79% vs 78% (-1.27%)
 - ▶ Reservation Bookings: 21% vs 22% (+4.76%)
- ▶ Booking Originations:
 - ▶ Phone: 92% vs 88% (-4.35%)
 - ▶ Mobile App / Online: 8% vs 12% (+50%)

Fleet Profile: 2018 vs 2023

- ▶ Annual Insurance Premiums: \$8,700 vs \$18,000 (+107%)
- ▶ Fuel Rates: \$1.22 vs \$1.60 (+31%)
 - ▶ 50 Litres Daily: \$61.00 vs \$80.00
- ▶ Vehicle Replacement Cost: \$47,500 vs \$95,000 (+100%)
- ▶ City Population: 494,069 (2016) vs 543,551 (2021) (+10%) *Statistics Canada

London taxi drivers face another potentially crippling insurance premium hike



Some cabbies have turned off their meters for good, unable to afford hefty rates



[Colin Butler](#) · CBC News · Posted: Oct 16, 2020 5:00 AM EDT | Last Updated: October 16, 2020

Recommendations

Phase 1 - Immediately



Increase Accessible Ridership

- ▶ Subsidize accessible rides.
- ▶ Market accessible taxi options at city owned properties, funded organizations, and distributed material. (ie. Community centers, city buses, garbage calendar, etc.)
- ▶ Allow accessible taxi cabs to work in collaboration with London Transit to help reduce wait times and provide more booking flexibility for paratransit rides.

Increase Accessible Drivers

- ▶ Free Training
 - ▶ Pay for the training costs to become an accessible licensed driver. (\$150-200)
- ▶ Waive Licensing Fees
 - ▶ Eliminate the \$60.00 per year vehicle for hire license fee for those that commit to driving an accessible vehicle only.
 - ▶ Eliminate the \$25.00 one-time fee to be listed on the accessible priority list.

Increase Accessible Vehicles

- ▶ Remove Vehicle Age Restrictions
 - ▶ Focus on safety rather than the age of the vehicle. Increasing the amount of safety checks in the year and allowing less expensive older vans on the road will help reduce the start-up costs for new accessible taxi cab owners thus increasing the amount of accessible vans on the road.
- ▶ Remove Vehicle Entry Restrictions
 - ▶ Allow for side entry accessible vans. At the moment rear entry is the only permitted option.
- ▶ Eliminate Vehicle Related Fees
 - ▶ Discontinue the annual \$750 business license for accessible vans only.

Provide Funding: Ongoing Expenses

- ▶ Insurance Premiums
 - ▶ After COVID-19 the only insurance option is Facility Association.
- ▶ Vehicle Financing Interest Cost
 - ▶ The cost of borrowing for commercial vehicles is at record highs.
- ▶ Fuel Cost
 - ▶ ESG goals continue to drive this variable up.
 - ▶ No hybrid/electric options.
- ▶ Maintenance (Commonly Replaced: Engine, Transmission, Suspension, & Tires)
 - ▶ The weight of the steel ramp continues to wear down the vehicle.

Can We Afford The Recommendations?

- ▶ Increase fees for non-accessible participants:
 - ▶ Ride Sharing: Increase the per ride fee. (Currently: \$0.35 per ride.)
 - ▶ Toronto, Ottawa, Guelph, etc all charge \$0.07-0.10 per ride towards an accessibility fund.
 - ▶ Brokers: Increase the business license fee for brokers that refuse to offer accessible options.
 - ▶ Uber, Steer (Formerly FaceDrive), RideON Canada, etc.
- ▶ Contributions from all levels of government.
 - ▶ Grants, interest-free loans, etc.

Recommendations

Phase 2 - January 1, 2025



Increase Accessible Drivers

- ▶ Consolidated Licensing

- ▶ Require every vehicle for hire driver to be trained as an accessible driver by January 1, 2025.

- ▶ Training shouldn't be limited to those in a wheelchair:

- ▶ Hearing
 - ▶ Mental
 - ▶ Physical
 - ▶ Vision

Increase Accessible Vehicles

- ▶ Require all vehicles being licensed for hire to be accessible by January 1, 2025.
- ▶ Work with government & vehicle manufacturers to offer accessible vehicles directly from the manufacturer.

Provide Funding: Ongoing Expenses

- ▶ Insurance
- ▶ Vehicle Financing Interest
- ▶ Fuel
- ▶ Maintenance (Commonly Replaced: Engine, Transmission, Suspension, & Tires)

No Action

Risks



If Nothing Changes

- ▶ Drivers & vehicles will gradually leave the industry.
- ▶ Riders will have to pay more per ride and eventually service levels will become unbearable.
- ▶ The City of London could miss out on economic opportunities such as hosting events, increase to its population, and business investment.

Hard to count on accessible taxis, buses

Jon Higgins
Published Sep 08, 2017 • Last updated Sep 08, 2017 • 2 minute read

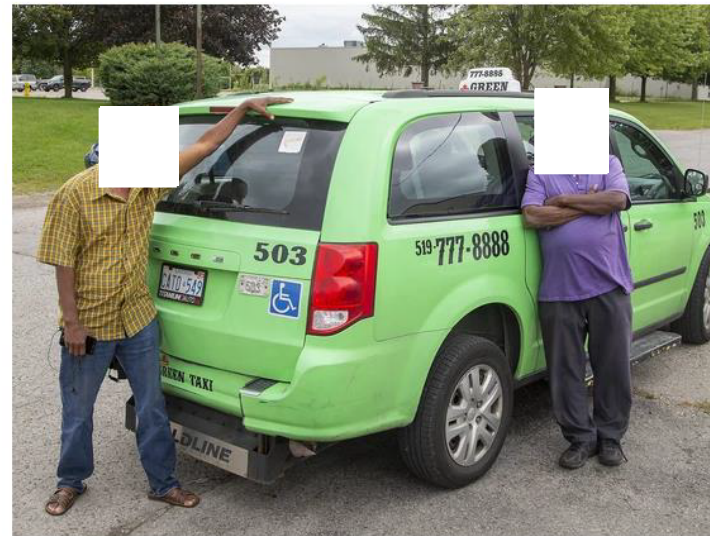


Local News

Is taxi surcharge to fund accessible cab subsidy 'too little, too late'?

Megan Stacey
Published Sep 05, 2019 • 3 minute read

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But there's another cap that could be lifted — a rule that limits the number of accessible taxis on the road. Right now, it's one for every 18 standard cabs. City staff have suggested removing that lid to address service issues.

Because picking up customers with mobility devices or other accessibility needs takes more time and effort, but isn't necessarily more profitable, some drivers avoid it, Katolyk said. That creates problems for customers, often left waiting for hours for accessible vehicles.



Taxi driver right, with driver (Free Press file photo)


complaints about accessible cabs are off the charts.

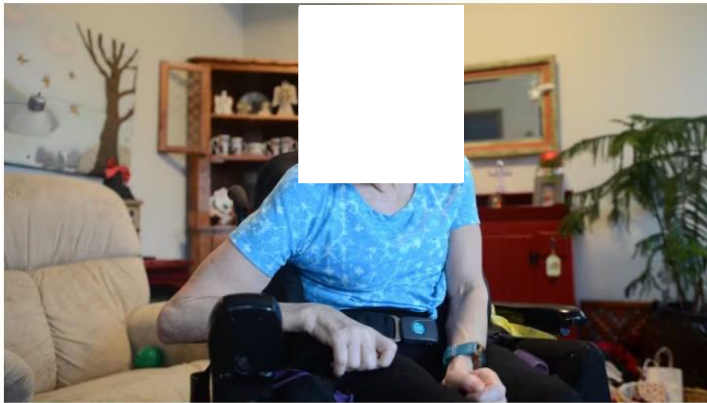
If Nothing Changes

This London senior is trapped at home relying on LTC's 'impossible' paratransit service



spent nearly \$100 getting to an appointment because paratransit wasn't available, she says

 Michelle Both · CBC News · Posted: Jan 06, 2023 5:00 AM EST | Last Updated: January 6



says she can only go on errands or meet up with friends occasionally now because paratransit isn't available. (Michelle Both/CBC)

A trip home from the hospital added up for this wheelchair-bound senior



says she had to pay for the service, and two ambulance bills

 Isha Bhargava · CBC News · Posted: Apr 05, 2023 5:00 AM EDT | Last Updated: April 5



of London, said it's unfair for her to be charged \$144 for a 20 minute ride home from the hospital emergency department when she has no other option to rely on in the absence of her wheelchair. (Isha Bhargava/CBC)

Lack of late-night accessible transportation options has this man singing the blues



says he wants to see more accessible transportation options for people later at night

 Isha Bhargava · CBC News · Posted: May 04, 2023 7:31 AM EDT | Last Updated: May 4

