

James Donnelly, 4th generation in taxi fleet operation beginning with my great grandfather and 20 years in London myself. Today I am the owner and president of Blue & White Taxis in London and Cox Cabs in St. Thomas.

Uber's arguments are entirely specious. The propaganda they presented to the Community Protective Services Committee on March 24th, 2015 suggests the City should turn the clock back over 40 years on safety and customer service, a reasonably short period in the over 500 year history of the second oldest profession in the world, dating back the boatman who predated the hackney carriage drivers of Cromwel's day. That the City should abandon the many lessons learned and simply turn the taxicab business in to the wild west. Not the Canadian west but the American wild west. No rules, no controls, no City oversight. Further, if their arguments are to be believed then the licenced brokers are only technology service companies as each uses technology to connect drivers and customers. The major difference is the licenced brokers only connect customers to licenced drivers operating inspected and licenced cars, with many safety features. Following the Chair's summary of the meeting rules, Uber would be asking for a meeting with no Chair, no timer, no direction through Chair, no oversight to the agenda. This sort of service will no more work for the City than an free for all meeting with no order would be productive tonight.

As pointed out by the GM of UNA not only are taxicab operators accountable to the City, the City can be held accountable to the taxicab operators and the citizens of London who could be endangered by this kind of service.

What the City would be giving up when it comes to the Munipl purpose of Health and Safety, Consumer Protection, Quality of Service and Efficient and available service to the travelling public (including all citizens who wish to travel):

- City set fares regardless of time of day, time of week or weather
- Recorded cameras for both driver and customer safety
- Recognized fleet colours and easily identifiable vehicles
- Safety inspected cars
- Police checked drivers
- GPS fleet tracking
- Dispatcher oversight and tracking
- Local ownership and management to resolve any issues, including to liaise with city police.
- Accepted payment by cash, debit card, credit card or corporate account. This is especially important for the most vulnerable of our city in lower economic circumstances who do not have the ability to obtain a credit card such as fixed income seniors, lower income families, single mothers and the disabled. These vulnerable populations are not taking convenience trips home from a night of drinking but rather trying to get to and from grocery stores, medical appointments and other life necessary trips.
- Adherence to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) which not only requires wheelchair accessible vehciles on each fleet, driver training for serving persons with special needs, and dispatch training for customer service, but also specific markings on all taxicabs in Ontario. Uber's service does not offer this. Uber is attempting to skim off the gravy with out the meat and potatoes that provide essential services to OUR community.
- Keeping the money earned in the industry, not having 20% of that \$35 to \$40 million dollars (being \$7 to \$8 million dollars) taken from the drivers and sent not only outside of London but outside of Canada for no actual investment in our city and not spent to pay Londoners to provide the services.
- Local economic investment and spin off. Uber offers no investment in our local economy. Only to dilute or destroy the thousand good paying jobs currently in the industry to be replaced with unsustainable over flow of unregulated, uncontrolled vehicles attempting to fight out whatever minimal income they can.
- Safe service. Uber's suggestion that they provide a safe service is strongly contradicted by dozens of news reports from around the world, including in the American states and countries such as Germany, France, India and South Korea that have banned the service in the interests of public protection.
- Local technological innovation tailored to the needs of London. Each broker uses technology operate their services. In our case we not only use customer in-house software, but also build the hardware in the vehicles. On a comparative level Uber would have to begin building smart phones to catch up to the level of innovation and creation our service provides, created locally in London, by Londoners, providing professional jobs in London.

- Significant revenue. The taxicab industry pays significant fees annually to the City, much of which could arguably be considered inappropriately collected should the City determine its ongoing regulation of this industry was in error. The City would be opened to many different lawsuits on the matter from the current industry members and drivers who have obeyed the laws and paid the City fees, rather than trying to circumvent all rules.
- The format of Uber leaves open many questions to the legality of their services beyond London by-laws including Provincial transportation regulations, federal tax rules involving HST and fare collection, and their refusal to accept cash at point of service as a means of payment.

It is very similar to the cars we drive today. All new cars must have air bags, seat belts, ABS brakes, crash testing, along with many other safety and environmental standards that were not in existence 40 years ago. If we removed those safety features the price of a new car would be closer to 1/3 of what they are. That is not an option. As a society we have chosen to improve the world and lives of people. This costs money, however as a society we have decided that the benefits far outweigh a cost that can be measured in money.

When an impossible statement is made, such as "we provide the fastest response time of any transportation option in Canada", one must begin to question all other statements made. It is very much like it is not possible for any one service to be the fastest in the country. By way of example, taxicabs sitting at popular venues, where a customer need only walk out and get into the cab. Nothing else could be faster. Uber cannot offer the geographic coverage of taxicabs, which serve every neighbourhood in the city, regardless of economics or distance to the city core.

How are apps different than car pooling? Car pooling is by adult individuals, usually either friends or colleagues, sharing a common origin and destination, for cost sharing, not for revenue compensation. Not an on demand service for compensation for individual travel.

In short, Uber is nothing more than an attempt to destroy a local industry, siphoning money from our local economy to a foreign entity that provides no improvement or services to our city. There is no upside to Uber. It is simply the destruction of an industry, removal of safety measures exposing customers to assault and rape, exposing drivers to unsafe circumstances to be robbed or assaulted without protection, while removing the economic viability of an industry that is a major employment sector in the city. No good will come of any of this.

We urge the committee and council to maintain a strong taxicab industry by rejecting Uber until such time as they modify their service to operate legally within all federal, provincial and municipal laws and regulations as all others in the industry have been required to for many decades.