

Dear Council Members,

I learned a great deal from attending the September 11<sup>th</sup> public participation meeting and I was very proud that my colleagues were willing to take responsibility for the problems that have come about as a result of our taxi bylaw.

The most important thing I gleaned was that there is no business sense in owning a transferable plate and driving a cab. Far better than driving, is to simply rent the plate to someone else for (around) \$500/wk.

Unfortunately, we have created an unfair situation where some people are forced to pay other people \$25,000 a year for the mere privilege of working. This is alarming because falls close to the definition of systemic exploitation.

The most startling aspect of the PPM was the almost empty hall. Where hundreds of drivers were present at previous PPMs, only a handful were there to speak about the cap on regular licenses. I don't believe that plate owners would try to discourage drivers from attending or threaten terminate their rental agreements for expressing contrary views, but I think we have created a system with such diametrically opposed financial interests that the drivers may have had that fear and acted upon it. This means that our taxi bylaw has also inadvertently moved us in the direction of systemic oppression.

One driver I talked to said that he would rather pay the \$500/wk to the city because the benefits would go to the community. If the city were to re-assert ownership of the plates and charge this amount for each of 367 cabs then the revenue generated would amount to over \$9 million dollars annually. This \$9 million dollars a year may be the real reason that taxi industry can't be competitive with Uber. It also contributes to the present financial struggle of the drivers. Without the cost of renting the plate, they would earn an extra \$500/wk and be making a decent living despite the presence of a transportation network company.

One obvious answer to is to allow all the taxi drivers to have their own plates. However, our bylaw has also created a commodity out of the plates. Those who may have invested upwards of a hundred thousand dollars in the purchase of a plate, sometimes mortgaging their houses to do so, may see their return on that investment shattered along with their plans for retirement. Any answer has to address the situation of the plate owners as well. For this reason I request the following friendly amendment be added to the motion:

That Staff report back on methods available to equitably deal with the loss in value of transferrable plates.