



Members of the Community and Neighbourhoods Committee
Corporation of the City of London

Re: Decision of Council to permit "hail" of Limousines

04 November 2011

Dear Chair Usher and Members,

We hereby formally request delegate status to speak before the Committee on 15 November 2011 regarding the decision of Council to permit "hails" of limousines. We realize that the practice of the Committee has been to refer all matters to the Public Participation Meeting, however in light of this unilateral action council has removed this issue from the Public Participation Meeting process.

The method in which this occurred is of great concern to us. A letter from one of the smaller brokers in the city requesting this was brought before Council without any public input or even discussion at Committee. The letter still does not appear to the public as it is not in the Council agenda and the minutes of that meeting are not yet posted. There was no time for the rest of the industry to respond. All other matters regarding this by-law have been referred to the Public Participation Meeting at the end of this month. Many issues have been brought forward by the industries, all have been referred to the Public Participation Meeting. The manner in which this was done, hidden from the light of public participation makes this in essence an ambush, not only on the rest of the limousine industry but on the members of Council as well who were not given time to formulate proper enquiries. **In the interest of fairness this issue needs to be treated with the same process as all other parts of the by-law review.**

It also appears to us that Council has violated it's own procedural by-law and the Municipal Act by failing to hold a public meeting on this matter. We find this monumentally unfair.

Our company is the largest owner-operator of executive limousine vehicles and the second largest executive limousine brokerage in the City. **That all members of the industry were excluded except the one broker with a single-minded interest in forcing the limousine industry further into the taxicab market, tarnishing the upscale image of limousines and eroding the taxicab market for its own gain, while not directly operating any of the vehicles in either industry, is entirely unfair and unacceptable.** Especially to those of us in the limousine industry who wish to elevate our industry to the level at which it belongs.

We ask that this Committee recommend Council overturn this decision, reversing what is a **complete failure of the public process** that would cause financial hardship to thousands of City residents in the livery industries of London.

The rest of North America's major municipalities require limousines to be prearranged, charge a suitably higher fare and only accept "hail" trips at major hotels, airports, convention centres, and registered City limousine stands. It is time for London to ask why it permits its limousines to be tarnished acting as taxicabs. Why it permits its taxicabs to be pilfered from by limousines. Why all other cities maintain a strong differentiation between the two. London is a magnificent city, with many positive unique attributes, however we are not so different that our livery industries should be treated radically differently from our neighbours such as Hamilton and Waterloo Region. In both those municipalities it is written in their by-laws that a limousines shall not act or be perceived to act as a taxicab. Why? To maintain a strong limousine industry they can be proud of and to maintain a strong taxicab industry they can rely on.

The largest single limousine industry in North America is in New York City with 12,000 black cars (executive limousines), equal to the 12,000 taxicabs. Both are heavily regulated with black cars always being prearranged (no "hails") and at a higher fare. The both industries thrive operating side-by-side, serving that city without interfering with or encroaching on one another. The taxicabs provide efficient, economically on-demand service at all times of the day and night in all weather in all sections of the city and the limousines provide upscale luxury service with a prestigious image for the city.

"ABOUTOWN is Transportation" is not just our slogan, we provide nearly all forms of on-road passenger transportation including taxicabs, executive limousines, stretched limousine and group transportation. By information provided in the recent broker assignment list released by the City **we are the only broker operating in each class of City livery licence. This gives us a unique perspective and interest in striking the correct balance between the industries.** We also provide many forms of Provincially regulated transportation including public transit in multiple municipalities, parallel accessible transit, highway transit, airport shuttle, inter-city bus lines, and motor coach service. We are professional transportation providers, who's vested interest is the best practices and regulation for each of the industries in which we participate.

Bring back the fairness and balance to the London livery industries for the good of the City and the good of the thousands of citizens of London who work in these industries.

Sincerely,

James R. (Jamie) Donnelly
Vice-President & Chief Operating Officer

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