



CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: October 26, 2007
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VanRIMS No.: 11-4600-25
Meeting Date: November 29, 2007

TO: Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets

FROM: Chief License Inspector in consultation with the Director of Finance

SUBJECT: Year 2008 Licence Fees for Taxicabs and Dual Taxicab

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT the license fee for Dual Taxicabs and Taxicabs, contained in Schedule "A" of Vehicles for Hire By-law No. 6066, be increased from \$340 to \$452, for Year 2008, in keeping with Council Policy of setting fees on a cost recovery basis.
- B. THAT Council approve annual funding of \$5,000 for accessibility training for drivers of dual taxicabs, to be offset by an additional taxicab license fee of \$9 (for a total of \$461).
- C. THAT the Director of Legal Services be instructed to prepare the necessary By-law amendments to the Vehicles for Hire by-law to implement the revised Fee Schedule and other proposed changes, to be effective January 1, 2008.

OR

CONSIDERATION

- D. THAT the license fee for Dual Taxicabs and Taxicabs, contained in Schedule "A" of Vehicles for Hire By-law No. 6066, be increased from \$340 to \$349, for Year 2008 to account for an inflationary adjustment.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager RECOMMENDS approval of A, B and C

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Corporate and Community Services RECOMMENDS approval of A, B and C.

COUNCIL POLICY

It is Council policy that fees and charges be established on the basis of the cost of providing the associated services. It is Council policy that new or expanded service costs be fully offset by expenditure reductions or new revenues.

The Vehicle for Hire By-law licenses and regulates the owners and drivers of vehicles for hire such as taxicabs and limousines.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to update the license fees for Taxicabs and Dual Taxicabs for 2008 and to seek Council approval to fund accessibility training for drivers of dual taxicabs. Staff recommends increasing the license fees to an amount (from \$340 to \$461) that would be cost recovery based on service costs associated with the taxi industry such as inspections, enforcement, regulation, and accessibility training.

BACKGROUND

In the fall of every year, the License Office prepares an administrative report to Council proposing an across-the-board inflationary adjustment in vehicles for hire license fees which reflects the estimated growth in City costs for the following year.

DISCUSSION

Accessibility Training

Over the past few years it has become apparent that drivers operating accessible vans require more comprehensive training to accommodate accessible passengers in a consistently safe manner.

Staff has reviewed various options beyond the Taxihost Program Level 2 provided by the Justice Institute of British Columbia and other individual companies. An existing course offered by Disability Resource Centre provides training for other agencies such as YVR's Park'N Fly and other local taxi companies in Richmond. The curriculum provided by Disability Resource Centre appears to meet the required training needs of taxi drivers. Staff are recommending that this training be implemented in 2008 for all drivers of accessible cabs and

that the cost be recovered through license fees. Staff would schedule this training at regular intervals throughout the year at locations convenient for drivers.

Recent History of Fee Adjustments

In 2005, staff put forward to Council for consideration three options to substantially increase the license fees for Taxicab and Dual Taxicabs for the following 2006 year, in order to achieve cost recovery revenue. At that time, Council decided to increase the fees by only the inflationary adjustment (from \$321 to \$331). There were 477 licenses issued in 2005 and the same number was expected for 2006.

In 2006, all vehicles for hire license fees, with the exception of Courier Bicycles, were increased by 2.75 percent for the year 2007 (from \$331 to \$340).

In early 2007, Council approved a total 111 new licenses for Taxicabs and Dual Taxicabs. At this Standing Committee meeting on April 5th, 2007, the City Manager recommended that staff report back to Council with options to increase license fees to at least recover the costs of city services provided to the taxi industry.

Year 2008 Fees

It is expected that by January 1st, 2008 all 111 new licenses, approved by Council earlier this year, will be issued thereby increasing the fleet from 477 to 588. For 2008, the increase in the number of licenses will generate additional revenue but the expected revenue generated by the license fees will not be sufficient to recover all service costs. Projected service costs associated with the taxi industry for 2008 are summarized below.

EXPENSE	APPROX. COST PER ANNUM
Police Services	\$132,000
Community Services Group	\$ 90,000
Property Use Inspectors	\$ 4,000
Engineering Services	\$ 10,000
Policy Development	\$ 10,000
Office Support & Overhead	\$ 20,000
Accessibility Training	\$ 5,000
Total	\$ 271,000

An estimated total cost of \$271,000 would require raising the 2008 license fees to \$461. This amount is required to achieve cost recovery for the various services required under the Vehicles for Hire By-law. VPD regularly conducts inspections; CSG staff regulates, monitors, and inspects vehicles and drivers; PUIs are required to assist during annual inspections; Engineering Services monitors and reviews taxi zones and traffic flow; regular Taxi Roundtable meetings facilitate communication and policy development; fixed and variable costs associated with office support and overhead; and upon approval, a comprehensive accessible training course to ensure a high level of training.

Current and Proposed (2008) Vehicles for Hire License Fees (Schedule "A")

Class of Vehicle		Current Fee (\$)	Proposed Fee (\$)
Dual Taxicab	For each vehicle	340.00	461.00
Taxicab	For each vehicle	340.00	461.00
If used also for displaying advertising material, for each vehicle so used, additional fee		28.00	29.00

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The current license fees are being adjusted to match the estimated associated service costs. A fee of \$461 per licence would result in revenue of \$271,000 thereby achieving a full cost recovery fee for 2008.

CONCLUSION

This report recommends increasing the license fees to an amount that would be cost recovery based on service costs associated with the taxi industry such as inspections, enforcement, and regulation. Further, staff recommends approval to fund accessibility training for drivers of dual taxicabs at a cost offset by licence fees of an additional \$9 per licence (from \$340 to \$461). Staff have also included a consideration item which would not achieve full cost recovery but only include an inflationary adjustment for 2008.

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About the Disability Resource Centre (DRC)

The DRC is a multidimensional service providing centre operated by and for persons with disabilities. Our mandate is to promote self determination and Independent Living Philosophy to our target population. After 7 years' of service provision, we are currently serving over 500 individuals weekly through various projects and activities such as Information & Referral services, employment assistance, handicapped parking permits, youth leadership development, peer support, recreational activities, as well as training for computer, English, life skills and financial literacy.

The mandate of the DRC is to give people with disabilities the opportunity to participate in the community to the fullest extent of their ability and to improve their quality of life by working for - Inclusion, Independence & Empowerment.

Our mission is to empower people with disabilities to participate in the life of the whole community to the level of their desires and abilities by providing information, resources, support and by increasing community awareness.

Basic Training Components:

1. Introduction & Overview
2. Background Information
 - Terminology
 - Statistics
 - Disability Types
3. General Approaches and Etiquettes
 - Basic Rules and Words of Dignity
 - Basic Skills & Etiquettes
 - Communication Skills
4. Specific Approaches and Assistance
 - ❖ Mobility Disability, Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment, Cognitive Disability, Mental Health Issues, Speech Impairment
 - Characteristics of Various Types of Disabilities
 - Barriers & Assistive Devices
 - Effective Ways of Providing Assistance
5. Assisting Customers Using Assistive Devices
 - Presentation and Sharing by Professionals
 - Demonstration

6. Video Presentation and/or Sharing of personal experiences
7. Questions and Answers

All training details are subject to changes and modification by the DRC.

PROPOSAL TO CITY OF VANCOUVER

Special Training Workshop:

- ▶ All basic training components
- ▶ Demonstration of Tie-Down procedures
- ▶ Other additional training - fee negotiable