



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: March 31, 2011
Contact: Tom Hammel
Contact No.: 604.873.7545
RTS No.: 09157
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: April 19, 2011

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: Chief License Inspector
SUBJECT: Vehicles for Hire By-Law Amendments for Temporary Taxi Licenses

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve an amendment to the Vehicles for Hire By-Law to exclude taxicabs operating under a temporary permit issued by the Passenger Transportation Board from the maximum number of permanent taxi licenses specified in the By-law.
- B. THAT Council approve an amendment to the Vehicles for Hire By-law to exclude vehicles for hire operating under a temporary permit issued by the Passenger Transportation Board from the calendar year license term applied to all licenses issued under the By-Law.
- C. THAT Council approve an amendment to the Vehicles for Hire By-Law to establish an annual license fee of \$256 for taxicabs operating under a temporary permit issued by the Passenger Transportation Board.
- D. FURTHER THAT Council instruct the Director of Legal Services to bring forward a by-law to amend the Vehicles for Hire by-Law, generally in accordance with Appendix A.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services RECOMMENDS approval of the above recommendations.

COUNCIL POLICY

Vehicles for Hire By-Law No. 6066 (“Vehicles for Hire By-Law”) licenses and regulates the owners and drivers of vehicles for hire in the City of Vancouver. Sections 23, 24 and 25 of the Vehicles for Hire By-Law specifically regulate taxicabs, dual taxicabs and taxicab rates and fares, respectively.

PURPOSE

This report provides recommendations for amending the Vehicles for Hire By-Law to differentiate between taxicabs operating under a temporary permit issued by the Passenger Transportation Board (PTB) and taxicabs licensed on a permanent basis by excluding the former from the maximum number of permanent taxi licenses and the calendar year license term. The report also proposes the creation of a separate license fee for taxicabs operating under a temporary permit issued by the PTB.

BACKGROUND

On November 16, 2010, Council directed staff to work with the Vancouver Taxi Roundtable and other stakeholders and to report back with recommendations on measures to improve service to customers at peak periods, including but not limited to possible temporary licenses.

Staff are currently engaging stakeholders in this review as directed by Council.

In February 2011, the four local taxi companies submitted applications to the PTB to operate a total of 65 additional vehicles in Vancouver on a temporary basis for 6 months. These vehicles would operate on Friday and Saturday evenings, high passenger volume days at the cruise ship terminals and during the Celebration of Lights summer fireworks festival. The companies describe the permit applications as a “pilot project”.

The PTB posted these applications, invited submissions and requested City comments on the applications by Friday, March 4, 2011.

On March 3, 2011, staff brought a report forward to Council on the issue of the PTB request for City’s comments on the TOP applications. At that time, Council approved the following motions:

- Advise the Passenger Transportation Board that, in regard to the applications to the Board by the four Vancouver Taxi companies for 65 Temporary Operating Permits restricted to Friday and Saturday evenings, the City is in the process of a comprehensive review at the Taxi Roundtable of initiatives to address the issues of improving service to the public and, with this process incomplete, the City cannot provide a formal position at this time, but is not opposed to the issuing of the permits on a 6-month pilot basis; and
- Request that the Passenger Transportation Board require an appropriate metric based evaluation of the pilot to inform future initiatives to improve service to the public.

On March 16, 2011, the Passenger Transportation Board approved 65 taxi temporary operating permits (TOPs) for the four Vancouver taxi companies as indicated in the table below:

Purpose	Date	Time
Weekend evening peak (Fri, Sat evening)	April 29 - October 30, 2011	3 pm - 6 am
Cruise Ship High-Volume Days	May 14, September 24 & September 25, 2011	24 hours
Celebration of Lights - Summer Fireworks Festival	July 30, August 3 & August 6, 2011	3 pm - 6 am (next day)
Canada Day	July 1, 2011	3 pm (June 30) to 6 am (July 1)

DISCUSSION

Currently, the Vehicles for Hire By-Law restricts the number of taxicabs and dual taxicabs in Vancouver to 475 and 113, respectively. There is no provision for taxicabs operating under a temporary permit issued by the Passenger Transportation Board.

Staff propose the following three amendments to the Vehicles for Hire By-Law:

- Exclude taxicabs operating under a temporary permit issued by the Passenger Transportation Board from the maximum number of permanent taxi licenses specified in the By-law;
- Exclude vehicles for hire operating under a temporary permit issued by the Passenger Transportation Board from the calendar year license term normally applied to all licences issued under the By-law; and
- Establish an annual license fee of \$256 for taxicabs operating under a temporary permit issued by the Passenger Transportation Board.

The above amendments would exclude temporary operating permits from the maximum number of permanent taxi licenses and the calendar year license term, in effect, permitting the operation of taxi vehicles authorized by the Passenger Transportation Board for a certain specific defined period of time and under specific conditions. As temporary operating permits (TOPs) are normally approved to address a certain service deficiency during a particularly busy time/period, such as high passenger demand in the Granville Entertainment District when liquor establishments close down, staff believe maximum numbers for TOPs are not necessary. Furthermore, as the current 2011 vehicle for hire taxicab/dual taxicab license fee is \$512, half of this amount for a temporary operating license is reasonable to cover administrative costs related to inspections and meter testing.

Further to these by-law amendments, staff expect to be able to activate licenses for the 65 temporary operating permits approved by the PTB by April 29, 2011, subject to the companies making their vehicles available for City inspection with enough lead time.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposed \$256 license fee for TOPs would result in a \$16,640 increase in vehicles for hire revenue for 2011.

CONCLUSION

This report proposes amendments to the Vehicles for Hire By-Law to exclude taxicabs operating under a temporary permit issued by the Passenger Transportation Board from the maximum number of permanent taxi licenses and the calendar year license term specified in the By-Law and to establish a reasonable license fee of \$256 for these temporary vehicles.

* * * * *

BY-LAW NO. _____

A By-law to amend
Vehicles for Hire By-law No. 6066
regarding temporary taxi licences

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER, in public meeting, enacts as follows:

1. This By-law amends the indicated sections of the Vehicles for Hire By-law.
2. At the end of section 8 (1), Council deletes "." and substitutes:

", except that if a person operates a vehicle for hire under a temporary permit issued by the Passenger Transportation Board, the Inspector may issue a license for a term that expires on the same date as the temporary permit."
3. At the end of section 23 (1), Council deletes "." and substitutes:

", except that this subsection does not apply to taxicabs operating under a temporary permit issued by the Passenger Transportation Board."
4. In Schedule A, after the licence fee for Taxicab, Council adds:

"Taxicab operating under a temporary permit
issued by the Passenger Transportation Board, for
each vehicle 256.00"
5. This By-law is to come into force and take effect on the date of enactment.

ENACTED by Council this _____ day of _____, 2011

Mayor

City Clerk