

COMMON COUNCIL REPORT

M&C No.	2022-212
Report Date	June 07, 2022
Meeting Date	June 13, 2022
Service Area	Public Works and Transportation Services

Her Worship Mayor Donna Noade Reardon and Members of Common Council

SUBJECT: Vehicle for Hire By-Law Amendments

AUTHORIZATION

Primary Author	Commissioner/Dept. Head	City Manager
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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that That Common Council authorize 1st and 2nd reading of the Taxi By-law, By-law Number M-12, in the form attached to M&C 2022-212

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2018, the Saint John Transit Commission, on behalf of the City of Saint John assumed responsibility of the day-to-day administration of the Vehicles for Hire By-law. Each year, the Saint John Transit Commission is required to perform a review of the Vehicle for Hire By-Law rates and bring forward any recommendations to Common Council. As part of the rate review, several improvements are being recommended to the by-law wording itself. These changes will help streamline regulation and bring the by-law more in line with similar by-laws in other jurisdictions in the region.

PREVIOUS RESOLUTION

At its meeting on May 4, 2020, Council resolved the following;

- a) Endorse an exception to the 7-year age limit of a Taxi, on a one-time basis, for vehicles that are currently in the fleet.*
- b) Endorse an extension to the deadline for an operator's license for anyone that has a birthday between May 04th, 2020 and September 30th, 2020, to October 01st, 2020, on a one time basis.*
- c) Endorse an extension to the deadline for an owner's license from May 31st, 2020 to September 30th, 2020, on a one-time basis.*
- d) Endorse that Common Council make a permanent adjustment to the*

definition of Taxicab meter.

e) Request that the City Solicitor's office make the appropriate changes, to the Vehicle for Hire By-Law.

REPORT

In order to operationalize Council's previous resolution on May 4, 2020, Council must go through the process of amending the "Vehicle-For-Hire By-law" to incorporate the changes previously approved by Council on that date. Additionally, staff are recommending some additional changes to the By-law in order bring it into alignment with the terminology used in the Management Services Agreement for the SJTC, Council's passage of a Rideshare By-law, and some general administrative updates. In part, the changes provide for:

- The use of a tablet instead of a meter for the calculation of fares,
- Fixed drop-off locations to enable executive service and other shuttle services such as an airport/hotel shuttle,
- Suspension of licenses to align with motor vehicle driving license suspensions,
- The use of electric vehicles,
- Staggering of licenses throughout the year instead of all renewing on the same date, and
- Allowing vehicles of 8 years of age or newer to operate as a taxi-cab.

Further to the last bullet, the City does not have the resources for broad and thorough inspection and enforcement system. There are vehicles older than 8 years old that are in good shape and would be acceptable vehicles for a taxi service. There are also vehicles only a few years old that should not be in the taxi service. Discussions are on-going with New Brunswick Commercial Vehicle Enforcement about an improved system that would allow for greater flexibility, inspections and enforcement. Without resources for a thorough inspection and enforcement system a fixed-year must be imposed to offer some level of quality assurance.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This report aligns with the Council priority of *MOVE* in seeking to achieve a balance in transportation choices that meet community needs.

SERVICE AND FINANCIAL OUTCOMES

The taxi industry is struggling under the cost of operating in a high inflationary period. Some changes to the by-law, such as enabling the use of tablets, may limit downtime to repair meters and could be a lower cost to operate.

Other changes will aid in the administration of the taxi industry by the Transit Commission by simplifying the regulations.

INPUT FROM OTHER SERVICE AREAS AND STAKEHOLDERS

The General Counsel's office was instrumental in recording and writing the changes to the by-law.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Tracked Changes Version of By-law M-12
2. Clean Version of By-law M-12