

Bylaw 16483 – Vehicle for Hire Amendment No. 15

Two Year Licensing Model

Recommendation:

That Executive Committee recommend to City Council:

That Bylaw 16483, be given the appropriate readings.

Purpose

To amend Bylaw 14700, the Vehicle for Hire Bylaw, to replace the existing one-year licensing model with a two-year licensing model for taxi, limousine, and shuttle drivers' licences.

Readings

Bylaw 16483 is ready for three readings.

If Council wishes to give three readings during a single meeting, then prior to moving third reading, Council must unanimously agree "That Bylaw 16483 be considered for third reading."

Advertising and Signing

Advertising is not required for this Bylaw.

Position of Administration

Administration supports this Bylaw

Report Summary

This Bylaw amends Bylaw 14700, the Vehicle for Hire Bylaw to create a two-year licensing model for taxi, limousine, and shuttle drivers' licences. The bylaw amendments

also create signage requirements within taxis for public safety.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the January 28, 2013, Executive Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration provide a report to Committee with amendments to Bylaw 14700 and Bylaw 5590 regarding:

- taxis stopping at fire hydrants
- 2 year licence model.

This report addresses part 2 of the above motion (2 year licence model). Sustainable Development report CR_114 addresses part 1 (taxis stopping at fire hydrants).

Report

Administration is proposing three main changes to the Vehicle for Hire Bylaw. Collectively, the changes offer conveniences to drivers for renewing licences while improving safety for passengers and the general public.

Two-Year Drivers' Licence

At the request of Executive Committee, Administration has developed bylaw amendments that create a two-year licensing model for taxi, limousine, and shuttle drivers' licences. This system will replace the current process which requires drivers to apply annually.

Drivers have requested a two-year licensing model for multiple reasons, including reduced costs and greater convenience. Under the current model, as part of each annual renewal applicants must provide a driving record

abstract from Alberta Registries and a police information check from the Edmonton Police Service, both of which require a fee to be paid.

A two-year licensing model will minimize these incidental costs as well as the number of visits to various agencies to obtain required documentation. The changes also enable Administration to process licence renewals more efficiently due to lower annual volume.

To facilitate the new licensing model and ensure it is managed effectively, a two-year transition period is proposed. Drivers will be separated into two groups to stagger renewal years, which will allow for a balanced number of renewals per year and ensure City revenues are accrued evenly. The revised process is designed to maintain fairness for all drivers.

As described in Attachment 2, all drivers will renew their licences in 2014. Half of the drivers will receive one year licences, while half receive two year licences. In 2015, the first half of drivers will renew again and receive a two-year licence. From this point forward, all drivers will renew their licence every two years, meaning that only half of all licensed drivers will renew during each calendar year.

To ensure fairness, drivers who only receive a one-year renewal in 2014 will have the requirement for a police information check waived in 2015. The risks of waiving this requirement are very low. A driver's abstract that ensures a minimum standard of driving is upheld will still be required. In addition, renewal fees will be based on a per year amount.

Police Information Checks

Public safety remains a top priority. The two-year licensing model may result in fewer opportunities to assess a driver's application documents, including police information checks. The proposed bylaw amendments require drivers to notify the City and provide an updated document if there are any changes to their police information check.

This amendment places responsibility on the driver to disclose any changes in their police information check even if his or her licence is not near expiry. This allows Administration to adequately scrutinize drivers to ensure they meet acceptable standards for operating a taxi, limousine, or shuttle during the term of the licence. Administration will work with the taxi industry to promote awareness of these requirements.

In-Vehicle Signage

The bylaw amendment also requires drivers to prominently display signage inside the vehicle. The signage should be visible to any passenger, and must include the vehicle number, licence plate number, broker information, and phone numbers to report concerns.

The purpose of the signage is to promote public safety by providing passengers with the ability to report problems and ensure Administration is aware of any issues related to vehicle for hire operation. The signage is not intended to interfere with normal business operations and there will be no additional costs incurred by the taxi companies or drivers.

Overall, the bylaw changes provide some conveniences to the industry by allowing drivers to renew licences once

every two years. Administration will also be able to issue and renew drivers' licences more efficiently and at a reduced cost. Other changes complement the revised licensing model, and provide mechanisms to ensure the industry is operating in a safe and appropriate manner.

Policy

Bylaw 14700 – Vehicle for Hire Bylaw

Corporate Outcomes

The Way Ahead – City of Edmonton
Strategic Plan 2009-2018:

- Improve Edmonton's Livability

Justification of Recommendation

The proposed amendments to Bylaw 14700 offer a more convenient renewal process for drivers and improvements for enhancing public safety.

Attachments

1. Bylaw 16483
2. Bylaw 16483 - Vehicle for Hire
Bylaw Amendment No. 15 -
Summary of Proposed
Amendments

Others Reviewing this Report

- D. H. Edey, General Manager,
Corporate Services