Response to Stakeholder Feedback

Background Checks for Operators/Drivers

Vehicle for Hire
Police Information Checks are a requirement for a Vehicle for Hire Driver Licence application. A licence would be refused if the applicant was convicted of any offence of a violent nature, any offence involving sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual interference, procuring or invitation to sexual touching, trafficking, any offence involving fraud, bribery, extortion, or theft; or any offence relating to the unlawful operation of a motor vehicle within the past 10 years.

If the vehicle for hire driver licence applicant's police information check reveals a pending charge for any of the offences listed above, the applicant may be required to provide updates related to the charge, additional police information checks or other documentation at regular intervals, and if the licensee is convicted of the charge, the licence will be cancelled.

The Government of Alberta Transportation Network Company Regulation requires transportation network companies (rideshare companies) ensure that any person applying to be a transportation network driver completes a Police Information Check and a Vulnerable Sector Search. It is the responsibility of the transportation network company to review the documents and determine acceptability before authorizing the person to provide transportation network services.

ETS
As part of the process to be hired as a Transit Operator at ETS, eight steps are completed by candidates, including Police Information Check as part of background checks. The following is an overview of the hiring steps for the Transit Operator position at ETS. The process is consistent with hiring best practices, policies and directives in the City of Edmonton, as well as transit industry standards in Canada.
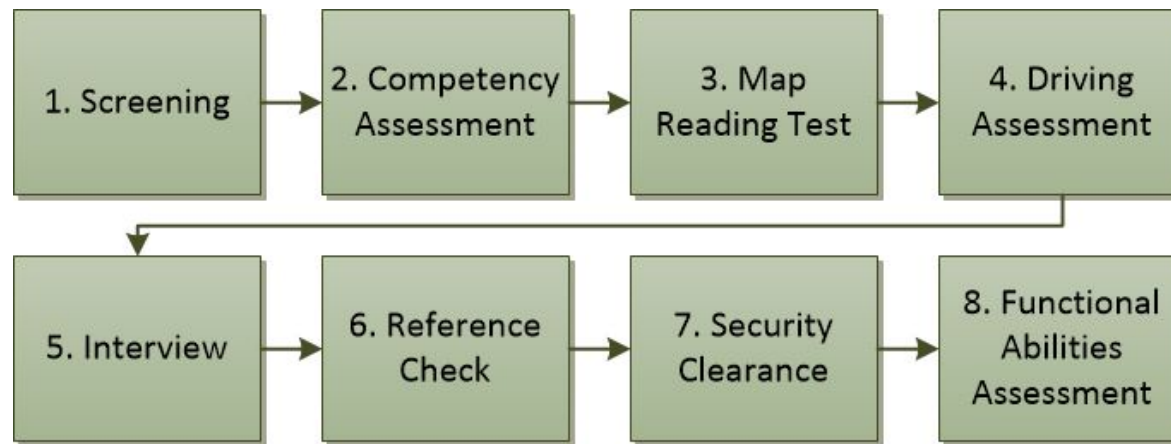
Step 1 - Screening - applications are initially screened to ensure basic qualifications are met. If successful, applicants move to the candidate stage, where testing and assessments take place.

Step 2 - Competency Assessment - candidates are emailed a link to an online assessment managed by the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) for ETS to assess Transit Operator competencies.

Step 3 - Map Reading Test – this test is designed to assess sense of direction and the ability to follow maps and directions/instructions.

Step 4 - Driving Assessment – this assessment includes a computer-based assessment as well as a driving assessment on a predetermined route while under the observation of the evaluator.

Step 5 - Interview – the interview poses a series of job-related questions to assess competencies and suitability for employment. The questions are structured and measure behaviours related to the job.

Step 6 - Reference Check- a minimum of two references are contacted and asked a scripted group of questions to verify employment and/or volunteer experience details.

Step 7 - Security Clearance- a Police Information Check is requested from candidates at this stage of the process. Hire is dependent upon a result that is satisfactory to the City of Edmonton.

Step 8 - Functional Abilities Assessment – conducted by a third-party service provider, this last step assesses functional abilities as they relate to the Transit Operator job requirements.

Increasing the Number of Women Employed as Transit Operators
Over the last year, ETS has made some progress and achieved gender parity between men and women on the senior management team; however, women are under-represented in other areas, including as Transit Operators. Currently, 18 percent of Transit Operators in Edmonton are women. Women and are consistently under-represented across the transit industry. Minimizing any relevant barriers for women in their pursuit of transit careers will improve service delivery, by having employees who better represent the community using transit.

Women who work as Transit Operators may be able to relate more closely to the experience of women who use public transit as their primary transportation mode and better understand their travel patterns, needs and preferences. As a result, Administration plans to launch a recruitment campaign to raise awareness about the Transit Operator job opportunity, focusing on recruiting more women to the job. The campaign will include several strategies, including focus groups, social media, print materials, as well as career fairs and events targeting diverse audiences. Merit and qualification based hiring practices will remain in place.

Text Alert Application for Transit Users
To further enhance safety and security for transit users, Administration will be adding a text messaging service for users to report concerns. These messages will be monitored by the ETS Control Centre and provide a discreet way to report concerns. Following receipt of the reported concern, Control Centre staff will assess the situation and dispatch appropriate resources as needed to provide support. It is anticipated that this feature will be introduced by the end of 2020.

Applying Ride Share Application Features to Taxi Industry
Although some Taxi Dispatchers provide services through an online application, it is a business decision and not a requirement in the Vehicle for Hire Bylaw, Bylaw 17400. Administration has limited opportunities to direct business operations with respect to online application features. Regular industry meetings do provide Administration space to communicate and have open discussions regarding ride share features on new or existing online applications.

First Kilometre/Last Kilometre and GBA+ Process
City Operations report CR_7812 Further Analysis of Alternative Transit Solutions, presented at the Urban Planning Committee on February 25, 2020 outlined key findings and actions arising from a GBA+ analysis of alternative transit service delivery models. The key findings highlight the perspectives of women, people with limited mobility (persons with disabilities and seniors), children and youth. Concerns with safety and security, accessibility and affordability need to be addressed to ensure successful deployment of on demand service.

On demand service would include many of the same security features as other transit modes, including appropriate training, technology and operating policies. Operators would complete a criminal and vulnerable sector record check, would wear an ETS ID badge, and would undergo appropriate training. Cameras would be installed on all vehicles. Operating procedures to support security of customers and Operators would be similar to conventional fixed route bus services.