

Good Morning Madam Chair and fellow council members.

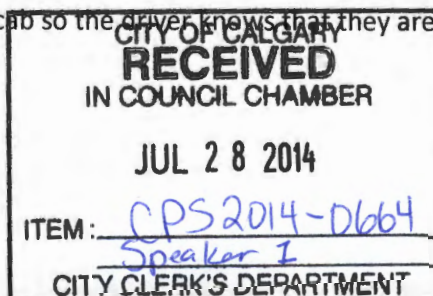
Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you today. The taxi industry has gone through many changes in the past couple of years. My family has been in the taxi and limousine industry for over 40 years and our company has always strived to stay current with technology with an emphasis on providing Calgarians the best service possible and that includes giving them a choice in how to book a taxi. We have spent several millions of dollars trying to do that and we continue to spend on upgrades and keeping pace with the many technical advancements available to us.

With the last set of bylaw changes the industry was asked to provide the city with access to our network so they can obtain real time stats on industry performance. At the same time there was a customer satisfaction survey completed by an independent pollster. Both the data collection system and the survey have provided great feedback on industry performance. It validates that we do have a challenge providing taxis during peak times, whether that is earlier morning, mid afternoon, and on Friday and Saturday nights when the bars are starting to close.

It should be noted that every North American city struggles with meeting this same demand of serving late night weekend bar patrons who all want rides home after a night of drinking. What has been overlooked amidst late night criticisms is the real fact shown by the survey...That is that 86% of Calgarians (Calgary Taxi Users) are satisfied with Calgary's taxis system. The report is clear that we in fact do need to improve our peak challenges. Checker is in favor of supporting LTS's recommendation to help close the gap of the 14 % of Calgary taxis users that are not satisfied. We have collaborated and worked hard with administration to embrace the high expectation of Council and its interests in improving the taxi industry. These high expectations have come with a soaring cost of business improvements; we have committed ourselves to continuous improvement in the transportation industry in Calgary.

We have heard and listened to Calgarians as well as Councils concerns on how hard it is to get a taxi. The improvements we have made at Checker are evidence of that. We have added an additional 25 incoming phone lines, as well as yesterday I purchased 8 more virtual call takers which makes it now 16, to help stop the ring busy signal, we are in the process of adding a third party answering service to take calls for us when we are getting close to hitting our maximum capacity.

Apps are nothing new to the Taxi industry, most of the taxi companies in Calgary currently have apps as well as online booking for taxis. With our new and improved app which will be launched later this month, customers will be able to book a taxi immediately or on a time call, and be able to request an accessible taxi, regular taxi or minivan. Our app will show the customer the car # and through GPS tracking the customer will see the taxi moving up the road so they know how far away their ride is. A key benefit of this app is if a customer decides not to wait for the taxi that has been sent and leaves within 50 meters of the pickup location, a message will be sent to the customer advising them that they have moved and ask if they still want the cab. If the customer keeps moving and goes past the 100 meter threshold, the app will auto cancel the cab so the driver knows that they are no longer required.



We also have a feature for customers that don't use the app, and that is our stale calls feature which will phone or text the customer back every 15 minutes telling them we are still looking for a cab and ask if they still want to wait or not. These features all intended to reduce the on-going challenge and high percentage of no trips our company receives each month, (15,000) and improve performance by sending a driver to another waiting customer. The customer also has the option to rate the driver after each trip, this feature will allow us to provide feedback to each driver on how well they are doing or where applicable, improvements if required.

My father's vision was always to make Calgary the best taxi system in North America, and was instrumental in getting us to where we are today. These improvements are being made through the strong working relationship that the industry and administration have built together over the past few years.

In closing, we have worked hard to make the necessary technology changes, for the customer as well as the drivers, so we can be as efficient as possible. However, please be mindful that technology enhancements alone are not going to solve the taxi shortages we are currently experiencing. The last piece of the puzzle to meet this challenge is for council to support administration's recommendation for more taxis on the road. Without the tools needed to meet customer demands criticism and complaints about dispatch and or the ring busy signal is never going to change.

Calgary is a growing city and demand is growing as well. Adding more taxis to the street will help with all of the challenges we as an industry face and subsequently provide Calgarians with exactly what they have been asking for.... **MORE TAXIS.** Additional capacity on the streets will help us to re-establish the trust factor for the customer and address their transportation expectations. They will know when they order a taxi that it will show up and when, and in return, the driver will be reassured that his/her customer will be waiting to be picked up as well.

Thank you and I am happy to address any of your questions or concerns.