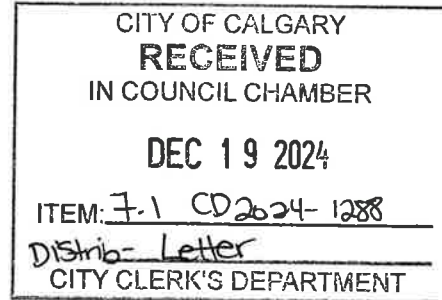


September 5th, 2024

City Council of Calgary
800 Macleod Trail SE
Calgary, AB T2G 5E6



Dear Members of the City Council,

We are long-time taxi drivers in Calgary, writing to you to bring attention to the growing challenges that the taxi industry faces. It has become incredibly difficult for drivers like us to earn a livable income and support our families. The following issues are severely impacting Calgary's taxi drivers, and we urge the City Council to address them:

1. **Excessive Insurance Costs Without Adequate Coverage:**

On average, taxi drivers are paying around \$900 per month to taxi brokers for insurance, but this provides us with very limited coverage. We are not protected against fire, theft, or hail/wind damage, and in case of accidents, brokers discourage us from seeking necessary medical treatments such as physiotherapy. If we do seek these benefits, we are not allowed to drive until we recover. Ride-sharing drivers, on the other hand, pay lower premiums and are fully covered by their companies in the event of accidents. This inequity needs urgent attention.

2. **Unfair Meter Rate Adjustments by Taxi Brokers:**

still same

The City allows taxi brokers to adjust meter rates to compete with ride-sharing companies, but some have lowered the rates so drastically that drivers are struggling to make a decent living. We request that the City amend its bylaws to prevent brokers from lowering meter rates to unsustainable levels.

3. **Proliferation of Illegal Taxi Services:**

still as it is,

Illegal taxi services are operating openly, offering cheap rides on social media and taking business away from licensed drivers. Despite this, the City has not taken sufficient action to stop these illegal operators. We request that stronger enforcement measures be implemented to address this issue.

4. **Restrictions on Van Drivers:**

still as it is,

Taxi drivers who operate vans with more than four passengers are not allowed to charge extra for larger groups, while ride-sharing services can charge additional fees. This is an unfair practice, and we ask the City to allow van drivers to charge accordingly for larger passenger loads.

5. **Closure of Taxi Stands at Hospitals:**

② South health Centre
①
③ PLC
④ She Idon
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Many hospitals in Calgary, particularly Foothills Hospital, have closed their taxi stands, making it difficult for us to provide transportation for patients and visitors. This poses a significant inconvenience to those in need of reliable transportation. We request that the City reopens taxi stands at hospitals to ensure better access for both drivers and the community.

6. **Denial of the Right to Contest Traffic Tickets:**

still as it is

In the past, taxi drivers were able to contest traffic tickets, but brokers are now forcing drivers to pay the fines without giving us the opportunity to fight the charges. We believe this practice is unjust and should be addressed to protect drivers' rights.

These issues are contributing to the rapid decline of Calgary's taxi industry. We respectfully request that the City Council take the necessary steps to support and protect taxi drivers, ensuring a fair and sustainable future for our profession.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ravinder Singh Dhalwal

[Redacted]

HARSIMRAN SINGH Pharyan

[Redacted]

Jagtar Singh Nahal

[Redacted]

Lakhsbia SINGH Sekhon

[Redacted]



Public Submission

CC 968 (R2024-05)

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY ACT

Personal information provided in submissions relating to matters before Council or Council Committees is collected under the authority of Bylaw 35M2017 and Section 33(c) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act* of Alberta, and/or the Municipal Government Act (MGA) Section 636, for the purpose of receiving public participation in municipal decision-making and scheduling speakers for Council or Council Committee meetings. **Your name and comments will be made publicly available in the Council or Council Committee agenda and minutes.** If you have questions regarding the collection and use of your personal information, please contact City Clerk’s Legislative Coordinator at 403-268-5861, or City Clerk’s Office, 700 Macleod Trail S.E., P.O. Box 2100, Postal Station ‘M’ 8007, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2M5.

Please note that your name and comments will be made publicly available in the Council or Council Committee agenda and minutes. Your e-mail address will not be included in the public record.

ENDORSEMENT STATEMENT ON TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION, ANTI-RACISM, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING

The purpose of The City of Calgary is to make life better every day. To fully realize our purpose, we are committed to addressing racism and other forms of discrimination within our programs, policies, and services and eliminating barriers that impact the lives of Indigenous, Racialized, and other marginalized people. It is expected that participants will behave respectfully and treat everyone with dignity and respect to allow for conversations free from bias and prejudice.

First name [required]	Kurt
Last name [required]	Enders
How do you wish to attend?	
You may bring a support person should you require language or translator services. Do you plan on bringing a support person?	
What meeting do you wish to comment on? [required]	Standing Policy Committee on Community Development
Date of meeting [required]	Dec 19, 2024
What agenda item do you wish to comment on? (Refer to the Council or Committee agenda published here .)	
[required] - max 75 characters	7.1 Vehicle For Hire Bylaw review.
Are you in favour or opposition of the issue? [required]	In opposition



Public Submission

CC 968 (R2024-05)

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Comments - please refrain from providing personal information in this field (maximum 2500 characters)

Please share my letter with City council members.

November 15, 2024

Cory Porter
Deputy Chief Vehicle for Hire

Dear Mr, Porter.

Subject: Feedback on Proposed Livery Transport Bylaw Amendments to Enhance Public Safety and Industry Standards

On behalf of Checker Cabs, I want to thank your team for taking the time to review the proposed Livery Transport Bylaw Amendments set to be discussed by the council in December. Checker has supported fair, responsible regulation of the transportation industry, always prioritizing public safety, reliability, and service quality.

After a careful review of the proposed amendments, we would like to express our support for several of the changes and offer additional recommendations that we believe would enhance public safety and operational efficiency for the traveling public.

Licensing Recommendations

Under the Licensing pillar, we support the six proposed changes. However, we have repeatedly recommended a simpler system for Taxi Driver's Licenses (TDLs): rather than reissuing a new TDL each time a driver returns to the industry, it would be more practical to reinstate the driver's original TDL number, as is done with provincial driver's licenses. This continuity would help in tracking drivers' histories, supporting both accountability and efficiency.

Accessibility Recommendations

We strongly recommend that all Accessible Taxi Permit License (ATPL) holders participate in the WAV Calgary platform. This program has been adapted to offset the added costs for ATPL vehicles, creating a balanced and fair system for accessibility-focused drivers. In addition, allowing customers to submit feedback to the Director via 311 from Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) app is logical. We feel the 311 decal should be required on TNC vehicles the same way it's required on taxis.

Although TNCs may be personally owned vehicles, those operating in a commercial capacity should be held to the same accountability standards as other commercial vehicles.

Reporting and Accountability

Currently, brokers are required to report complaints to the Director under Section 84, and this reporting should be extended to TNCs. Given that drivers often switch between platforms, this measure would promote consistent standards across the industry. Additionally, TNCs should notify Public Vehicle for Hire (PVH) when a driver is dismissed for cause, ensuring that drivers with serious infractions are not rehired by another company, whether TNC or Taxi.

Safety Recommendations

While we generally support the three proposed safety measures, we strongly oppose extending the vehicle age limit beyond 10 years for taxis, TNCs, and airport sedans. These vehicles accumulate between 75,000 and 90,000 kilometers annually—equivalent to nearly four years of personal usage per year. Extending the age limit would lead to higher mileage vehicles, decreasing safety and reliability for the traveling public. Conversely, we recommend allowing specialty pre-arranged limousines to operate beyond 10 years due to their significantly lower annual mileage. We recommend going back to a vehicle inspection every 6 months for Taxis, TNC's and airport sedans. This will help ensure public safety, vehicle safety, and driver safety.

Additional Considerations

While the proposed amendments address several key areas, there are additional critical issues we urge the PHV team and Council to address:

1. Up-Front Fare Payments

Up-front fare payment received 79% support from industry participants in the September 2023 engagement. This change, especially during late hours, would reduce the risk of fare-related fraud and altercations, which have become common. Mandating up-front fare payments would improve driver and passenger safety, align with customer expectations, and reduce police involvement. Today's technology fully supports this measure and would make fare agreements clear and secure.

2. Driver Fatigue and Vehicle Supply Concerns

The City of Calgary currently has an oversupply of licensed vehicles. As more TNC vehicles flood the market, drivers experience fewer trips per shift, forcing them to extend their hours to earn a sustainable income. This increase in driving hours to meet basic financial needs contributes to driver fatigue, posing significant safety risks. A balanced approach to licensing TNCs would help ensure both driver and public safety by reducing prolonged shifts.

3. Retention of Badge Numbers for Consistency

In recent years, PVH has reissued badge numbers when drivers let their badges expire, which has posed challenges for tracking driver history. Badge continuity allows companies like Checker to track previous drivers and make informed decisions regarding rehires. We recommend that badge numbers remain consistent throughout a driver's career, similar to other professional licensing structures, ensuring transparency and accountability.

4. 311 Decals for TNC Vehicles

We recommend that all TNC vehicles display a 311 decal on the back of the vehicle, similar to the requirement for taxis. This decal is essential for public accountability, allowing passengers, pedestrians, and other motorists to report unprofessional driving behavior directly. While it has been argued that TNC vehicles are “personal vehicles,” this rationale does not hold, as taxis are also used personally by drivers but are still required to display 311 decals. Any vehicle operating in a commercial capacity should be held to the same accountability standards. Displaying a 311 decal allows the public to easily distinguish and report TNC drivers who may be endangering others or not meeting professional standards.

5. Controlled Entry System for Vehicle Licenses

Historically, Calgary transitioned from an open taxi license system to a controlled entry system due to a flood of vehicles that raised significant safety concerns. At the time, the city experienced issues such as poorly maintained vehicles, drivers working excessive hours, and even some sleeping in their cars to earn enough to support their families. It took years for the city’s growth to absorb the excess taxis and restore a balance that protected both drivers’ well-being and public safety.

Today, we find ourselves in a similar situation with an overabundance of TNC vehicles, causing drivers to work extended hours and potentially neglect vehicle maintenance to stay competitive. This situation mirrors the past, with the same risks to safety and quality of service. Furthermore, the significant increase in TNCs has likely contributed to a decline in transit ridership, which may have a direct impact on Calgary’s public transportation system and sustainability goals. A balanced approach to controlling the number of TNC licenses would help ensure that all drivers can earn a reasonable wage without compromising safety, while also supporting a healthy relationship with public transit services.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide input on these amendments, and we look forward to working with the PVH team and council to implement policies that serve the best interests of the public, the transportation industry, and our drivers. Thank you again for your commitment to improving safety and operational standards within our city’s transportation sector.

Sincerely,

Kurt Enders

President, Checker Cabs