

Transportation Report to
SPC on Community and Protective Services
2019 March 13

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CPS2019-0142

Calgary Transit Access Expanded Programs Evaluation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the 2018 October 15 regular meeting of Council, Council approved a motion arising requesting Administration to evaluate opportunities for expanded customer offerings through the Access Calgary Extra (ACE) and Calgary Transit Access (CTA) programs.

During our review of ACE, Administration found that the current RFP process was limiting for service providers. As a result, Administration is recommending that a Request for Service Qualification (RFSQ) replace the traditional RFP process, allowing for all brokerages to apply at any time instead of waiting for each RFP to expire. To accommodate the transition time required for this change and prevent any service disruption to customers, the current RFP was extended until 2019 June 28.

During the review of CTA, Administration determined that CTA shared-ride services require a significant amount of investment by providers to offer this specialized form of service. This investment includes integration of CTA software and IT infrastructure including Mobile Data Terminals, Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) of each vehicle, two-way radio systems, administrative staff, and on-road supervision and specialized driver training for transporting people with disabilities. It is possible that because of these significant investments required on the part of providers, they may be discouraged from bidding on such a contract. However, Calgary Transit will continue to work with Law and Livery Transport Services to monitor the accessible taxi system to see if there are opportunities to enable increased participation opportunities for shared-ride service providers upon the introduction of a centralized dispatch system.

In addition, as the contracts get closer to expiry, Calgary Transit will review the possibility of strategically allocating trips to enable more contractors to participate in the shared-ride service.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

That the Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services recommends that Council:

1. Direct Administration to begin the RFSQ for the ACE program; and
2. Direct Administration to engage with the taxi industry prior to developing the next procurement strategy for CTA ride-share program.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

At its 2018 October 15 regular meeting, Council endorsed Administration's recommendation in Report CPS2018-1033 to pilot a third party accessible taxi centralized dispatch system, referring the decision for a one-time funding request to support the pilot to the One Calgary budget deliberations in 2018 November.

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At the 2018 October 15 regular Council meeting, that with respect to Report CPS2018-1033, the following Motion Arising was also adopted:

“That given Council’s direction to implement an accessible taxi centralized dispatch system, Council direct Calgary Transit and Law to evaluate opportunities for expanded customer offerings through the Access Calgary Extra (ACE) Card and Calgary Transit Access programs, and that Administration reports back to Council on this matter through the SPC on CPS by the end of Q1 2019.”

BACKGROUND

Every year, Calgary Transit Access provides over one-million trips to more than 15,000 Calgarians that cannot use Calgary Transit services due to a disability. Calgary Transit Access ensures customers with limited mobility get safe, responsive and courteous public transportation services through their regular CTA shared-ride service programs and their Access Calgary Extra (ACE) program.

CTA’s regular shared-ride service programs are comprised of partnerships with various service providers, including taxi service providers, hourly contractors and City employed CTA bus operators. CTA contracts taxi drivers to provide this service who hold a taxi driver’s licence and have received supplementary training in addition to that provided by Livery Transport Services. CTA’s ACE program is made up of three contracted taxi companies—Checker Cabs, Associated Cabs, and Mayfair Taxi—who provide regular taxi service to CTA customers at a discounted taxi rate subsidized by CTA. By providing service through contracts, it enables CTA to offer a cost-effective way to provide quality service to customers with different levels of mobility.

As a result of the October 2018 Council direction mentioned above, Administration investigated alternatives to providing Calgary Transit Access programs.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

The ACE Program

The Access Calgary Extra (ACE) card is a supplemental taxi service provided to customers who have Unconditional CTA shared-ride service (CTA customers that have no other public transportation options for their transportation needs) for a period of more than one year. The ACE program is currently a \$56-per-month subsidy that can be used on-demand with contracted taxi providers, including accessible taxis. The ACE card provides customers with an option for spontaneous or last-minute travel.

The current ACE program has had several RFP’s where the same contractors were awarded the contract. Those were Checker Cabs, Associated Cabs and Mayfair Taxi.

Rather than renewing the ACE program RFP, Administration reviewed the various options to broaden the opportunity for other suppliers to bid. The current ACE RFP expired 2019 January 31. At the time of Council’s motion to evaluate opportunities for expanded customer offerings, the ACE RFP was ready to be posted. With the direction to be more flexible, the RFSQ option was determined to be more in-line with the above motion.

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The RFSQ process allows any interested parties to put forward a bid for providing this service. This would allow brokerages to have the ability to apply at any time, and they would not have to wait for a new RFP to be issued.

Due to the review of the current process, the present RFP for service providers has expired and in order to offer continuous service without interruption, we extended the contract to 2019 June 28, to give time for the new model to be put in place.

Calgary Transit Access (CTA) Shared-Ride Service

The other program that Calgary Transit Access provides is a shared-ride program. This is a door-to-door shared-ride service that is booked in advance. Calgary Transit Access takes the booking requests, schedules the trips and provides each contractor with a manifest that they assign a driver to perform. This requires more investment from prospective contractors than that of those who perform services under the ACE contract. These investments include but are not limited to: integration of CTA software and IT infrastructure including Mobile Data Terminals, Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) of each vehicle, two-way radio systems, administrative staff, on-road supervision, and specialized driver training for transporting people with disabilities.

Based on three priorities—customer service, cost, and fair market support—CTA uses the Request for Proposal (RFP) process to allow interested businesses to bid on providing CTA shared-ride service. The RFP was used for various vehicle types i.e. mini-bus, accessible mini-vans and sedans. Currently, Southland Transportation, Care Calgary and Checker Cabs provide this service. The following are the contract terms for each of the above:

- **Checker taxi contract:** Expires May 2020 with possible extensions until 2026;
- **Southland bus contract:** Expires October 2020; and
- **Care Calgary accessible minivan contract:** Expires March 2020, with possible extension until 2023.

In addition, Calgary Transit will engage with the taxi industry prior to developing the next procurement strategy for CTA ride-share program to see if there are opportunities to enable increased participation for shared-ride service providers.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

This report is in alignment with earlier research and engagement undertaken as part of Accessible Taxi Review Report CPS2018-0127, presented to Council 2018 March 19 (see Attachment 1).

Strategic Alignment

This report aligns with Council direction for One Calgary 2019-2022 to ensure that Calgary's transportation network offers a variety of convenient, affordable accessible and efficient transportation choices.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

CTA is committed to providing a safe, sustainable and customer focused transit system. Accessible transit service enhances mobility and reduces social isolation from those with disabilities in Calgary communities. Further, the taxi, limousine and vehicle-for-hire industries

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serve to facilitate the city's economic development while furthering the use of environmentally friendly modes of transportation by enabling personal travel through an integrated network that does not require purchasing a vehicle. Providing transportation options, particularly affordable accessible transportation, aligns with The City's goal of providing a great place to make a living, a great place to make a life.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

There are no budget implications for this Report.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

There are no budget implications for this Report.

Risk Assessment

Engagement with the industry for the CTA shared-ride program, may not result in consensus within the taxi industry. The RFSQ process may result in constant communication to our customers as to which taxi broker are participants of the ACE program, which may cause confusion; however, Administration perceives these risks to be low.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

Transitioning from a traditional RFP to an RSFQ for the ACE Program enables CTA to have greater participation from the taxi industry and supports their three priorities—customer service, cost and fair market support.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Attachment 1 –CPS2019-0142- Summary of Engagement and Communication with Stakeholders