

ACCESSIBLE VAN OPERATORS ASSOCIATION SUBMISSION

SUMMARY

Submission from the Accessible Van Operators Association.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The wheelchair taxi is a public service mandated by the city of Calgary to provide 24 x 7 on demand taxi service to the wheelchair borne accessible challenged citizens of Calgary.

The operators of the accessible vans are a trained, dedicated and responsible group trying to provide the best customer service to their customers.

INVESTIGATION

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The operators of the accessible vans are a trained, dedicated and responsible group trying to provide the best customer service to their customers.

Unfortunately, there is not enough business from the accessible challenged community, mainly due to financial reasons, and not enough business from the regular taxi customers due to false perceptions and stigma.

On top of that the accessible van conversions cost a lot to purchase (\$50,000) and maintain (extra \$7,000 over regular taxi costs). Thus the accessible van operator is caught in the vice of lower income on one hand and higher expenses on the other. So much so that the accessible van operators are losing money instead of making any income and as such cannot continue on this path any further without assistance.

If the city of Calgary believes that the wheelchair accessible van is an essential service for the city then the Accessible Van Operators Association unanimously, asks LTAC to recommend the city of Calgary to provide financial assistance to the accessible van operators in the following four points:

Finance the conversion of these vehicles by providing a \$15,000 subsidy to the each accessible van operator as and when his/her van is due for replacement.

Provide an annual subsidy of \$7,000 to each accessible van operator to cover the additional fuel and maintenance costs, over and above the operating costs of a regular sedan taxi.

Extend the operational lifespan of the accessible van from 8 to 10 years.

Convert all "Non-transferable" accessible taxi plates to "transferable" accessible taxi plates.

The Accessible Van Operators Association is presenting these facts about the situation facing each accessible van operator. There have already been over 15 accessible taxi plates that have been permanently returned to the LTS. If we do not get this financial assistance from the city of

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Calgary, we are afraid, that as each vehicle comes up for replacement, each operator will have no option but to return their accessible taxi plate to the LTS.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LTAC TO CONSIDER

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ATTACHMENTS

None

SUBMISSIONS PRESENTED BY:

Zulf Khan, President – Accessible Van Operators Association