

## **AUTHORIZATION OF EXPENDITURES REQUEST – LAURI BRUNNER**

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### **SUMMARY**

Lauri Brunner is seeking authorization of expenditures for wheelchair accessible taxi trips recently taken for research purposes, and, going forward, for wheelchair accessible taxi or TNC trips taken to attend meetings of LTAC.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

On 2012 May 7 through TT2012-14, Council adopted the following recommendation:

*That LTAC assess a new subsidization/incentive model to ensure drivers, in relation to standard taxi service, are equitably compensated...and That LTS in collaboration with Access Calgary and brokers assess the feasibility of establishing a central booking system for accessible taxi requests.*

Thus began the Accessible Taxi Review, which has since included numerous attempts to obtain and assess customer perspectives on accessible taxi services including current and anticipated needs for on demand accessible taxi service and levels of satisfaction with the existing service. Obtaining this input has been challenging.

In 2016, it was decided to include a separate quantitative research component aimed specifically at surveying users of accessible taxis and/or their caregivers who actually require the services of an accessible van. *Leger & Associates* was contracted to complete this research. While 48 accessible taxi users/caregivers expressed interest in participating in the survey, only 12 responded. This survey was found to be statistically insignificant and not meaningful to base further decisions upon.

For 2017, the Communication, Engagement and Research subcommittee is conducting qualitative (as opposed to quantitative) research with users of on-demand wheelchair accessible taxis. Through extensive engagement with persons who use wheelchairs, Ms. Brunner has provided a comprehensive list for *Leger* to (hopefully) gain meaningful insights to the realities of needing and securing 24/7 on-demand wheelchair transportation for Calgarians.

### **INVESTIGATION**

The results of the 2016 wheelchair accessible taxi user research do not align with less favourable experiences that have been shared many times through the Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA) from individuals who rely on on-demand wheelchair accessible taxi services for their day-to-day transportation needs. Furthermore, the wait times reported to Ms. Brunner (from the accessible community) did not seem to match those reported on LTAC agendas. This motivated Ms. Brunner to seek out on-demand wheelchair accessible taxi services -- assuming she had no other option. To date, Ms. Brunner has taken 6 trips (this fall) which have given her an authentic experience with regard to present day wheelchair accessible service levels in Calgary.

Lauri Brunner has not yet attempted to request wheelchair accessible service from one remaining taxi company; nor any TNCs, however she would like to.

Ms. Brunner would also like LTAC to authorize expenditures for on-demand wheelchair accessible vehicle-for-hire services for LTAC members with mobility issues as long as the meetings are not convened in the city's municipal building. The parking situation at Deerfoot Junction puts Ms. Brunner (and others) at risk of having a long and somewhat treacherous walk from their vehicles to the meeting room. There is an accessible parking spot near the front of

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the building, however it is most often not available. Ms. Brunner's preference would be to rely on a wheelchair accessible taxi or TNC to travel to and from LTAC meetings. Acknowledging the commitment and contribution Ms. Brunner makes on behalf of persons with disabilities, Ms. Brunner submits these are expenses LTAC ought to cover, for which she seeks the committee's support.

### **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND RESEARCH CONDUCTED**

N/A

### **CURRENT AND FUTURE FINANCIAL IMPACTS**

Expenses of \$218.96 plus future expenses to attend meetings of LTAC.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LTAC TO CONSIDER**

1. That LTAC authorize expenditures of \$218.96 for recent trips.
2. That LTAC authorize expenditures for future on-demand trips to attend meetings of LTAC for LTAC members who require wheelchair accessible transportation services where the meeting venue is other than the City of Calgary Municipal Building.

**SUBMISSION PRESENTED BY:** Lauri Brunner, Chair, Advisory Committee on Accessibility and ACA representative to LTAC