

**CITY OF HAMILTON**

**PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
Parking and By-law Services Division**

<b>Report to:</b> Chair and Members Economic Development and Planning Committee	<b>Submitted by:</b> Tim McCabe General Manager Planning and Economic Development Department
<b>Date:</b> May 28, 2008	<b>Prepared by:</b> Marty Hazell 905-546-2424, Ext. 4586

**SUBJECT: On-board Safety Features for Licensed Taxis (PED08139) (City Wide)**

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

That Report PED08139, which provides a chronological history of the issue of on-board safety features for Licensed Taxis in the City of Hamilton, be received for information.

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Tim McCabe  
General Manager  
Planning and Economic Development Department

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

City Council, at its January 30, 2008 meeting, received and referred to the General Manager of Planning and Economic Development for report, a petition from Taxi Cab Drivers respecting installation of shields in taxi cabs, and directed that the on-board camera requirement be deferred for six months and to invite the Taxi Cab Drivers to address the Committee on this item.

As a result, the Economic Development and Planning Committee and City Council on February 13, 2008 approved:

*“That the section of the Licensing By-law, 07-170, which requires that security cameras be installed in all taxis by May, 2008 be amended, and that this date be changed to November 28, 2008, to allow time for a full review of taxi shield installation, including a Public Meeting on the matter with the Taxi Industry”.*

**SUBJECT: On-board Safety Features for Licensed Taxis (PED08139) (City Wide)**  
**Page 2 of 3**

The purpose of Report PED08139 is to provide Committee members with the necessary background on this issue in advance of their June 19, 2008 public meeting.

**BACKGROUND:**

In June 2000, the Transition Board for the New City of Hamilton was presented the Taxi Industry Reform report that gave an overview of the taxi industry in Hamilton and the surrounding municipalities. The report touched upon issues relating to the lack of driver training and the need for a review of driver safety through implementation of a variety of safety features. The report also addressed many other aspects of the taxicab industry.

Following municipal amalgamation in 2001, the Taxi Licensing Schedule of the Licensing By-law needed to be harmonized. Because of the controversial nature of many of the issues, the City established a Taxi Reform Sub-Committee to deal with the issues and recommend to the (former) Planning and Development Committee an amalgamated Taxi By-Law. The Taxi Reform Sub-Committee membership consisted of Councillors Sam Merulla (Chair), Chad Collins, Dave Mitchell, Tom Jackson and Bernie Morelli, as well as former Councillors Frank D'Amico and Larry Dilanni.

In April 2002, Taxi Industry Reform Sub-Committee Report PD01120(a) identified driver training and safety as areas requiring development and in May 2002, Taxi Industry Reform Report PD01120(b) presented information collected through consultation with stakeholders and other municipalities. At that time, the stakeholder consultation was to plan for the installation of on-board cameras and GPS devices, but not shields.

On May 28, 2003, City Council enacted Licensing Code By-law 07-170, and as part of Schedule 25, included the requirement to "within five years of enactment of this Schedule", equip each taxicab licensed by the City with on-board cameras and GPS devices. The implementation date for these devices was May 28, 2008 (five years after the passing and enactment of the Licensing Code). Staff understands that the five year lead time was intended to allow stakeholders an opportunity to plan financially for the installation of the on-board cameras and GPS systems.

In October 2007, staff began developing the "Skills and Safety" training identified in the 2003 by-law, and this training initiative is scheduled to begin by June 1, 2008.

In late December 2007 and early January 2008, there were fifteen robberies and two assaults on cab drivers. This caused a great deal of media focus on the safety of the driver and raised the question about safety devices in the industry. In April 2008, the Hamilton Police Service conducted three Taxi Safety Forums. The first one was attended by eighteen drivers/plate owners/brokers. The second one was cancelled as only four drivers attended. The third held May 6, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. had 70 drivers attend.

As a result of an increase in assaults and robberies of cab drivers in the City, the Economic Development and Planning Committee, and subsequently City Council, on February 13, 2008, directed that a six month extension be added to the enactment of the on-board cameras "to allow time for a full review of taxi shield installation, including

**SUBJECT: On-board Safety Features for Licensed Taxis (PED08139) (City Wide)**  
**Page 3 of 3**

a Public Meeting on the matter with the Taxi Industry”. No extension to the GPS devices was directed by City Council. The Economic Development and Planning Committee public session is scheduled for June 19, 2008.

**ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:**

n/a

**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

n/a

**FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

**Financial:** n/a

**Staffing:** n/a

**Legal:** n/a

**POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:**

n/a

**RELEVANT CONSULTATION:**

n/a

**CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:**

By evaluating the “**Triple Bottom Line**”, (community, environment, and economic implications) we can make choices that create value across all three bottom lines, moving us closer to our vision for a sustainable community, and Provincial interests.

**Community Well-Being is enhanced.**             Yes    No  
n/a

**Environmental Well-Being is enhanced.**     Yes    No  
n/a

**Economic Well-Being is enhanced.**         Yes    No  
n/a

**Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines?**  
n/a     Yes    No

**Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants?**                                     Yes  No  
n/a

vo:jcs