

VEHICLE FOR HIRE BOARD

JANUARY 14, 2013 RECOMMENDATION

NUMBER OF PERMITTED TAXICABS

The Vehicle for Hire Board recommends to City Council that the total number of taxicabs which may be licensed in the City of Columbus be increased from 500 taxicabs to 530 taxicabs. **These 30 taxicab licenses will be solely designated as Wheelchair/Specialty taxicabs.**

Provisions of the **Current** Moratorium

Ordinance #1132-1997

Section 1:

That expanded entry to the taxicab industry of the City of Columbus be permitted to a maximum of five hundred (500) licensed taxicabs.

Section 2:

That Ordinance No. 1385-90 be and is hereby repealed.

Section 3:

That this Ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

Provisions of the **Proposed** moratorium to read as follows:

That expanded entry into the taxicab industry of the City of Columbus be permitted to a maximum of five hundred thirty (530) licensed taxicabs. The increase of 30 taxicab licenses can only be issued to Wheelchair Accessible/Specialty taxicabs.

Rationale

During the November 29, 2012 meeting of the Vehicle for Hire Board, the taxicab industry representatives proposed an increase in the number of taxicab licenses to accommodate the need for Wheelchair accessible taxicabs. With the proposal from the taxicab industry, the Vehicle for Hire Board voted to create a sub-committee to study the need for Wheelchair Accessible taxicabs in the City of Columbus. The members of the subcommittee were:

- City Council representative
- Livery owner representative
- Taxicab owner representative
- License Section representative
- Public Safety Directors Office representative
- Division of Support Services Administrator

The Wheelchair Accessible Taxicabs Sub-committee conducted a survey of six (6) other cities regarding their number of wheelchair accessible taxicabs that were available to the public:

- Chicago(152)
- Seattle(45)
- Houston(280)
- Nashville(35)
- Portland(N/A) – at least 20% by code
- Phoenix(N/A) – at least 10% by code

Four (4) of the 6 cities stated that they had wheelchair accessible taxicabs available to their citizens. At this time the City of Columbus does not have any wheelchair accessible taxicabs available for “Immediate-on-Call” services.

This sub-committee recommends that the extra 30 licenses be designated as “Wheelchair/Specialty” taxicab licenses. Adding the “Specialty” distinction would allow some leeway in issuing licenses to other non-traditional vehicles which are currently operating in other cities.

Findings

The Vehicle for Hire Board Wheelchair Accessible Taxicab Sub-committee found that the public demand for wheelchair accessible taxicabs does exist in the “Immediate-on-Call” services and is not being met.

They also found that the increase of the thirty(30) taxicab licenses should be deemed “Wheelchair /Specialty” taxicab licenses.

Conclusion

The Wheelchair Accessible Taxicab Subcommittee of the Vehicle for Hire Board found that wheelchair accessible taxicabs are non-existent in the City of Columbus for “Immediate-on-Call” taxicab service. The handicap population that is reliant on a wheelchair is not being served in any capacity through the “Immediate-on-Call” taxicab service.

The Vehicle for Hire Board is recommending an increase of thirty(30) taxicabs that will be designated as Wheelchair/Specialty taxicab licenses. This will increase the total number of taxicab licenses to five hundred thirty(30).

Vehicle for Hire Board

The Vehicle for Hire Board reviewed and accepted the Wheelchair Accessible Taxicab Sub-committee’s recommendation and procedures for distribution of the additional licenses.

Respectfully submitted by

Vehicle for Hire Board

January 14, 2013