



Legislation Text

File #: 11-0145, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to receive and file the Biennial Report on Public Convenience and Necessity regarding Taxicab Service; the Taxicab, Auto-for-Hire Inspection process; determine that the number of authorized taxicabs is sufficient; and direct that the time period for filing of taxicab applications remains closed. (Citywide)

In May 2000, the City Council passed Resolution C-27694 closing the time period for the filing of taxicab applications until specifically opened by the City Council. In addition, the Resolution requires that not less than once every two years, beginning in October 2002, the City Manager conduct an investigation into the public convenience and necessity regarding taxicab service and recommend whether the period for filing of applications should be opened or remain closed. If it is determined by the City Council that the number of authorized taxicabs is sufficient for the needs of the City, then the time period for the filing of applications shall remain closed. If, on the other hand, the City Council determines that the number of authorized taxicabs is sufficient for the needs of the City, then the time period for the filing of applications will be opened.

City staff has conducted an investigation into the public convenience and necessity regarding taxicab service. The investigation examined the taxicab service being provided to both resident and non-resident taxicab customers, and finds that Long Beach Yellow Cab is providing satisfactory service, the number of taxicabs authorized to operate in the City will be sufficient, and recommends that the period for filing of taxicab applications remain closed. In addition, Long Beach Yellow Cab Co-Operative, Inc., has submitted a report (Attachment 1), which cites factors that will help in the weighing of public convenience and necessity. Additionally, Long Beach Yellow Cab Co-Operative, Inc., consulted with Gladstein, Neandross and Associates (GNA), an independent third-party expert in air quality issues, who compiled a report (Attachment 2). GNA's report highlights efforts with the agreement of the taxicab fleet replacement program that would result in the reduction of emissions and petroleum fuel use in the City.

The investigation into public convenience and necessity of taxicab service in Long Beach conducted three steps of review. First, a repeat of the customer service survey taken in 2008, was done on November 16 and 17, 2010 (Attachment 3) to determine the quality of taxicab service provided in the City. Second, a random spot inspection was conducted by City staff on taxicabs operating at the Long Beach Airport, and other various hubs in the City, to determine if the taxicabs had a clean and professional appearance, to check for valid taxi driver regulatory permits, and to verify the posting of a required sign with a customer service phone number for inquiries and complaints for the City of Long Beach. Third, City staff was in attendance at the annual Taxicab, Auto-for-Hire Inspection process on January 10, 11 and 12, 2011, performed on 154 Long Beach Yellow Cab vehicles at their facility in Gardena, CA, in conjunction with the Department of Public Works, Fleet Services Bureau (Attachment 4). As a result of these three days of inspections, three vehicles did not pass the first round of inspections, at which point they were required to be re-inspected by Fleet Services in order to be in compliance. All three vehicles were later re-inspected, remedying their deficiencies and passing their final inspection. As a result, all 154 vehicles were compliant with the requirements of

the inspection process.

Over the course of the past year, in an effort to improve service delivery, Long Beach Yellow Cab recently completed the installation of the Taxi Magic Passenger Information Monitors (PIM) in the back seat of all 154 taxicabs to provide passengers with a convenient and secure way to pay for the taxicab ride using a credit card at the conclusion of their trip. The PIM devices also serve as an informative and entertaining tool displaying customized messages and a high definition interactive screen (Attachment 5). Long Beach Yellow Cab is the first taxicab fleet in Southern California to have implemented this technological enhancement, the Taxi Magic PIM. Long Beach Yellow Cab collaborated with the City to participate in the Taxicab, Limousine & Paratransit Association's (TLPA) "Pink Ride" Program for the month of October 2010, to raise community awareness in the battle against breast cancer. As a symbol of their support, Long Beach Yellow Cab temporarily changed the color scheme for one of its taxicabs by painting the entire vehicle pink (Attachment 6). Additionally, Long Beach Yellow Cab also provides annually free taxicab service on Election Day to Long Beach voters, to and from the polls. This service is provided to any Long Beach resident who calls the regular request line and specifies the nature of their request.

SUSTAINABILITY

Long Beach Yellow Cab is continuing to support efforts to promote environmentally sensitive business and lifestyle practices. In supporting these practices, the Yellow Cab Co-Op partnered with the City and adopted a "Green taxicab" program that requires owner-drivers to replace their existing taxicabs with compressed natural gas (CNG) or Hybrid-powered vehicles. Although they have not been immune to the effect of the country's economic crisis, they have maintained their commitment to greening their taxicab fleet. Long Beach Yellow Cab's fleet of 154 vehicles includes minivans that are exempt from this plan. Currently, minivans with the appropriate specifications are not offered with either CNG or a gasoline-electric hybrid form, and minivans can only make up 25 percent of the entire fleet.

With the 154 total number of taxicabs operated in the City, the requirement that 100 taxis must employ "green" technology as those units come up for replacement is obligated. Currently there are 52 hybrid or CNG-powered taxicabs under construction or in service, a total of 52 percent of the overall "green" requirement of 100 vehicles in service. An additional 26 vehicles will reach their eight-year life cycle in 2011 and be replaced this year with hybrid or CNG powered taxicabs, bringing the total of the green technology vehicles to 78 percent by the end on 2011. Once achieved, this will bring the City to the forefront as the highest percentage of "green" taxicabs in Southern California.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Richard Anthony on January 27, 2011 and Budget Management Officer Victoria Bell on January 28, 2011.

City Council action on this item is not time critical.

The annual business license tax of \$69,970, due January 1, 2011, allows Long Beach Yellow Cab Co-Operative, Inc., to operate up to 155 taxicabs. The business license tax was deposited in the General Fund (GP) in the Department of Financial Management (FM). Additionally, Long Beach Yellow Cab Co-Operative, Inc., paid \$17,094 as a full cost recovery reimbursement to the City for City-incurred charges related to the three-day Taxicab, Auto-for-Hire Inspection process.

Approve recommendation.

WILLIAM YEOMANS
INTERIM DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

APPROVED:

PATRICK H. WEST

CITY MANAGER