
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Report CEC-02-2023 Amendments to Hired Vehicle Licensing By-Law For Consideration by Council in Committee on March 21, 2023



OBJECTIVE:

To obtain Council approval to increase Hired Vehicle Fares (Schedule A) in alignment with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and seek delegated authority to staff for future annual fare adjustments.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report CEC-02-2023 Amendments to Hired Vehicle Licensing By-Law be received;
2. AND THAT the proposed increase to Hired Vehicle Fares (Schedule A) be approved for reasons outlined in Report CEC-02-2023;
3. AND THAT a by-law be presented to amend Schedule A in Hired Vehicle Licensing By-law 2139/20 as outlined in Report CEC-02-2023.
4. AND THAT an amendment to By-law 2322/21 be presented for enactment to delegate authority to the General Manager, Corporate & Social Services in consultation with the Manager, Customer Experience & Communications, to make CPI adjustments to Hired Vehicle fares on an annual basis as outlined in Report CEC-02-2023.

Prepared by: Kyra Hayes, Supervisor, Customer Experience & Communications

Reviewed by: Trish Cardwell, Manager, Customer Experience & Communications

Respectfully submitted: Cathy Case, General Manager of Corporate & Social Services

Approved: Craig Manley, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Staff propose to increase Hired Vehicle Fares in alignment with the Statistics Canada Consumer Price Index (CPI) and associated rise in transportation costs across Ontario. Staff are also recommending future delegated authority to the General Manager, Corporate & Social Services, to make CPI adjustments to the Hired Vehicle Fares.

BACKGROUND:

The Municipal Act allows municipalities to license taxi cabs and set appropriate fares. Most municipalities do so to ensure public safety as there are no other regulatory systems in place to do so. The County licensing structure for hired vehicles provides a balance between ensuring residents have a safe and viable transportation option and operators being fairly compensated. This is significant in Haldimand County where there isn't a public transit option.

In March 2020, Council directed staff to conduct an annual review of Hired Vehicle Fares based on the Statistics Canada Consumer Price Index (CPI). Furthermore in 2021, Council directed staff to only

bring forward any changes in transportation costs that would result in a fare adjustment of \$0.25 or higher.

The annual CPI review has been completed and the CPI adjustment is higher than \$0.25 therefore staff are proposing to increase Hired Vehicle Fares. This increase aligns with the rise in transportation costs across the province.

ANALYSIS:

In March 2020, Council directed staff to conduct an annual review of taxi fares applying the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Staff were also directed not to bring forward a fare adjustment to council until it resulted in an adjustment of \$0.25.

Staff reviewed the Statistics Canada Consumer Price Index (CPI) annual average for transportation costs in Ontario from December 2020 to December 2021 and found that there was a +5.2% change in transportation costs during that period. Staff calculated the proposed fare adjustment using the 5.2% CPI increase and included any cumulated increases less than \$0.25 from the previous year. Chart 1 illustrates a summary of all proposed fares based on calculated increases where applicable. Fares have either been rounded up or rounded down to ensure adjustments do not cause inefficiencies for clients and taxi operators who may be dealing with cash payments.

In a municipality where public transit does not exist, taxi operators provide a much needed service without impacting taxpayers significantly. The municipality's role in licensing hired vehicles such as taxi's is to ensure public safety of the service, much like the purpose of other municipally licensed services or inspections (i.e. health inspections for restaurants, building inspections, smoke alarm inspections, etc.). The balance the municipality must find is in setting appropriate fees that are affordable for the general public, yet not so low that they negatively impact the feasibility of operating a hired vehicle business. If fees are imbalanced one way or the other, it can impact the availability of these services throughout the municipality.

The chart below outlines the proposed fare increases based on the relative CPI increase. If approved by Council, hired vehicle owners will be notified individually. Public notice will be provided through regular avenues such as social media and website.

Chart 1: Proposed 2022 Hired Vehicle Fares (Schedule A)

Hired Vehicle Fare Description	Current Fare	Proposed 2023 Fare
Urban Area flat rate	\$11.00	\$11.50
Rural Area (min)	\$6.00	\$6.25
+ (\$/km) - discretionary option of charging for pick up at halfway point between where the cab is coming from and the pick up destination	\$2.50/km	\$2.75/km
Standing / Waiting Time	\$0.50	No change
Handling Luggage or Groceries	No charge	No charge
Seniors & Students Discount - discretionary	10%	10%
Surcharge - discretionary (on fares of four (4) or more people at any time)	\$2.00	\$2.25

Staff are also seeking delegated authority to apply annual CPI increases once they reach \$0.25, to the Hired Vehicle Fares chart, rounded up or down to the nearest \$0.25, rather than bringing a report forward to Council for such incremental increases. Any adjustments made through delegated authority would trigger the Hired Vehicle Licensing By-law No 2139/20 to be presented directly to Council to authorize the amendment. This allows for a more efficient process. Notice to hired vehicle operators and the public would continue as outlined above each time an increase is applied. If Council approves this recommendation, By-law 2322/21 Delegated Authority By-law, will be presented for amendment at a future Council meeting to include authority for this purpose being delegated to the General Manager, Corporate & Social Services in consultation with the Manager, Customer Experience & Communications.

FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Not applicable.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:

Should the recommended Hired Vehicle Fare increases be approved by Council, all existing and future hired vehicle owners and drivers licenced within Haldimand County will be required to adopt the approved fare structure. Since hired vehicle owners have historically had concerns with rising insurance rates and fuel costs, it is expected that the increased fares will be welcomed by the business owners yet are not significant enough to adversely impact users of the service.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: No

By-law: Yes

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: No

REFERENCES:

None.

ATTACHMENTS:

None.