



King County

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Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
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Legislation Text

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Clerk 05/10/2010

AN ORDINANCE relating to taxicab licenses; regulating wheelchair accessible taxicab licenses; making technical corrections; and amending Ordinance 10498, Section 89, as amended, and K.C.C. 6.64.700 and Ordinance 10498, Section 90, as amended, and K.C.C. 6.64.710.

STATEMENT OF FACTS:

1. There is an unmet need for taxicab services for individuals that rely on mobility devices such as manual and motorized wheelchairs.
2. King County and Seattle collaborated on the Wheelchair Accessible Taxicab Project that demonstrated the need for as well as the viability of wheelchair accessible taxicabs in Seattle and King County.
3. Individuals who require mobility devices have the right to expect highly qualified taxicab drivers and appropriate vehicles that can provide safe, quality and timely service.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

SECTION 1. Findings:

- A. The safety, reliability and economic viability of privately operated taxi transportation is a matter of county concern and regulation of that type of transportation is an essential government function.
- B. The maximum number of taxicab licenses sufficient to provide the public adequate taxicab service is five hundred sixty-one.
- C. Some previously issued licenses have reverted to the county and the demand for service has grown

to the extent that the issuance of additional taxicab licenses from within the number of reverted licenses may be justified.

D. The escalating cost of a taxicab license as it is transferred between parties may be reflected in higher costs to the customer and may diminish the owner's ability to maintain and upgrade the owner's vehicle.

SECTION 2. Ordinance 10498, Section 89, as amended, and K.C.C. 6.64.700 are each hereby amended to read as follows:

A. ~~((The King County council finds that the safety, reliability and economic viability of privately operated taxi transportation is a matter of county concern and regulation of that type of transportation is an essential government function. The council further finds that the maximum number of taxicab licenses sufficient to provide the public adequate taxicab service [is five hundred sixty-one]. The council further finds that some previously issued licenses have reverted to the county and that the demand for service has grown to the extent that the issuance of additional taxicab licenses from within the number of reverted licenses may be justified. The council further finds that the escalating cost of a taxicab license as it is transferred between parties may be reflected in higher costs to the customer and may diminish the owner's ability to maintain and upgrade his or her vehicle.~~

B.) The total number of taxicab licenses issued shall not exceed five hundred sixty-one. The director also shall deny issuance of new taxicab licenses from within the number of reverted licenses as specified by this section unless ~~((he or she))~~ the director determines that there is demand for additional taxi service.

((C.)) B. The following methodology shall be used to determine whether to issue new taxicab licenses:

1. The director shall periodically make a determination of the need for additional taxi service in areas served by King County licensed taxicabs. The ~~((viability))~~ sufficiency of wheelchair accessible taxi service at levels established in adopted policy shall be the primary consideration. One measure of sufficiency shall be whether wheelchair accessible taxicab response times for customers are approximately equal to response times for taxicabs that are not wheelchair accessible. Other factors to be considered for issuing new taxicab licenses

include:

a. coordination with the city of Seattle's taxicab licensing and regulatory framework;

b. growth in population, tourists and other visitors to the area;

c. the quality of existing taxi service as indicated by response times and

customer satisfaction; ((and))

d. the sales price of licenses; and,

e. other indications of unmet demand;

2. Upon determining that a specific number of new taxicab licenses should be issued, the director may issue all or a portion of those licenses through a request for proposals process designed to test alternatives to the current local taxi industry model. King County should retain the ability to revoke, reallocate or recondition those licenses should the alternative model prove infeasible; and

3. All taxicab licenses not subject to a request for proposals process shall be issued by lot from a pool of ((qualified)) applicants ((as determined by the director)). The director shall then evaluate the qualifications of individuals selected by lot and issue licenses to those determined to be qualified.

((D. The director may issue temporary taxicab licenses to wheelchair accessible taxicab vehicles used to provide transportation to disabled persons who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices. The temporary licenses are nontransferable and shall not be included in calculating the maximum number of taxicab licenses allowable pursuant to subsection B. of this section. The transit division shall coordinate a demonstration project to determine the long-term viability of wheelchair accessible taxicab service.

E.) C. All temporary taxicab licenses issued to wheelchair accessible taxicab vehicles for the purpose of a demonstration project under Ordinance 15263 expire June 30, 2010. The temporary licenses are nontransferable and shall not be included in calculating the maximum number of taxicab licenses allowable under subsection A. of this section.

D. The director may issue licenses for wheelchair accessible taxicabs. The director shall determine the

number of wheelchair accessible taxicab licenses needed to serve the areas serviced by King County and may also coordinate with the city of Seattle to determine the number of wheelchair accessible taxicab licenses needed to provide service in areas serviced by both the city of Seattle and King County. Wheelchair accessible taxicab licenses shall not be included in calculating the maximum number of taxicab licenses allowed under subsection A. of this section but are subject to the process outlined in subsection B.1. of this section.

1. Except as otherwise provided in subsection D.2. of this section, the processes for issuing wheelchair accessible taxicab licenses is as follows:

a. Upon determining that a specific number of new wheelchair accessible taxicab licenses should be issued, the director may issue all or a portion of those licenses through a request for proposals. In any request for proposals, the director shall consider among other factors an applicant's driving record, driving experience, conduct record and qualifying experience transporting disabled individuals that require any type of mobility device including a manual or motorized wheelchair or other mobility device;

b. All wheelchair accessible taxicab licenses not subject to a request for proposals process shall be issued by lot from a pool of applicants. The director shall then evaluate the qualifications of individuals selected by lot and issue licenses to those determined to be qualified;

2. As an alternative to the process in subsection D.1. of this section, the director may coordinate the process to license wheelchair accessible taxicabs with the city of Seattle and is authorized to issue King County wheelchair accessible taxicab licenses to applicants selected by the city of Seattle to be issued wheelchair accessible taxicab licenses for the city of Seattle.

E. In order to test alternative ways of structuring taxi associations and the terms of taxicab license leases, the director may issue licenses on condition that the licensees make specific commitments or perform specific actions not generally required of other licensees. The director shall establish the special conditions through the administrative rule making process in accordance with K.C.C. chapter 2.98. The director may revise the conditions applied to such licenses or revoke and reissue the licenses upon determining that the

conditions have not been met or that they will not achieve the objectives of the alternative being tested.

SECTION 3. Ordinance 10498, Section 90, as amended, and K.C.C. 6.64.710 are amended to read as follows:

A. Transfer or sale of a license issued before January 1, 2006, to any other person is authorized, except that temporary wheelchair accessible taxicab licenses and all taxicab licenses issued after January 1, 2006, are nontransferable, except that all wheelchair accessible taxicab licenses issued in accordance with K.C.C. 6.64.700.D. are transferable after five years from the original date of license. Application for transfer of a license to another person shall include the name of the transferee, and the trade name and color scheme under which the vehicle will be operated, the sales price and other information required by the director. The licensee selling the license and the individual purchasing the license must file an affidavit and bill of sale, signed by both parties, with the county records and licensing services division. The transferee shall comply with all requirements of this chapter. ~~((Any transfer of a taxicab license shall be for the transfer of all licenses issued to the vehicle.))~~ For taxicabs licensed by more than one jurisdiction, ((I)) if the transfer is for one vehicle license only, the remaining taxicab license shall be considered abandoned, nonrenewable or nontransferable.

B. Unless suspended or revoked, a taxicab license may be renewed annually subject to timely payment of license fees and compliance with other relevant provisions of this chapter. 10 days prior to hearing

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