

Edmonton first Canadian city to legalize ride share services

City Council has approved a [new vehicle for hire bylaw \(17400\)](#), which will allow technology-based companies, such as mobile app dispatchers, to operate legally in Edmonton under a new class called Private Transportation Providers (PTPs). The new bylaw will come into effect March 1, 2016, providing time for the City of Edmonton and industry to begin introducing Edmontonians and vehicle for hire drivers to the new regulations.



"The regulatory framework in the new bylaw helps to answer citizen and business demand for more choice in the vehicle for hire industry," says Mayor Don Iveson. "It represents a significant evolution of the industry and creates a model that will enable the taxi business and private transportation providers to co-exist."

Under the hybrid fare model in the new bylaw, both taxis and PTPs will be required to charge a minimum of \$3.25 for any trip pre-arranged through a mobile app or written contract. Rates above the \$3.25 minimum may be negotiated between the PTP or taxi, and the customer.

Only taxis will be permitted to pick up street hails or use taxi stands. Street hails, pick ups from taxi stands and trips arranged by telephone dispatch will be charged at a stipulated metered rate of \$3.60 for the first 135 metres and \$0.20 for each additional 135 metres or 24 seconds waiting time.

"Edmonton is in a leadership position among Canadian cities in developing and implementing a response to ride sharing in the vehicle for hire industry," says Peter Ohm, acting branch manager for Current Planning. "Our goal was to find the right balance between recognizing the long history of service by the taxi business and being responsive to innovation in the industry. We will continue to closely monitor the impact of these changes and make adjustments, if necessary, to address potential issues, such as predatory pricing, that may negatively impact the industry."

The new bylaw will continue to firmly uphold the standards set for public safety to protect passengers and drivers. Drivers will be required to provide the City with proof of the proper insurance and class of driver's licence, as outlined in provincial law. Criminal record checks and an annual vehicle inspection by a licensed garage and mechanic will also be required.

Fines for operating without a City driver's licence or City vehicle licence under the new bylaw will be \$5,000, and regular enforcement of unlicensed vehicles for hire will continue.

The City regulates the vehicle for hire program, which is funded on a cost recovery basis. Fees collected are used to pay for the resources needed to administer and enforce the bylaw.

The new licence fee structure establishes two PTP dispatcher categories: regional PTPs operating less than 200 vehicles and commercial PTPs operating more than 200 vehicles. The license fees for dispatchers, vehicles and drivers will be the same between taxis and regional PTPs.

The regulations in the new bylaw are the result of wide-reaching research on emerging vehicle for hire business models from across North America, and extensive engagement with industry stakeholders and the public. Public input on fares was captured through a 400-person random sample telephone survey, and an online survey which received over 3000 responses.

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edmonton.ca/vehicleforhire

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