



# Accessible Taxi Incentive Program & WAV Calgary

## Industry Engagement: What we heard

### Table of Contents

Project overview .....	2
Engagement overview .....	2
Engagement activities .....	2
Participation.....	2
What we asked .....	3
What we heard.....	4



### Project overview

The Accessible Taxi Incentive Program was implemented on 2019 January 1 to improve on-demand wheelchair accessible taxi service and customer safety while reducing the higher operating cost of accessible taxis compared to other taxi vehicles. The program provides up to \$5,000 in annual grants and incentives to holders of an Accessible Taxi Plate Licence and accessible taxi drivers who meet the qualifying criteria.

WAV (Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle) Calgary was launched in 2019 December to provide a centralized dispatch service for on-demand wheelchair accessible taxis. WAV Calgary pools the services of all active licensed wheelchair accessible taxis and drivers operating in the city and provides customers with one point of contact to request an accessible taxi. The goal is to reduce wait times and improve service levels by providing customers with more accurate wait time information for the closest accessible taxi.

### Engagement overview

Engagement with holders of Accessible Taxi Plate Licences and accessible taxi drivers took place from 2021 June to July. This process enabled us to gather feedback on how the Accessible Taxi Incentive Program and the WAV Calgary Centralized Dispatch Service are working and what improvements should be made to help Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders/drivers continue to provide great service to customers who use wheelchairs. This feedback will be included in a briefing to Council on the effectiveness of the Accessible Taxi Incentive Program and WAV Calgary in Q4 of 2021.

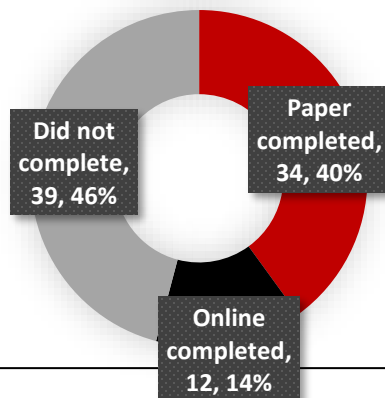
#### Engagement activities

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and public health and safety restrictions in place during this time, in person industry stakeholder engagement was not possible. Engagement with Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders/drivers continued through a survey that was made available online or in hard copy. An option to attend a virtual engagement session was also made available upon request.

#### Participation

**A total of 46 out of 85 Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders/drivers completed the survey (54 per cent response rate).** At the Livery Transport Services office, Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders/drivers were provided a QR code to access the online survey. A paper copy of the survey was also offered and 34 individuals (40 per cent) completed it, which contributed to a high response rate.

Participation





## What we asked

The following section describes the common topics and specific questions we asked Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders/drivers through online and paper surveys.

<b>Key Topics</b>	<b>What we asked</b>
Accessible Taxi Driver grants and incentives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs</li> <li>• Understanding criteria</li> <li>• Satisfaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has receiving grants and incentives through Livery Transport Services helped reduce the costs associated with operating an accessible taxi?</li> <li>• Are the criteria for receiving the grants and incentives from Livery Transport Services easy to understand?</li> <li>• Were you satisfied with how the grants and incentives were calculated and distributed?</li> </ul>
Per-trip incentive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a driver, would receiving a 'per-trip' incentive for every accessible trip completed help cover some of the additional costs of running an accessible taxi? <i>(An example of a 'per-trip' incentive is a reimbursement or "kicker" of a set amount for each completed accessible trip.)</i></li> <li>• If a 'per-trip' incentive is introduced for every accessible trip completed, what amount would you suggest?</li> <li>• As a driver, if there was a higher 'per-trip' incentive for accessible trips completed during the evening and nighttime hours (6 pm-4 am) would you be more willing to be available during those hours?</li> </ul>
WAV Calgary platform usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a driver, do you accept accessible trips through WAV Calgary? If no, what are the reasons?</li> <li>• If you're not currently accepting accessible trips through WAV Calgary, would receiving a 'per-trip' incentive for every trip completed encourage you to log on the platform?</li> </ul>
Declining an accessible trip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After accepting an accessible trip through WAV Calgary have you ever had to decline the trip?</li> </ul>
Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holder/driver current status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How long have you been an Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holder?</li> <li>• Do you have a second driver on your Accessible Taxi Plate Licence?</li> </ul>
The future and challenges of driving an accessible taxi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you intend to keep driving an accessible taxi in the future?</li> <li>• What continues to be the biggest challenge of driving an accessible taxi?</li> <li>• Are there any other challenges of driving an accessible taxi that you would like to share?</li> </ul>



## What we heard

Survey responses and feedback from a virtual meeting were analyzed for themes. The following are feedback in detail of what we heard from Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders/drivers including verbatim quotes:

<b>Topic: Accessible Taxi Driver grants and incentives</b>
<b>Key theme: Accessible grants and incentives are helping reduce the high operating cost of accessible taxis however more incentives were suggested.</b>
<p><b>What we heard</b></p> <p>When asked has receiving grants and incentives through Livery Transport Services helped reduce the costs associated with operating an accessible taxi, 90 per cent of respondents indicated “yes”. Additional incentives suggested are:</p> <p><b>Verbatim quotes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We like to see subsidize ramp and finance the no interest van.</i></li> <li>• <i>The cost is still very high to maintain accessible vehicle. The incentive is not enough to maintain vehicles.</i></li> <li>• <i>There should be 2 types of incentives – one for each accessible trip they do and the 2<sup>nd</sup> is if they’re working during nighttime hours, they should get an extra incentive for each hour they work, even if they don’t get any accessible trips.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Key theme: Generally, the criteria for receiving grants and incentives from Livery Transport Services is easy to understand.</b>
<p><b>What we heard</b></p> <p>Over 87 per cent of Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders/drivers who responded indicated “yes” the criteria for receiving grants and incentives are easy to understand. For those who indicated the criteria are not easy to understand, their explanations include:</p> <p><b>Verbatim quotes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Because the incentive is split up between 3 periods per year and between the driver and owner can be complicated.</i></li> <li>• <i>Criteria is complicated, see if the driver is working and picking up wheelchair trips he should be qualified, we can make it simple by having let’s say 900 hours per year 50 trips.</i></li> <li>• <i>These funds are created for the help of ATPL holder so need to be paid to to ATPL holders without any questions ask also the vehicles are retiring or expiring from the fleet those drivers or holders can not afford to buy a new vehicle which cost around 50000 plus so the city need to help those drivers holders to share half of the cost otherwise no ATPL holders will be able to buy new vehicle.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Key theme: Generally, Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders/drivers are satisfied with how grants and incentives are calculated and distributed.</b>
<p><b>What we heard</b></p> <p>Over 70 per cent of respondents indicated “yes” they are satisfied with how the grants and incentives were calculated and distributed.</p>



Of respondents who said they were not satisfied, explanations provided include:

**Verbatim quotes:**

- *It takes long if the driver supposed to get his money after his birthday it should not be more than two weeks and the plate owner supposed to get the money for the vehicle once He renewed his plate should get the money right away.*
- *Some people pick up 5 clients a month, and I pick up 5-8 trips per day and yet they still receive the same amount of money as me. Some people don't even work and they are happy with the grants and incentives they receive. This is unfair.*
- *The criteria to calculate the incentive should not be based on night service and trips done if someone do more trips, he should be paid more.*
- *No I am not satisfied because the said grant is almost deducted out for some minor reasons.*

**Topic: Per-trip incentive**

**Key theme: Receiving a ‘per-trip’ incentive (e.g. “kicker”) for every accessible trip will help cover some of the additional costs of running an accessible taxi.**

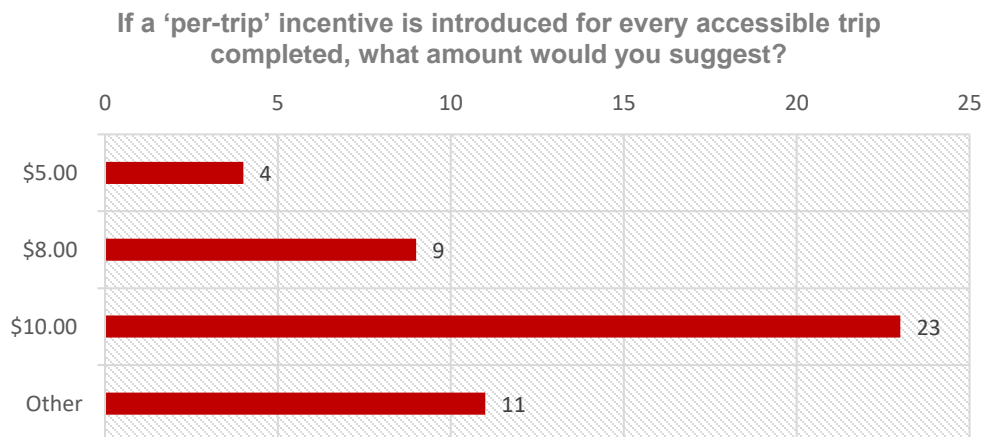
**What we heard**

When asked would receiving a ‘per-trip’ incentive for every accessible trip completed help cover some of the additional costs of running an accessible taxi, 82 per cent of respondents indicated “yes”. Of those who responded “no” the following explanations were provided:

**Verbatim quotes:**

- *There is no need to count of trip if a vehicle is available on the road so it’s mean he is working and the vehicle is in service and if he is not in the area where he can get a trip this is not his fault So no per trip is fare.*
- *No equally between companies. Some of them they have a good dispatch and regular customers. Some of them they don't have this advantage.*

Respondents were also asked what amount they would suggest if a ‘per-trip’ incentive was introduced for every accessible trip completed. The results are displayed in the following chart:





Of the responses, **\$10 was the most suggested 'per-trip' incentive amount.**

Of those who indicated "other" the most common suggestions specified are \$20 or an amount based on the distance/mileage of the accessible trip.

When asked as a driver, would you be more willing to be available during nighttime hours (6 pm – 4 am) if there was a higher 'per trip' incentive for accessible trips completed 68 per cent selected "yes", while 33 percent selected "no".

**Topic: WAV Calgary platform usage**

**Key theme: Most drivers are using WAV Calgary to deliver accessible trips and a per-trip incentive will encourage more to log on to the platform.**

**What we heard**

Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders/drivers were asked if they accept accessible trips through the WAV Calgary platform and almost all (96 percent) responded "yes".

Of the respondents who selected yes, some continued to provide the following reasons why they may not be using the WAV Calgary platform:

- Broker restrictions
- Find customers by other means
- Too difficult to use

When asked if receiving a 'per-trip' incentive for every trip completed would encourage them to log on to the platform 74 per cent indicated "yes" while 26 per cent said "no".

**Topic: Declining an accessible trip**

**Key theme: Generally, drivers complete all the accessible trips they accept through WAV Calgary and only decline a trip in rare circumstances**

**What we heard**

Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders/drivers were asked whether they ever had to decline a trip after accepting it through WAV Calgary. Most respondents (84 per cent) said "no". For those who responded "yes" their reasons why are:

**Verbatim quotes:**

- *Car is broken on the road.*
- *Once or twice because accidently accepted or had another trip.*
- *Not worth of travel to 20 km for \$7 trip.*
- *Some time you get stuck in traffic, winter weather. You get trip but forget to log off from WAV.*
- *Way too far away, accepting by mistakenly while I have load 8.*
- *Confusing the area - sometime the trip is 20km far.*

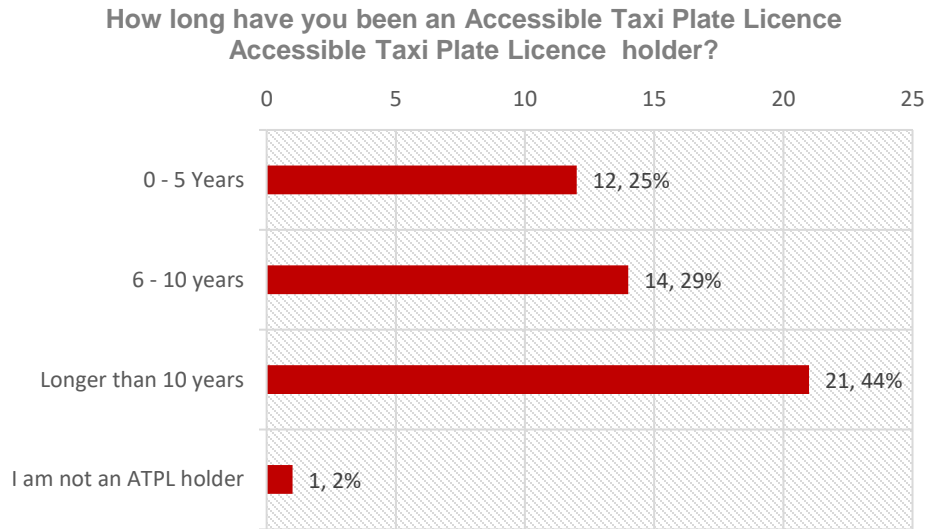


**Topic: Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holder/driver current status**

**Key theme: Most respondents have been Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders for longer than 10 years and most are the only drivers who operate their vehicle.**

**What we heard**

Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders/drivers were asked how long they have you been an Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holder. The results are displayed in the following chart:



When asked if they shared their vehicle with a second driver almost all (94 per cent) indicated “no” they do not. Most common reasons why are:

**Verbatim quotes:**

- *No willingness to drive an accessible vehicle.*
- *It is hard to find a driver for an accessible van. Most drivers prefer cars.*
- *High costs and consumption of gas.*
- *No one wants to drive accessible van due to higher cost of fuel and at night time no passenger take that specifically in downtown.*
- *I work flexible hours.*
- *You have to work more than 14 hours to make a pay.*
- *Car off the road due to COVID.*

**Topic: The future and challenges of driving an accessible taxi**

**Key theme: Many Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders/drivers intend to keep driving accessible taxis in the future however, vehicle costs (purchasing, maintenance and fuel) and longer distances to pick-up and drop-off customers continue to be the most challenging aspects.**

**What we heard**

Over 80 per cent of respondents intend to keep driving an accessible taxi in the future.



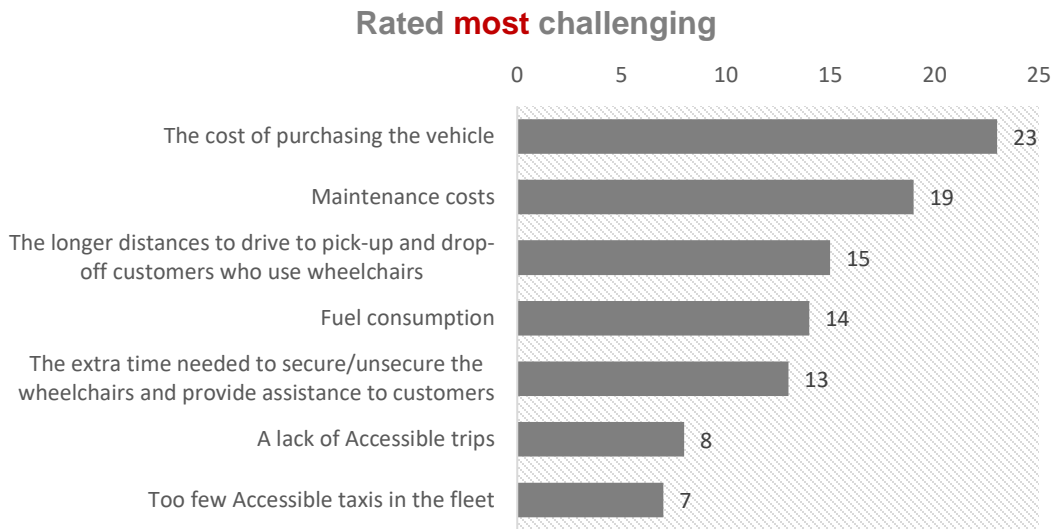
## Accessible Taxi Incentive Program & WAV Calgary Industry Engagement: What we heard

Some reasons why respondents may not intend to keep driving an accessible taxi in the future include:

**Verbatim quotes:**

- *Driving regular cab is more profitable than accessible. 3 Regular cars can be changed in cost of one accessible.*
- *My car is getting old and someday it will be out of service. I can't afford to invest \$50K for new car. If city provides us help to get new car then I can consider.*
- *Still expense are very high compare to TPL holders.*
- *There is millions of dollars business city has they're not offering to wheelchair drivers they are giving that fortune to none taxi company in Calgary.*

Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders/drivers were asked what continues to be the biggest challenge of driving an accessible taxi and was asked to rate a list of options provided from 1 to 7 (1 being the most challenging and 7 being the least challenging). The following chart shows the options **rated most challenging**:

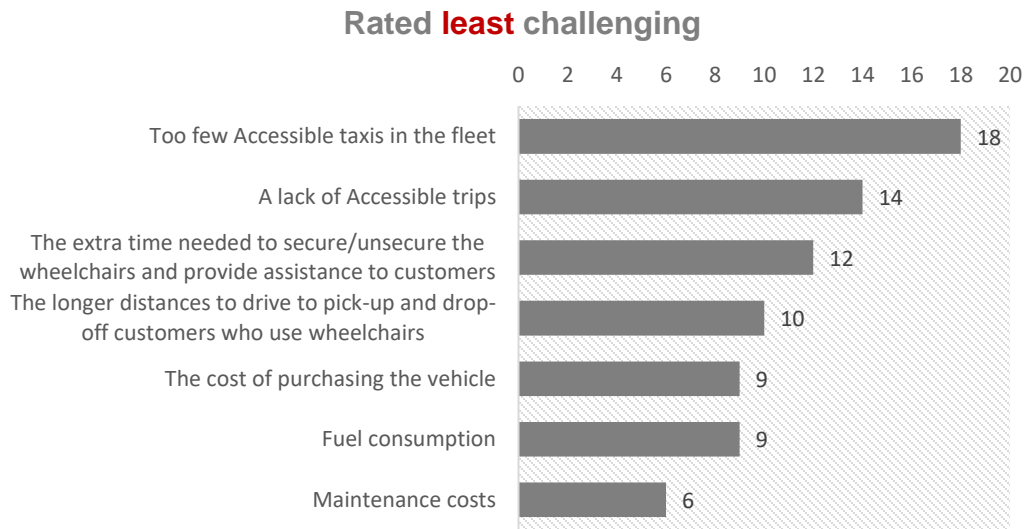


Of the responses, “The cost of purchasing the vehicle” (23) continues to be the biggest challenge of driving an accessible taxi.





The following chart shows the options **rated least challenging**:



“Too few accessible taxis in the fleet” (18) was rated the least challenging by the Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders/drivers from the options provided.

Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders/drivers were asked if they had any other challenges of driving an accessible taxi they would like to share. Other challenges/ideas that were shared are:

**Verbatim quotes:**

- *Some passengers prefer a car to a van so we lose out on those trips, especially for groups of 1-4.*
- *Wheelchair taxi age should be extended more than 10 years as long as they keep maintained mechanically Calgary access transit business should be given to wheelchair drivers.*
- *The City should have their own accessible taxis and hire drivers to drive them or give a subsidy at the time of purchasing and always cover the cost of the ramp.*
- *Please I suggest for access taxi check all drivers on their device b/c the trip it comes 60km away it is good to monitor access taxi drivers closely.*
- *Some customers are not maintaining the hygiene condition. As front line worker we are at high risk to get contaminate by in contact with customers.*
- *Night trips should be cancelled - no customers.*
- *These incentives are appreciated but at the same time drivers want to see if they can get business from the City, then they will be able to continue operating.*
- *Too much cost to run a van & regular customers don't like to rent a van & maintenance cost gas increasing year to year.*
- *I would have suggested that ATPL holders be given special exemptions for example extra yyc trips so that they can cover their necessary cost.*