



**Date:** March 20, 2012

**To:** Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager  
**Through:** Theodore L. Voorhees, Deputy City Manager  
**From:** Mark D. Ahrendsen, Transportation Director  
Gracie W. Chamblee, Taxicab Program Administrator  
**Subject:** Agenda Item-Passenger Vehicle for Hire Ordinance Amendment to allow Advertising on Taxicabs

### **Executive Summary**

The Passenger Vehicle for Hire Ordinance that was adopted by Council on May 17, 1999 does not allow or address advertising on taxicabs. A representative from the Durham taxicab industry has requested that the ordinance be amended to explicitly allow advertising. The Passenger Vehicle for Hire Subcommittee has discussed this matter and supports an amendment to the ordinance which would allow advertising on an approved rooftop device that is placed on the taxicab.

It is the recommendation of the Passenger Vehicle for Hire Subcommittee and Staff that the City Council approve the attached ordinance which amends the Passenger Vehicle for Hire Ordinance to allow advertising on taxicabs.

### **Recommendation**

It is the recommendation of the Passenger Vehicle for Hire Subcommittee and Staff that the City Council adopt the attached Ordinance which amends Chp. 50, Article III of the Durham City Code captioned-"Passenger Vehicles for Hire" to allow advertising on taxicabs.

### **Background**

The existing Passenger Vehicle for Hire Ordinance does not allow advertising on taxicabs. The Passenger Vehicle for Hire Subcommittee in conjunction with City Staff has had several meetings with the taxicab industry regarding the possibility of allowing advertising on taxicabs. Staff and the taxicab industry have done research that suggests that it is an acceptable practice to allow advertising under certain conditions.

### **Issues and Analysis**

Since advertising is allowed elsewhere in the country, this has been found to be an acceptable way for the taxicab industry to supplement its income. The Passenger Vehicle for

Hire Subcommittee and Staff recommends that advertising be allowed on cabs. The display of the advertising would be regulated as follows. The rate and messages for the ads would not be regulated by the City of Durham. Advertisements shall only be allowed when placed upon or inside the rooftop device.

In addition, the inspector shall approve a rooftop device that:

- (1) Do not obscure any required vehicle markings or lights.
- (2) Do not add more than 18 inches to the overall height of the vehicle.
- (3) Do not extend beyond the top of the front windshield, the rear window, or either of sides of the vehicle.
- (4) Are securely attached to the roof of the vehicle and are stationary.
- (5) Do not block exits such as doors and windows or obstruct opening of trunk or hatch.

The advertising message and rate for advertising would not be regulated by the City.

### **Alternatives**

The City Council may:

1. Adopt the recommended change from the Passenger Vehicle for Hire Subcommittee and Staff to allow advertising on taxicabs that are licensed to operate in the City of Durham.
2. Make no change to the existing Passenger Vehicle for Hire Ordinance.
3. Modify the recommended ordinance as deemed appropriate by Council.

### **Financial Impacts**

Due to the nature of this item, there are no financial impacts to the City.

### **SDBE**

There are no SDBE requirements for this project.

### **Attachments**

Attachment 1 Ordinance Allowing Advertising on Taxicabs