

Appendix C: Pedicab Operators' Statement

Pedicab Operators' Statement

To the Victoria City Council,

The following is a statement written on behalf of the pedicab operators of Victoria. It is intended to be received by the Victoria City Council for consideration regarding the increase of pedicab licenses.

Many cities have pedicabs; however, most operate purely as a taxi service. The pedicab operators in Victoria are special: we operate tours throughout the city which aim to showcase Victoria's heritage, beauty, and exciting nature. The professional culture we have developed is a result of an industry-driven code of conduct that promotes positive sales methods and safe tour practices. This code allows us to work in harmony with the many other tour services in Victoria. Most importantly, it protects the visitors of Victoria from unsafe practices and ensures the best guest experience. We worry that the proposed expansion will affect our ability to maintain our high standards and reduce our ability to prevent conflict between drivers, thus leading to practices that may negatively impact our trade. Our hard earned, positive reputation is one of our biggest assets and we fear that it may become compromised.

Sustainability is a big priority for the pedicab operators of Victoria. We are all aware that our working space in the downtown core is limited and at times frustratingly so. The current number of licenses is almost half of what the City of Vancouver issues -- a city that holds much more space to work in. Increasing the licenses in Victoria would not only make our working space more congested, but lead to even more pedicab tours being under-utilised. So far, license expansion discussions seemingly have not addressed this issue of finite space and over-saturation of the market. Furthermore, the chaotic nature of rapid expansion may damage the good relationships which have been built with other tour companies and establishments in the area.

Our concerns regarding the license expansion are informed and relevant. We hope to bring to the attention of the Victoria City Council the potential negative consequences of license expansion upon the existing pedicab operators and on the Victoria tourism industry on the whole. Under the current system, there is a standard code of conduct which governs all aspects of our selling and riding. The expanded license base would compromise this existing standard, which includes agreed-upon code and dispute resolution mechanisms. The expenses and the responsibilities of managing, monitoring and arbitrating conflicts would then be passed onto the City -- a prospect that would be both costly and inconvenient to all parties involved.

We, the pedicab operators, are a fun and diverse group who all share a passion for Victoria. This passion drives us to continually develop professionally and personally. The decisions made by the Victoria City Council will undoubtedly affect us and our ability to continue operating, and will also affect our ability to support ourselves and our families. Please carefully consider this when making decisions on license expansion. Both the City of Victoria and the pedicab operators have a lot to lose.

We would welcome an opportunity to consult with the City of Victoria, so that together, we can further build this industry in a sensible and sustainable manner.

We thank you for your time and consideration on this matter,