

MEMORANDUM

TO: Regina City Council

SUBJECT: Uber's Commitment to Safety

DATE: June 24, 2020

Introduction

Since our first trip in Regina on May 15, 2019, hundreds of workers have had access to a new income opportunity via the Uber app which they could do on their own schedule day or night - weekend or weekday - simply by meeting the regulated safety criteria and then pressing the Go button. These drivers completed hundreds of thousands of safe trips for riders heading to grocery stores, the airport, medical appointments, or home from a night out.

Uber is very proud of our record in Regina. In the recent Vehicle for Hire update (CPS20-9), Staff writes that "The City has not received complaints from passengers about services that have been provided by Uber, nor have any TNC drivers reported any concerns." The report highlights that even though the service was available for less than a year, regulated rides including taxi and ridesharing increased by 13% and growth was continuing into 2020 until Covid struck.

Uber believes that the current regulatory environment in Regina strikes the right balance between enabling innovation and maintaining a safe and reliable marketplace. As Council receives the Vehicle for Hire update, we wanted to provide additional detail about Uber's commitment to safety and address the issues of cameras in vehicles that arose at Committee.

Uber Safety Features

We have a variety of policies, processes and partnerships in place and leverage the most advanced safety technology to help keep Regina safe.

Key safety features include:

- **In-App Safety Toolkit:** Passengers have immediate access to the Uber app's safety features all in one place, including the ability to share your trip status with friends and family in real time, 24/7 incident support, and an emergency assistance button to call to get help if you need it. The app displays your location and trip details, so you can quickly share them with the emergency dispatcher.

- **Engagement with Law Enforcement:** Uber works very closely with law enforcement. We have an online portal just for law enforcement inquiries where law enforcement can put in data and information requests from Uber. Uber also has a Law Enforcement Operations team that works on the ground with local law enforcement including Regina Police.
- **RideCheck:** By using sensors and GPS data, RideCheck can help detect if a trip goes unusually off-course or if a possible crash has occurred. If the app alerts Uber to anything out of the ordinary, they'll reach out to provide riders with the tools to get help.
- **Real-time ID Check:** Uber utilizes facial recognition software to randomly require drivers to take a selfie to ensure that the correct driver is accessing the account.
- **PIN Verification:** We encourage users to double-check the app for their driver's information to ensure they are getting in the right car by matching the license plate number, the car make and model and driver's photo to the information in the app. Uber's newest feature is PIN verification. On some trips, riders will be asked to provide their driver with a unique 4-digit PIN before the trip can start. This helps riders verify that they are getting into the right car.
- **Commitment to Women's Safety:** Uber committed to a multi-year, multi-million dollar campaign to partner with leading sexual assault and domestic violence partners around the world. In Canada, Uber works with organizations such as YWCA Canada, Woman Abuse Council of Toronto, Toronto Rape Crisis Centre, and the Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking to help keep people safe and end gender-based crimes in our country.
- **Driver Safety:** All the above safety features, including 24/7 support and the emergency button, are available to drivers as well as features like speed limit alerts.

While these represent some of our key safety features at the moment, we are constantly working to improve the safety of our platform, leveraging technology wherever possible.

Cameras in Vehicles

At the meeting of the Community and Protective Services Committee on June 3, 2020, there was a motion passed requesting a staff report on background and recommendations for a camera policy specific to the ridesharing industry.



No Canadian city currently requires cameras in ridesharing vehicles. Calgary and Ottawa have both completed reviews on the matter and determined that cameras are not necessary for business models that only conduct pre-arranged trips and retain appropriate rider and driver information to maintain accountability, such as TNCs. Additional pieces of rationale include:

- TNCs (Uber) and Limos only accept prearranged rides. Limos have historically not required a camera. Uber and Limo are more alike in this regard because trips are pre-arranged.
- Taxis are granted special permission to operate via street hails and accept cash, which has led to a requirement for cameras. Ridesharing drivers are not permitted to accept street hails or accept cash.
- Pre-arranged trips through an app (with driver and vehicle information and ratings provided to the customer, and customer identification provided to the driver, with computerized records of the information) provides additional security. Data must be shared with the regulator monthly and retained for law enforcement purposes.
- To work effectively, cameras installed must be tamper proof, always on and only accessible to police. Even then it raises significant privacy concerns as the same ridesharing vehicles used commercially are also used privately to take family to and from activities and appointments. It would be a significant privacy violation to be recording a family's private activities.

Finally, as we enter a phase of economic recovery, imposing an additional cost on drivers, particularly when there is no evidence that it increases the safety of the platform, is misguided and will only hurt drivers.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to many more years of partnership between Uber and the City of Regina.

Jake Brockman