

**BFAST Comments on Amendments to Public Vehicle By-law 20-2009 (BB-12-21)
November 30, 2021**

It is encouraging that Council recognizes the importance of taxi service for transit users and residents who have no driver's license or access to a vehicle. Many shift workers and workers at bars and restaurants need taxis to get to and from work. They are an important transportation mode for getting people to medical appointments and for getting many children to school. Taxis provide a valuable service when patrons consume alcohol at their favourite tavern or eatery.

It was a shock to us at BFAST and to taxi users across Burlington when the news about the closing of Burlington Taxi leaked out to the public. Many taxi users have not yet even learned about the loss of taxi service in Burlington, nor were they informed of this special Council meeting.

While we applaud Council for its attempts to ensure a continuation of taxi service in Burlington and recognize the emergency in the context of which the proposed bylaw is being developed, we are concerned that there seems to be no opportunity for formal public input on this proposed measure. The meeting at which this proposed bylaw amendment is being discussed was not well publicized, which is understandable given the timing of the crisis. However, we suggest that the rule requiring delegations to register a day in advance should have, in this case, been relaxed to permit late registrations.

We suggest, therefore, that Council

- approve the amendments on the understanding that this will be an interim bylaw which could be changed after public input;
- establish a task force to further investigate issues such as the regulation of ride-sharing services and to initiate a program of outreach, especially to those vulnerable populations referenced in the staff memo, to ensure their concerns are heard;
- set a realistic timetable that allows for public participation in the process of finalizing a new bylaw; and
- set a date, at least several months from now, at which a final draft of the bylaw would be presented to Council for approval.

All of which is submitted with respect.

Burlington for Accessible, Sustainable Transit (BFAST)