

2010 05 17 Angry cabbies head to City Hall over fears of airport taxi monopoly

Motion today will call on the airport authority to suspend the call for proposals

By Gwendolyn Richards, with files from Jamie Komarnicki, Calgary Herald May 17, 2010 6:56 AM

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<http://www.calgaryherald.com/news/Angry+cabbies+head+City+Hall+over+fears+airport+taxi+monopoly/3036626/story.html#ixzz0oC3ZswdX>

Calgary cabbies fearing a call for proposals will lead to a taxi service monopoly at the airport are expected to pack council chambers today as several aldermen introduce a motion calling on the airport authority to stand down.

The Calgary Airport Authority sent out the request for proposals to cab companies earlier this month -- a move drivers say will affect both the public and drivers.

Drivers and company owners say the airport authority's request could see a contract awarded to a lone company.

"Bringing an individual, exclusive company will create big problems for the customers and drivers," said Balwinder Sahota, president and owner of Advance Cab Co.

He said the current system, which has several companies under contract to the airport, is working well.

"We want to work with the airport," he said.

Ald. Diane Colley-Urquhart, who met with angry cabbies Sunday, said she will introduce a motion today -- along with Andre Chabot, Ray Jones and Jim Stevenson -- calling on the airport authority to suspend the call for proposals.

The airport acted "unilaterally," without consulting stakeholders, she said.

The motion, which isn't binding on the airport authority, asks the city to put forward a formal request that the airport uphold existing contracts and suspend the call for proposals pending a consultation process.

"Council has to put them on notice that we're not happy about this," said Colley-Urquhart, who noted many drivers abided by the airport's "eight-year rule" to invest in new vehicles in 2010 under the assumption the operating rules would be the same.

"They need to do the right thing and stand down on this," said Colley-Urquhart, who said she spoke with a number of cabbies who plan to attend council today.

Driver Rajiv Kapil, who has organized a meeting on the issue for this evening, said almost all of the companies have agreed to oppose any plan that would see a lone service providing taxis.

"Some drivers for more than 20 years are earning their bread and butter from the airport only. They will be deprived of their right to work," he said.

The airport authority has set a deadline of May 26 for the proposals.

"The airport authority has not made any decisions regarding the request for proposals. Nothing is predetermined," said authority spokeswoman Jody Moseley.

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2010 05 17 airport protest COMMENTS (50)

anonymous

2:09 AM on May 18, 2010

Why didn't the aldermen ask (1) what does this RFP mean for the cost of trips to/from the airport? (2) what does this mean for service quality to/from the airport? The CAA is probably going to an RFP because City Council isn't doing its job.

anonymous

7:13 PM on May 17, 2010

Bluh Bluh,, Why have to appreciate the great work out taxi drivers do. None of them anything wrong. Considering our aging population we need someone who is willing to do this kind of job. We all know most of us WHITEMEN would not drive taxi, why do not we give them some credit. Imagine as Canadian night of too many beers without taxi. you will kill someone or killed driving DUI or lose tour driving licence

anonymous

5:40 PM on May 17, 2010

It's getting to the point where there will be less people flying and taking vacations as taxi fare or parking near the airport takes a big chunk out of a vacation budget. In the end the Airport Authority will finally "get it". Don't need a taxi monopoly at the airportwhat we really need of course is LRT to the airport. As soon as the S.E. LRT line is completed it should be first priority.

3:34 PM on May 17, 2010

anonymous

3:28 PM on May 17, 2010

This is such a stupid situation. The cab fares are so absurd that people will do anything they can to NOT take a taxi. For this reason, taxi drivers have a hard time getting fares anywhere but the airport. This leads to a lack of cabs everywhere else so when people DO need to take a cab, there's none to be found...which in turn reinforces the need to taxi only if there is no other option...and so forth.

Solution: Drop the insanely high fares so that people will ride cabs again. No you won't make as much as an airport trip, but consistent fares make a hell of a lot more than waiting in a cab queue for more than 50% of your day.

Name withheld

3:23 PM on May 17, 2010

anonymous

3:23 PM on May 17, 2010

@ 1:26- Sadly, MANY people would agree with you but just don't say it!!!

anonymous

3:21 PM on May 17, 2010

It is very, very seldom that you see Canadian cabbies sitting for hours, lined up for a fare. Each & every time I am at the airport & see the line-up of taxis there, there are at least 10 or more immigrant drivers congregating, waiting for work. This is not an opinion, this is a fact. There are many excellent cabbies that really hustle for every dollar they make & they DESERVE priority for trips over lazy loiterers.

anonymous

2:29 PM on May 17, 2010

1:37 you see if you and the rest of the jockies weren't here any comments towards you would be mute. 40 years ago when you and yours were not here there was never a problem.

anonymous
2:06 PM on May 17, 2010

We were in Phoenix Arizona, Los Vegas and Laughland Nevada and had shuttle buses to take us to the car rental agencies.

anonymous
1:59 PM on May 17, 2010

this city is so far behind its peers its laughable. seems we are still a one horse town.....in this case one cab town! LOL

anonymous
1:59 PM on May 17, 2010

An airport monopoly contract IS NOT a good thing. Saskatoon is a prime example of this failure. Saskatoon contracted with that goddawful United cab company and you CANNOT get a taxi from the airport because there is never enough cabs there and other cab companies ARE NOT ALLOWED ON THE PREMISES. We had flown back from Los Angeles and it was -20 weather and at night and there was not a single cab out! We were waiting forever to find a way home! Some people have resorted to calling a different cab company to come pick them up from the Saskatoon airport and meet them off the property because the lone cab service is so bad. DON'T DO IT CALGARY AIRPORT AUTHORITY.

anonymous
1:54 PM on May 17, 2010

1:41
You cracked me up!

anonymous
1:52 PM on May 17, 2010

1:26 PM
What are you talking about?? what does singing and dancing have to do with the topic. I think you need to read more and and see what the 'singing and dancing' was about and who was doing it and actually READ what you see in the papers or listen when you watch tv. It was not the Calgary Cabbies. Most were at the airport waiting for fares. If you think about it you have the same mind set as those terrorists who are equally prejudiced against you and all other westerners. Why cant people just accept each other for who they are not their racial, physical or ethnic background?
Now getting back to the topic above.....

anonymous

1:46 PM on May 17, 2010

cab rates are ridiculously overpriced and only add to impaired driving

1:41 PM on May 17, 2010

anonymous

1:37 PM on May 17, 2010

Well glad to see 1:26 PM keeps the spirit of red neck Calgarian racism and prejudice going strong. Be proud of yourself buddy for your stereo typing. Sad people like you exist in this city. Maybe you should head to the States, join the army and go over and kill innocent people who sing and dance over seas... probably make you feel better about the little person you truly are.

anonymous

1:31 PM on May 17, 2010

It is because of the fares charged in Calgary that whenever I have to travel there I just rent a car. You can believe it or not if you are going to be in cow-town over night it is cheaper, quicker, and more convient to rent.

anonymous

1:26 PM on May 17, 2010

I can't really feel sorry for any group of people who sing and dance in public over terrorist attacks against innocent people.

anonymous

1:12 PM on May 17, 2010

The Calgary Airport Authority is out of control and is completely abusing it authority. First it blocks Calgary Transit from building a train to the airport, then it shuts down Barlow Tr. to the airport, now they only want to let certain cabs use their facilities. Any one know why? PARKING! They keep jacking up the rates and decreasing peoples ability to access the airport so you have no choice but to park at the airport. People if you're going to get mad focus your anger at the right target!

anonymous

12:53 PM on May 17, 2010

Sasadikal

anonymous

12:45 PM on May 17, 2010

Quote: Some cab companies can only drive at the airport and can not go to the city and pick up trips. Some of these cab drivers have worked 20 years straight 7 days a week, they worked the city but now work the airport because it is to slow during the day in the city.

Answer: What this poster said is untrue. ALL cabs CAN work in the city. OLDER cabs cannot work the airport. IF this cab driver is unaware of this fact after working twenty years AS a cab driver he is too stupid to be EVEN a cab driver. Imho ..

anonymous

12:44 PM on May 17, 2010

This city has no taxi'service' unless you are landing at the airport. In every country I visited they have shuttle busses from the airport to your hotel. Also they have busses with set times to take hotel guests to the center of the city and pick them up at a set time to return to the hotels. In Calgary you hardly see any taxis unless they are rushing somewhere like to the airport. I have never seen any being flagged down in the city centre either. If they are complaining about lack of fares downtown they get what they deserve. The public has gotten used to lack of taxi services so they dont even bother. There are way too many taxis sitting in front of the arrivals to the point where if you are picking up someone waiting outside you have to do so in the middle of the road. Not everyone needs to take a taxi from the airport but there are a lot of customers who have given up trying to get a cab anywhere else. This city is backwards in many ways.

anonymous

12:24 PM on May 17, 2010

So now not only are they taking away the bus route to the airport but also some of the cabs? Seriously Calgary, some of us do not have cars but still need to get to places!

anonymous

12:22 PM on May 17, 2010

Get the lazy cabbies back working for the whole public. Build a train to that goes to the airport. This city is so behind the times. Can't wait to get

anonymous

12:00 PM on May 17, 2010

There NEEDS to be SOMETHING done about the taxis in the city. The FACT these 'drivers' work nowhere BUT the airport leaves the airport open ONLY to those drivers who are WILLING to sit in line at the airport for several hours. MANY .. too many of the taxi drivers ARE willing to spend those long hours at the airport BECAUSE simply they are willing to ONLY work the 'grave' but are UNWILLING to actually WORK for a living. Sitting on your butt for hours on end at the airport is NOT 'driving taxi' but simply

thieves stealing NOTHING BUT THE BEST TRIPS and unwilling to fulfill their OBLIGATIONS to the rest of the city . Imho ..

anonymous

11:40 AM on May 17, 2010

This is great finally... You might be able to get a cab somewhere else in the City. Good move YYC. Make these cab drivers that sit at the airport all day work for a living.

anonymous

11:32 AM on May 17, 2010

Build a Train!!!

anonymous

11:26 AM on May 17, 2010

The taxi commission is the cause of this. It is against the Combines act to lessen competition by limiting their number of cabs, and the taxi commission also sets one rate for everyone to use. They should all be in jail for price setting and gouging

anonymous

11:22 AM on May 17, 2010

The taxi companies should just put a sock in it....They gouge people with their exorbitant fare rates and some cabbies are extremely rude! I say let them suffer....

anonymous

11:12 AM on May 17, 2010

Some cab companies can only drive at the airport and can not go to the city and pick up trips. Some of these cab drivers have worked 20 years straight 7 days a week, they worked the city but now work the airport because it is so slow during the day in the city.

anonymous

11:09 AM on May 17, 2010

I find it funny how some say deport cabbies as soon as they apply for welfare. Cab drivers have successful families, majority of their children are post secondary degree holders and work good jobs now, times have changed this is not the 1980's. I see more people that are born in Canada, who may be 2nd generation or 3rd generation on welfare, the white man has had all the benefits and still on welfare and guess who pays that all the immigrants. If it wasn't for the immigrants here the white man wouldn't have welfare they would have ran out of welfare.

anonymous

11:08 AM on May 17, 2010

10:03 - the airport bus sucks and that's why CT has low ridership... if you build it they will come.

anonymous

11:07 AM on May 17, 2010

build an LRT trench / tunnel combination instead of the car tunnel...

anonymous

10:47 AM on May 17, 2010

Expand the LRT. In the meantime there should be a shuttle to the nearest LRT.

anonymous

10:46 AM on May 17, 2010

I would have to agree with many of the comments below. Cab fares in Calgary are absurd. The city should consider extending the C train to directly connect to the airport. I travel to Vancouver on a weekly basis for business. I hop on the skytrain easily and get downtown in about 20 minutes. And not to mention, I've encountered a few Calgary drivers that were less than desirable. Many don't know how to drive, they are extremely aggressive on the road! No thanks!

anonymous

10:46 AM on May 17, 2010

The other benefit to this is no more run down worn out cabs will represent this city to the world. Calgary is the only place I have seen as many cabs wait for hours and hours on end for a fair. If this is your only way of generating business the time to find a new job.. Good Move YYC

anonymous

10:25 AM on May 17, 2010

This is too funny , happens all over the world . Cab culture . Transit by bus and especially by train will straighten this out . Checking into our trip to Europe , found bus and train service to and from hotels in all our plans .

anonymous

10:03 AM on May 17, 2010

Just so everyone knows, C-Train Service to the Airport is NOT in the plans. It's considered low ridership and not financially sound.

anonymous

9:48 AM on May 17, 2010

When I fly into Vancouver, I can take a shuttle bus to the hotels downtown, I can hop a city bus, take the Skytrain. In Calgary, I can spend \$40 on a cab, or \$60 on a limo. No wonder the cabbies are ticked, they want their monopoly intact. A driver who lives on airport traffic? What a scam!

anonymous

9:26 AM on May 17, 2010

When is the C-Train coming to the airport?

anonymous

9:25 AM on May 17, 2010

A driver who relies on the airport for their existence are lazy. They wait for up to 3 hours for a fair downtown, then they deadhead it back into the lineup for another 3 hour wait. All the while, reading or watching tv waiting for their next trip..

anonymous

9:15 AM on May 17, 2010

I wish we would stop getting ripped off by cabs. Better bus service to and from the airport would be most excellent as well. The 57 needs better frequency, as well as the 430.

anonymous

9:15 AM on May 17, 2010

Expand the C-Train to the Airport.

anonymous

9:04 AM on May 17, 2010

It shouldn't be any of the Airport Authorities business who I ride with.

anonymous

8:59 AM on May 17, 2010

Cabbies who prey on the magical "airport fare" should be stripped of their licence. I'm tired of being refused by drivers who prefer to wait for someone with a larger suitcase!!!

anonymous

8:57 AM on May 17, 2010

If Calgary Taxi drivers and companies would stop whining and actually start providing good service, maybe more people would use them... There is more to Calgary than just the airport.

Even in Calgary, the cost of a taxi to the airport is easily twice what it costs in Toronto and/or Montreal. The difference being, those two airports are 35-45 minutes of highway driving from the City Centre. Calgary's airport is so much closer, yet the public is gouged.

anonymous

8:55 AM on May 17, 2010

....This is why you can't get taxis anywhere else in the city. They are all waiting at the airport so they can get the biggest fare. I needed to get a taxi once from the airport to the Mcknight hangers (near Deerfoot) and he literally tried to refuse me for 10 minutes because the fare would only be \$20 until he was forced to.

Making sure that taxis are available at all parts of the city will improve service. Every single taxi waiting at the airport is just frustrating.

anonymous

8:43 AM on May 17, 2010

It's looking like someone in city hall took a "blacktop" cab and does not wish to invoke that same punishment upon our tourists.

Read more:

<http://www.calgaryherald.com/news/Angry+Calgary+cabbies+head+City+Hall+protest+possible+airport+taxi+monopoly/3036626/story.html#Comments#ixzz0oHqcLs6k>