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Date: August 30, 2024

To: Common Council  
John Weidl, City Manager

From: Rachelle Blitch, Finance and Administrative Services Director

Re: Brown Cab

I met with Brown Cab's leadership team to discuss the complaints you have received over the last several months and worked to find solutions. Many of the concerns were the same or similar and are listed below with their response and possible solution if applicable.

**Q: Are they currently fulfilling all of their obligated hours?**

A: They are currently staffed and are operating for the contracted hours except from 12 am – 2:30 am on Friday's and Saturday's. There was a time period when they were not able to cover the 5 pm – 7pm Monday-Thursday shift but that has been resolved. If they have to end services earlier than normal they will notify staff and we can utilize social media to make the community aware.

**Q: What specific challenges are they encountering in meeting service obligations?**

A: Up until the summer months they were unable to find enough drivers to fill the hours and had a couple of staffing emergencies that required them to abruptly end services for that day. Every effort is made to notify the individuals who had already scheduled a ride.

**Q: How are they addressing complaints from users regarding timeliness and reliability?**

A: They have not received any complaints directly. They strongly urge staff and council members who receive complaints to get as much information as possible and contact them directly so the complaint can be researched and addressed immediately. All of their logs are time stamped which will assist in understanding the context and timeline of the situation.

**Q: What is their strategy for managing peak demand hours?**

A: Their regional managers are responsible for monitoring and adjusting to accommodate the busy hours and will often fill in when necessary.

**Q: Have they experience any staffing shortages, and if so, how are they mitigating the issue?**

A: They had staffing shortages in the winter and spring months. While they try to utilize drivers that are local to the community they are serving it's not always possible. They currently post job openings on Indeed and have agreed to notify staff when they are hiring so we can notify the public of the opening on social media for additional exposure.

**Q: Are there any recurring maintenance issues with their fleet that might be affecting service quality?**

A: No issues with the fleet.

**Q: Are they tracking and reporting on customer satisfaction regularly, and what do the latest metrics indicate?**

A: They do not put surveys in the car however, if the City wishes to collect the data a survey could be created and put in the vehicles.

**Q: How are they planning to adjust services to better meet the communities needs in the future?**

A: They will notify staff if they see a need to adjust the number of hours or drivers. Since the contract cannot exceed the specified number of hours listed on the RFP the options to adjust is limited. Should the City see a significant increase in the utilization of services we can submit a change request to WisDOT.

To address the complaints about wait times, extended time in the vehicle, additional stops, and rides ending early and leaving individuals stranded, we can focus on educating the public about what the Shared-Ride service entails, setting clear expectations, and providing helpful information to ensure that passengers reach their destinations within the anticipated timeframe. By setting clearer expectations for the Shared-Ride service, they aim to improve customer experience and minimize service disruptions.

It is recommended that the City develop a customer satisfaction survey to be made available in the cabs, allowing for greater insight into challenges riders may be experiencing. This could be implemented using a laminated QR code placed in each vehicle. However, further research is necessary to identify the most effective and accessible methods for collecting this data to inform future decision-making.