

City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201



Agenda Item Number: REP 101-14

Department Source: City Manager

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: October 20, 2014

Re: Report - Uber Ride-Sharing Service

Documents Included With This Agenda Item

Council memo

Supporting documentation includes: None

Executive Summary

On Tuesday, October 7th, city staff were informed that Uber would begin their ride-sharing operation in Columbia on October 9th. This report documents the current status of ongoing negotiations with Uber officials and possible next steps.

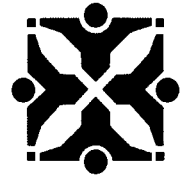
Discussion

Despite Uber's assertion that they are not a taxi cab company but rather a ride sharing service with drivers using their private vehicles to provide rides, Uber has placed the City in the awkward position of having to enforce the existing ordinances as they apply to taxi companies. However, this is akin to placing a square peg in a round hole. Had staff been aware of Uber's intent to begin service 30-60 days ahead of time, we would have been able to work out many of the issues and concerns raised by local taxi cab companies and others. That being the case, staff has advised Uber that there are three suggested courses of action:

1. Cease operations until we have enacted a new ordinance dealing with the transportation network company model;
2. Continue to operate as a no charge introductory service until we have enacted new ordinance provisions, or
3. Comply with all current ordinances by having each prospective driver obtain the necessary permit from the city business license office in the Finance Department before transporting passengers for hire. This will require each driver to apply, exhibit a valid photo ID, pay the fee, produce an original certificate issued by a reputable insurance carrier, verifying current liability insurance in at least the minimum amounts required by the State of Missouri, produce an original certificate issued by Uber verifying a criminal background and a driver's license check has been run on the applicant and he is qualified, and an original certificate from Uber verifying the car to be used by applicant has been inspected and has met Missouri Department of Public Safety and Motor Vehicle Inspection Division standards.

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As of the writing of this memo, Uber is still discussing internally each of these options, and strongly considering Option 3 or a slight variation thereof. By the date of the Council meeting, staff should have additional information to share with Council regarding the status of this item. An Uber representative might be present during the meeting to provide comments to Council during the discussion of this report.

Staff has also requested a meeting with all existing taxi cab companies in Columbia. This meeting will occur on Thursday, October 16th, and is intended for staff to hear their concerns and to find ways that any proposed changes to the ordinance to allow companies like Uber to operate do not put traditional taxi companies at a competitive disadvantage. The objective is to ensure that despite the differences in the way they operate, that we establish a level playing field for both types of operators.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: N/A

Long-Term Impact: N/A

Vision, Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Vision Impact: Not Applicable

Strategic Plan Impact: Not Applicable

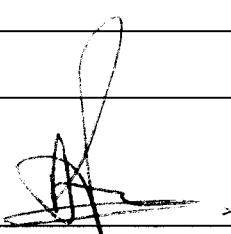
Comprehensive Plan Impact: Not Applicable

Suggested Council Action


For information only. Staff will keep the Council apprised of the status of ongoing discussions with Uber and other stakeholders such as our existing taxi cab companies.

Legislative History

None



Department Approved



City Manager Approved