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Communication to City Council from the City Taxicab Board Regarding Proposed Ordinance to Create Transportation Commission

The Ann Arbor Taxicab Board met on Thursday, June 23 at a regularly scheduled meeting and discussed the future role of the Board with respect to a rapidly changing industry and many different transportation options in the City, beyond traditional metered taxicabs.

The Taxicab Board was established under Chapter 8 of the City Code and the Board’s current authority and duties are governed by Chapter 85, Taxicabs, of the City Code. Due to the emergence of limousine companies (i.e. non-metered vehicles) and transportation network companies (e.g. Uber), the number of licensed taxicabs have declined considerably in the City in the last three years. The Board was not assigned a City Council representative during the last Council Committee assignments. Because of these changes, the Board has been tasked with reevaluating their relevance and future role in the City.

The Taxicab Board has considered a few options for their future. One possibility would be to eliminate the Board completely, leaving the regulation of Chapter 85, and the licensing of remaining taxicabs, entirely to staff. The Board has also considered re-introducing amendments to Chapter 85, which would require the licensing of non-metered vehicles (i.e. limousines) in the City. A similar proposed ordinance was defeated by City Council on August 18, 2014. Finally, the Board has begun to consider the possibility of eliminating the Taxicab Board and looking at transportation from a much broader perspective, creating a new Transportation Commission. The proposed Transportation Commission would have oversight of Chapter 85, in addition to regulation and oversight of all transportation issues in the City, providing comments to Planning Commission, DDA, AATA and City Council regarding all forms of transportation in the City. Board members might include a City Council Member, AAATA member, Planning Commissioner, Engineering staff, Police, and Transportation industry members, in addition to appointed citizens.

At the June 23 meeting, a motion was approved unanimously by the Taxicab Board to provide

Council with this communication and to seek support and further direction. The Board plans to discuss this issue with staff from Systems Planning at their upcoming meetings.

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