



P.O. Box 1079
Los Gatos, CA 95031
408-766-9534
www.citiesassociation.org

February 29, 2016

Mark Linder
Chair, Santa Clara County/Cities Managers Association
City Manager, City of Campbell
70 North First Street
Campbell, CA 95008

RE: Countywide Taxi Regulations

Dear Mr. Mark Linder:

On behalf of the Cities Association Board of Directors, I write to you to request the Santa Clara County/Cities Managers Association (SCCCMA) consider evaluation of taxi regulations countywide in collaboration with the Santa Clara County Police Chiefs Association.

At the February 11th Cities Association Board of Directors Meeting, Yellow Checker Cab President and General Manager Larry Silva presented an overview of the taxi industry and the challenges it faces while competing against the Transportation Network Companies (TNC's), such as Uber and Lyft.

As you may know, several of our cities enforce taxi regulations varyingly. These regulations include adherence to and fulfillment of requirements such as permits, business licenses, fingerprinting, and periodic vehicle inspections for each city. For example, six cities in Santa Clara County (SCC) fingerprint taxi drivers. In order for a taxi driver to provide services throughout SCC, he or she must be fingerprinted six times. This scenario applies to other requirements such as vehicle inspections and permits. To our knowledge, the Town of Los Gatos is the only jurisdiction that includes a statement of reciprocity in its taxi codes and accepts a current certificate of public convenience from another city or town in SCC. In addition, along with separate regulation/inspection, an applicant must pay the relevant fees for each city. Recently, the City of Sunnyvale took action on a number of regulatory changes to simplify its process and benchmark its services to be compatible to the region.

TNC's are licensed by the California Public Utilities Commission, are subject to considerably less regulation than taxi drivers, and their rates are not regulated. On the contrary, taxi's meter rates are regulated in several cities, which makes it difficult for taxi's to conduct business across jurisdictions. According to Yellow Checker Cab, taxi

ridership has decreased 40-50% countywide. As a response, the City of San Jose passed new regulation in December 2015 deregulating a taxi's fare when requested through mobile phone applications or on-line enabled devices.

Cities Association Board Members agreed that cities' regulations should not be the obstacle to an even playing field for the taxi industry and TNC's. This letter notes two jurisdictions that recently took action in an effort to address the taxi industry's concerns. The Cities Association is interested in exploring the following questions:

Can reciprocal agreements be included in each jurisdiction's taxi codes so that one permit that includes background checks and fingerprinting is acceptable and applicable countywide? Would one annual vehicle inspection be sufficient and applicable countywide? Can regulation of rates be reduced or eliminated countywide to enable the taxi industry to compete with its competitors? How would taxi regulation implemented countywide affect revenue stream for jurisdictions?

Though it is possible action may be taken at the state level to address the situation, Cities Association Board Members believe it is important to consider feasible and innovative strategies. As an Advisory Committee to the Cities Association of Santa Clara County, and per the Board's unanimous support, I request the SCCCMA to consider the evaluation of taxi regulations countywide in collaboration with the Santa Clara County Police Chiefs Association as an effort to streamline the various requirements, achieve economies of scale, and create improved efficiencies, while preserving public safety for our constituents.

We look forward to a response from the SCCCMA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James R. Griffith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jim Griffith
President, Cities Association of Santa Clara County
Council Member, City of Sunnyvale

CC: Cities Association Board of Directors
Peter Decena, President, Santa Clara County Police Chiefs Association
Larry Silva, President and General Manager, Yellow Checker Cab