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**Proposed Citywide Vehicle-for-Hire Dispatch App Presentation  
& Discussion of Proposed Amendments to Ch. 46, 9, 25  
Houston Code of Ordinances**

**Presentation for:**

**Transportation, Technology & Infrastructure  
Committee**

**By**

**City of Houston  
Administration & Regulatory Affairs Dept**

**September 12, 2016**

# TODAY'S PRESENTATION

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Part I: Presentation of Citywide Vehicle-for-Hire Dispatch App & Demonstration

Part II: Discussion of Proposed Ordinance Amendments:

- Chapter 46
- Chapter 9
- Chapter 25



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**PART I:**

**PROPOSED CITYWIDE  
VEHICLE-FOR-HIRE DISPATCH APP**



# Problem Statement

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- **There are almost 9,000 licensed taxi and limousine drivers in Houston. Only 3,000 have access to ANY kind of dispatch.**
- Due to lack of dispatch, many permitted vehicles for hire are functionally unavailable to the public except at airports, hotels and downtown stands.



# Why Now?

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- First time in history centralized dispatch for taxis can be done quickly and inexpensively
- Houston is growing so traffic keeps growing:
  - 600,000 commuters every day, Monday to Friday
  - Need more public transportation options
- The Super Bowl is coming!!!



# App Costs

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## City of Houston

- \$0.00

## Permittee

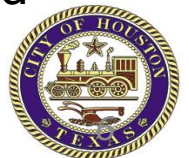
- \$0.00
- Integration fee if permittee desires integration w/existing dispatch system

## Passenger

- <\$2.00 per trip booking fee + fare

## Driver

- <\$1.00 per trip
- <3% credit card processing fee
- \$0 equipment rental if BYOD
- \$.25 per trip equipment rental fee if desired

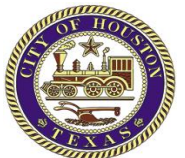


# App Benefits

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- **DRIVERS**
  - Cashless trips – safer!
  - Daily payment
  - More trips from more sources – not just the airport and hotels and stands
  - Allows customers to tip
  - Dynamic, demand driven pricing
- **PASSENGERS**
  - Access to up to 9,000 drivers
  - More transportation options
  - Better cab service throughout the city
  - Potential for first mile/last mile service
  - Potential for multi-modal transportation as app functionality evolves
- **COMPANY OWNERS**
  - Increases demand for taxi and limo service overall
  - Fleet management tools to allow drivers to be more efficient
  - Improves perception of taxi fleet for general public



# App Functionality

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- Similar to what the public is already used to with TNCs
- Supports **all** vehicle types but mandatory for taxis
- App features:
  - Smart-phone enabled dispatch
  - Secure in-app payment
  - Estimated fare and wait time
  - Driver and vehicle information
  - GPS tracking
  - Data reporting
  - Virtual staging - **NEW**
  - Concierge service - **NEW**



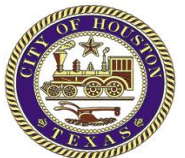


# App Functionality (cont'd)

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- Service categories (potential):
  - Economy (the cheapest ride close by; the customer can select this option and any vehicle type may show up – the driver will determine if he wants to take accept a trip at this rate)
  - Nearest me (the closest driver; the customer can select this option and agree to the rate and the closest car will show up – not a luxury car)
  - Luxury – only limos
  - Taxi – regulated taxi fares
  - WAV – wheelchair accessible vehicles



# App Adoption

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- Must have widespread adoption by drivers **and** passengers
- Community Leaders that support and/or have expressed interest in participating in a comprehensive promotional strategy to increase adoption of the app include:
  - Mayor and City of Houston
  - Houston First
  - The Hotel & Lodging Association of Greater Houston
  - The Greater Houston Restaurant Association
  - The Downtown Management District
  - Super Bowl HLOC
- App vendor is contractually obligated to market the app locally



# App's Role During the Super Bowl

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- Unified transportation platform for visitors to Houston
- Integrated with official Super Bowl app
- Communication tool to reach both drivers and passengers
- Concierge function allows Super Bowl event venues to call vehicles for guests
- Digital staging and geo-fencing ensure just-in-time vehicle delivery and mitigates traffic issues caused by physically staging vehicles
- Provide real-time analytics on how guests are moving around the City during the event



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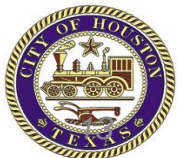
# APP DEMONSTRATION





## **PART II:**

# **DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS CHAPTERS 46, 9 & 25 HOUSTON CODE OF ORDINANCES**



# CHAPTER 46: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

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1. Provide authority to designate citywide vehicle-for-hire dispatch app
2. Allow for virtual taxi meters
3. Remove the 100,000 mileage limit for placing a taxi or limo into service for the first time (consistent with other vehicles-for-hire in Ch. 46)
4. Remove the 20-vehicle minimum to transfer taxi permits to a new entrant
5. Allow taxi licensees to provide their own commercial insurance with permittee drop down policy
6. Allow four-door electric vehicles to be used as taxis
7. Allow for removable and variations of display of taxi stool lights
8. Allow taxi rate cards to be displayed digitally on the Passenger Information Module (PIM)



# CHAPTER 46: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS (CONT'D)

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9. Allow City to conduct license hearing based on conviction identified through “rap back”
10. Remove requirement for license applicant to present driving record
11. Allow fingerprint results to be valid for two years from submission with rap back.
12. Allow taxis to use a temporary seal if a taximeter is repaired outside of normal COH business hours
13. Allow ARA to use digital inspection forms
14. Remove taxi knowledge test (was approved by Council last year but failed to make it into Muni Code)
15. Remove vehicle for hire driver training (was approved by Council last year but failed to make it into Muni Code)
16. Prohibit use of physical signs to solicit customers (already prohibit verbal solicitation)
17. Allow for half-year prorated Wheelchair Accessible Service Provider permit
18. Consolidate all fingerprint background check requirements into one section of the ordinance for readability
19. Taxi permittees will be limited to choosing from 5 color schemes
20. New taxi permittee vehicles will all be one uniform color
21. Bring parity to registration and permit terms – all are years except MDS, TNC, and WAVs
22. Prohibit TNC drivers from sitting at the curb or otherwise blocking traffic while waiting for a trip.
23. Change taxi permit fee refund request period from calendar year to permit year



# CHAPTER 9: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

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1. Change Scheduled Ground Transportation (SGT) License to Scheduled Ground Transportation Permit – for consistency w/Ch. 46
2. Add requirement for “any other information requested” on SGT application – for consistency with Chapter 46
3. Remove appeal to City Council (all other permittees had this removed in 1999). Sends appeals to administrative hearing official at MCD – for consistency with Chapter 46
4. Add Airport Use Permits and related fees for wheelchair accessible permits that exist in Chapter 46



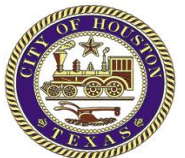


# CHAPTER 25: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

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- Create special event, **joint** vehicle-for-hire/airport use permit for the limited time period of competitively bid events (e.g. Super Bowl; Final Four)



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# Questions?

