April 27th, 2022

Mayor Bowman,
Deputy Mayor John Orlikow
Acting Deputy Mayor Markus Chambers
Councillors Klein, Gilroy, Schreyer, Rollins, Eadie, Browaty, Sharma, Santos, Allard, Gillingham, Mayes, Nason and Lukes

VIA: Clerk's Office, City of Winnipeg

Re.: Joint Community Statement in support of the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works (IRPW), Item 1, Vehicle for Hire Report

Dear Mayor and Council:

This submission is made in solidarity with those who have been discriminated against and made to feel unsafe by the traditional taxi industry. While we acknowledge that anyone involved in the vehicle for hire industry must be held to the same standard, historically the taxi industry has been in operation the longest. Safe public transportation, specifically the taxi industry, was identified as a major issue in the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry. Commissioners heard from many family members and survivors about unsafe public transportation particularly with the taxi industry. More specifically, they heard about the Indigenous women's community in Winnipeg creating Ikwe Safe Rides when the industry, city and province did nothing to protect Indigenous women and girls that had no choice but to take public transportation. The lack of safe public transportation created Call to Justice 4.8:

We call upon all governments to ensure that adequate plans and funding are put into place for safe and affordable transit and transportation services and infrastructure for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people living in remote or rural communities. Transportation should be sufficient and readily available to Indigenous communities, and in towns and cities located in all of the provinces and territories in Canada. These plans and funding should take into consideration:

- *ways to increase safe public transit;*
- *ways to address the lack of commercial transit available; and*
- *special accommodations for fly-in, northern, and remote communities.*

This call is further affirmed in the distinction based Calls for the Metis, in particular 17.1:

We call upon all governments to provide safe transportation options, particularly in rural, remote, and northern communities, including "safe rides" programs, and to monitor high recruitment areas where Métis women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA individuals may be more likely to be targeted.

We cannot express our shock and alarm strongly enough that Council voted down the full code of conduct and its enforcement measures on March 24th, 2022. The City had been poised to demonstrate, finally, some progress to better ensure the safety of those who must rely on the taxi industry. Instead the decision was to side with the industry. We are calling on Council to correct that decision on April 28th, 2022.

In response to your March decision, twenty-five (25) community members scrambled to rearrange their lives to appear at the April 6th Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works. In the end, only twenty (20) were able to stay to present. Given the concern, pain and even outrage expressed on that day, it is our expectation that all members of Council will review those presentations before voting. For your convenience they are listed and time-stamped below. While some presenters may choose to appear again at Council, they should not have to. Council should not demand they once again relive and re-experience the trauma they survived. More importantly, Council should move to do everything they can to ensure it never happens again.

We disagree with the concerns brought forward by the legal representatives of Unicity and Duffy's Taxis. Specifically:

- In 2022, there is simply no room for any excuses on what is and is not 'lewd'. There is nothing in the essential communication between the driver and the passenger that would lend itself to being innocent and somehow just misconstrued.
- The appeal process for any fines issued is fair, aligns with other such processes and will ensure an investigation takes place with evidence gathered through both video and audio under the control of the industry itself.
- The industry's claims to want to enter into discussions with community advocates are not perceived as genuine given that the complaints from community are long-standing in nature and the industry has refused to take any meaningful action to regulate their own.
- The industry seems to be conflating the need for a code of conduct and passenger safety with their need to turn a profit and combat competition from other ride sharing options.
- The industry has and always has had the means to increase driver safety.
- The industry has and always has had the protection that the law affords to all but the nature of the power imbalance between the service provider and the individual

needing the service has routinely favored the service provider in the form of the previously misunderstood and ineffectual provincial regulatory body.

- The industry should not oppose higher regulatory standards as that should actually encourage more confidence in their service.
- The industry can and should better train their members to meet community expectations as laid out in the code of conduct.
- The industry's expectation that this should be delayed so they do not have to "labour" under the new bylaws until the September report back to IRPW. The industry has benefited from the status quo for far too long. The mere 6 months, now 5 given the delay by Council, these will be in effect while the industry is afforded its own consultations with city staff represents a minor inconvenience when compared to the experiences related to IRPW on April 6th and the years community has been calling for change.

In closing, there is one thing that we agree with in the industry's submission. This is the opportunity to get it right, right out of the gate. For once, we can actually create policy that seeks to protect the more vulnerable rather than those who hold more power and control. In this case, the latter is the industry. We cannot emphasis the need and responsibility to protect the vulnerable in all circumstances.

Passing the original by-law as proposed at the March council meeting will mean the City is putting policy behind their promise to the Indigenous Accord to specifically work with:

- MMIWG2S+ organizations to identify priorities in Winnipeg,
- Review City of Winnipeg policies and by-laws that have created barriers for families and survivors of MMIWG2S+ people to align and improve systems as defined within the Calls for Justice,
- Continue to create relationships with the Manitoba MMIWG2S+ Coalition, its members and allies, family and survivors, to continue the journey of implementing the Calls for Justice.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month and it is important to recognize that the individuals who presented at committee relayed their experiences at the expense of their mental health and well-being. The only good thing that can come out of the delayed decision to support this report in March is for Council to take this opportunity to re-affirm their support for the Indigenous Accord and their Charter responsibility to protect the health and well-being of all the city's inhabitants.

April 6th Standing Committee Meeting List of Delegates & Timestamps:

Brianna Brooks (WCWRC) (4:08:07), Sandra Delaronde (4:18:21), Rachel Sansregret (WIFC) (4:32:03), Christine Brouzes (Ikwe Safe Rides) (4:54:34), Lindey Courchene (5:07:32), Karen Swain (5:32:26), Alisha Bigelow (5:36:45), David Monias (5:21:37), Cora Morgan (AMC) (5:42:37), Brittany Lavallee (6:14:54), Cierra Roulette (6:19:36), Rana Bokhari (6:22:31), Travis Bighetty (6:38:06), Kate Kehler (SPCW) (6:45:06), Lena Joseph (6:53:14), Kayla Frank (6:59:00),

Shirley Frank (7:03:32), Myrna Thompson (7:16:03), Amber Laplante (7:27:19), Charlotte Boubard (7:41:52)

Truly,



Sandra Delaronde



Kate Kehler

On behalf of:

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (Manitoba),
Community Education Development Association Winnipeg,
Council of Women of Winnipeg,
Fearless R2W,
Immigration Partnership Winnipeg,
Ka Ni Kanichihk,
Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre,
Make Poverty History Manitoba,
Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba,
MMIWG2S+ Implementation Committee,
North End Women's Centre,
North Point Douglas Women's Centre,
Ogijiita Pimatiswin Kinamatwin,
Police Accountability Coalition,
Resource Assistance for Youth,
Restorative Justice Association of Manitoba,
SEED Winnipeg,
Social Planning Council of Winnipeg,
Sunshine House,

The North End Community Renewal Corporation,
West Central Women's Resource Centre,
Wahbung Abinoonjiiag Inc.,
Winnipeg Indigenous Friendship Centre,
Women4Women South Sudan