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City of Seattle announces smart taximeter pilot program

Seattle Yellow Cab fleet outfitted with new smart meters

SEATTLE – Looking at options to modernize the legacy for-hire industry, the city of Seattle’s Department of Finance and Administrative Services announced a two-year program to pilot the use of smart taximeters. Seattle Yellow Cab was one of the first taxi associations in the area to propose the use of smart taximeters in its fleet, prompting an interest in establishing a pilot and creating an opportunity for other taxi associations.

A smart taximeter uses GPS technology to dispatch and meter trips. All vehicles in Seattle Yellow Cab’s fleet have new tablets and credit card readers installed. The meter will display in the tablet, and the tablet must be visible to the customer during the trip. Old taximeters will eventually be removed from Yellow Cab’s fleet.

The new technology will allow the city to collect more reliable data on taxi trips. It will give passengers more options when booking a trip and when receiving a receipt. The smart taximeters also establish the infrastructure to support dynamic pricing, if allowed by regulation in the future.

Even with the adoption of the new technology, Seattle Yellow Cab’s meter rates remain the same as those set by city law — \$2.60 for the base trip, 30 cents for each 1/9 mile and 50 cents for each minute of waiting time. All licensed taxicabs operating in Seattle must accept cash or credit card as payment for a trip and must issue a receipt to the passenger.

FAS is partnering with King County to permit the smart taximeter pilot program. FAS recently posted for public comment [proposed revisions](#) to its administrative rules concerning taximeters. The proposed revisions will formalize the testing and approval process for smart taximeters.

Anyone with questions about the smart taximeters pilot program should contact John Megow at 206-386-1266 or john.megow@seattle.gov.

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