
Matthew W. Daus, Commissioner/Chair

**Press Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**TLC RELEASES “TAXI OF TOMORROW”
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Program Aims to Create One Taxi – Cleaner, Safer, and Accessible – for New York City

The New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) today announced that the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) will be issuing on the TLC’s behalf a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the *Taxi of Tomorrow* project, an effort to upgrade the existing taxi fleet to better meet the needs of passengers, drivers, owners, and the City as a whole.

The release of this RFP is the culmination of a long series of initiatives that has included *Taxi ‘07* (a design-oriented celebration of the NY’s taxicab centennial created by the Design Trust for Public Space in partnership with the TLC, which featured an impressive exhibition of prototypical future taxicabs at the Jacob Javits Center), as well as a Request For Information (RFI) that asked the automotive manufacturing community the critical question of “what is possible?”. The *Taxi of Tomorrow* project brings together a number of Bloomberg Administration goals, such as increasing the number of fuel efficient taxicabs and wheelchair accessible taxicabs, as well as the enhancement of passenger comfort amenities.

This RFP represents a new way forward for bringing taxicabs to the market. Today’s taxi fleet is made up of 16 different vehicles, supported by 9 manufacturers. None of the vehicles currently approved as taxis were designed by the original manufacturers as taxis; rather they have all been outfitted (“hacked up”) by third party upfitters, garages and meter shops to conform to TLC’s taxicab specifications. But these current vehicles fall short of meeting the needs of stakeholders: there is no one vehicle that is clean, accessible, and comfortable and meets the needs of a New York City taxicab.

The goal of the RFP is to seek a highly-qualified manufacturer that has the knowledge and practical experience necessary to bring the TLC’s and its stakeholders’ vision of the next generation of taxicab to fruition, representing all the stated qualities below:

- Meets highest safety standards
- Superior passenger experience
- Superior driver comfort and amenities
- Appropriate purchase price and ongoing maintenance and repair costs
- Smaller environmental footprint (lower emissions and improved fuel economy)
- Smaller physical footprint (with more usable interior room)
- Universal accessibility for all users
- Iconic design that will identify the new taxi with New York City

“This is the phase of the project where the rubber will meet the road,” said TLC Commissioner Matthew W. Daus. “The successful respondent will have the right to exclusively provide the quintessential New York City taxicab for a full ten years, which is an incentive I am confident will spark interest and competition, resulting in a cleaner, affordable, and better vehicle. Both passengers and drivers will benefit from this program, in terms of superior safety, convenience, access and customer service amenities. The time to develop the taxi of tomorrow is today, and the opportunity is here to build a cleaner, more functional, more comfortable taxicab.”

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The RFP also contemplates modifications of, or technologies that could replace, the traditional partition, which is now an important component of driver safety. While the current taxicab partition design has contributed to the fact that New York City is among the safest taxi cities in the nation, it is several decades old and we want to see what new ideas a competitive process might generate. The goal here is to explore a range of possible solutions that would have the effect of improving driver safety while maintaining interior space and facilitating more effective driver/passenger communications.

Successful concepts will also maintain that special iconic quality that makes a New York City taxicab the world-famous symbol that it is today. While many dozens of vehicle models have served as taxicabs in the industry's 102-year history, there has always been something almost un-definably special about the New York City taxicab. This RFP seeks to not only define the un-definable, but to successfully build it into the taxicab that will carry us into the future.

Respondents are also encouraged to propose ways in which the City may benefit through a strategic partnership with the Taxi of Tomorrow's ultimate creator. The TLC is very interested in learning from respondents what they envision. Such opportunities could take the form of unique partnerships on major marketing campaigns, or infrastructure projects to support taxicab services, to offset the costs associated with bringing the *Taxi of Tomorrow* to the streets of New York City.

Prospective respondents can access the RFP through the TLC's Web site at www.nyc.gov/taxi. The pre-proposal conference will be held on January 14, 2010 at 10 a.m. EST at 100 Gold Street, 8th floor, New York City. The due date for proposal submission is 2 p.m. EST on March 26, 2010. The TLC anticipates the conclusion of the selection process to be followed by the signing of a contract in October 2010, and that the first vehicles would be available for service no later than October 31, 2014.

The New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) was created in 1971 and is the agency responsible for the regulation and licensing of almost 200,000 licensees, including 13,237 medallion taxicabs and more than 48,000 medallion taxicab drivers. It is recognized as the largest and most active taxi and limousine regulatory body in the United States.

To find out more about the TLC, or to review its rules, regulations and procedures, we encourage you to visit our official Web site at www.nyc.gov/taxi or call 311 in New York City, or 212-NEW-YORK from outside of New York City.

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