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DESIGN TRUST FOR PUBLIC SPACE TAXI 07 EXHIBIT SHOWCASES TAXI INNOVATION AT THE NEW YORK AUTO SHOW

NEW YORK (April 4, 2007) – Marking the 100th anniversary of the modern-day taxi in New York City, the Design Trust for Public Space has mounted an exhibition of innovative taxi prototypes, presented by Standard Taxi, that could usher in a brighter future for the yellow cab. The exhibition, part of the New York International Auto Show at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, will be open to the public from April 6-15.

The Taxi 07 Exhibit is part of a larger Design Trust initiative to foster design innovation, celebrate the taxi's centennial, and develop a taxi system strategic plan in partnership with the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission.

"Today's taxis have reached the limits of their potential," said Deborah Marton, Executive Director of the Design Trust for Public Space. "To help spur change, we mounted this exhibit to show New Yorkers and the taxi industry how the yellow cab – already an icon of our city – could also be environmentally sustainable, accessible to all, and well-designed."

The centerpiece of the project, the Taxi 07 Exhibit, designed by Imagination, USA, with lighting designers Nathalie Rozot and James Long, and constructed by Richter + Ratner, uses a streetscape as the backdrop for showcasing taxi innovations from automotive, design, technology and academic partners. The exhibit features eight taxi prototypes, along with related displays, which collectively highlight innovations in sustainable mobility, accessibility, and good design.

Standard Taxi presents its "purpose-built" taxicab, designed and engineered with direct input from taxicab owners, operators, drivers and the riding public. The engineers employed "universal design" strategies, or designing for the widest range of users possible, to create a "Taxi for All." Highlights include comfortable seating for four passengers, plus space for a wheelchair, scooter, or baby stroller; durable frame and body architecture; interchangeable body panels; huge trunk; and use of alternative fuels.

Kia Motors America collaborated with a consortium of NYC-based design firms, led by Smart Design, to transform two all-new Kia Rondo crossovers into yellow cabs loaded with thoughtful innovation. Antenna Design created a taxi roof light concept, which quickly and clearly communicates the cab's availability status. Smart Design with Birsel + Seck designed an interior space that organizes the driver's belongings, and installed an L-shaped partition to protect the driver while creating a more open social environment for the passengers.

Hybrid Technologies shows its L-PT Cruiser Yellow Cab powered by a lithium-ion battery pack, similar to that used in cell phones and digital cameras, for zero-emissions, fuel-free operation. The converted Chrysler PT Cruiser has a projected range of 120 miles between charges and a top speed of 80 mph.

Four prototypes propose new takes on the familiar taxis cruising the streets today. The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) presents a Crown Victoria taxi fueled by compressed natural gas (CNG), a more sustainable alternative to conventional gasoline. The race-ready Crown Victoria, World's Fastest Taxi, gets a boost from its hydrogen-powered, 1000-horsepower engine with projected speeds of 200 mph. RIDES™ Magazine pays special tribute to the Crown Vic by giving it a hi-riser-style makeover complete with larger-than-life wheels, hydraulic step-up ladder, and custom taxi-yellow paint.

(more)

The programs of Taxi 07, a consortium led by the Design Trust for Public Space, are also made possible through the generous support of Imagination, USA Inc., Lily Auchincloss Foundation, New York International Auto Show, and Richter + Ratner.

The Toyota Sienna Taxi, updated by Bronx Auto Group with Bruno Independent Living Aids, counters the vehicle's high step-in height by fitting it with a motorized seat that swings out of the vehicle and lowers to ease the entry and exit of elderly passengers and people with disabilities. A radiator treated with BASF Catalysts' PremAir® coating destroys harmful, ground-level ozone molecules and converts it to oxygen, allowing this cab to clean the air as it cruises the streets.

Two vintage taxis, courtesy of Taxidepot and Bruce Ulrich, also appear in the exhibit – the 1956 Checker A8 and the 1975 Checker. A timeline by the authors of *The American Taxi: A Century of Service*, Christophe Monier and Benjamin Merkel, recounts the taxi's historic role in New York City.

In addition to prototypes, the exhibit includes scale models of visionary taxis and taxi components from leading design schools Art Center College of Design (Pasadena, CA), College for Creative Studies (Detroit, MI), and Pratt Institute (Brooklyn, NY). Hybrid Product Design & Development offers three taxi concept models that form a diversified taxi fleet built on a new vehicle platform that employs a hybrid engine, and optimizes the interior to accommodate wheelchairs.

Several displays in the Taxi 07 Exhibit illustrate ways to optimize the streets and leverage technology to improve the taxi system, including: a taxi stand by Birsell + Seck; the scale model STRETCHfence taxi driver relief stand concept from TRUCK Product Architecture; a full-scale rendering of an interactive taxi stand concept from Weisz + Yoes; and eTaxi™ from Taxi Tech, a passenger information monitor inside the cab which provides riders with interactive content while enroute.

Other exhibit highlights include a film by independent filmmaker Shrvan Vidhyarthi that presents an intimate portrait of taxi drivers and their daily milieu; the hybrid engine from Ricardo US that powers the Toyota Highlander hybrid taxi, among other vehicles; and from NYSERDA, a display of automotive components that help reduce fuel consumption.

The Taxi 07 Exhibit, located at 11th Ave. and 35th St. (accessible via the outdoor stairway or through the South Concourse of Javits Center), is open to the public April 6-15. For more information about Taxi 07, please visit www.taxi07.org

ABOUT THE DESIGN TRUST FOR PUBLIC SPACE

The Design Trust for Public Space is dedicated to improving New York City's parks, plazas, streets, and public buildings. Design Trust projects enrich the urban experience for all New Yorkers by turning good design intentions into reality. By forging public/private partnerships between neighborhoods, city agencies, and design professionals, the Design Trust creates powerful working relationships that overcome political and logistical hurdles. For more information, please visit www.designtrust.org.

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Additional press information and images are available at www.taxi07.org