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GLITZ EYED FOR CITY'S PRETTY UGLY TAXIS

By JEREMY OLSHAN

April 1, 2007 -- The city's yellow taxis don't win many beauty contests, but a nonprofit design group is working to change that with a series of "concept" cabs of the future that will be unveiled at this week's Auto Show.

Ford Crown Victorias, which comprise 90 percent of the fleet of 13,000 cabs, are rugged and functional, but there's no reason they can't be made easier on the eyes, said Deborah Marton, director of the Design Trust for Public Space.

"New York City has arguably the best designers in the world, so why shouldn't we have a cab that is iconic and wonderful as the Checker was?" she said.

Among the features in the cabs are child seats and passenger seats that can extend outside of the cab for elderly or disabled passengers.

"It's a perfect opportunity to celebrate the taxi's 100-year history while reimagining its potential and role," said TLC Chairman Matthew Daus.



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