YELLOW FEVER

Sick of the look and feel of NYC’s taxi brigade, the Design Trust for Public Space has an antidote for improvement.

You put more thought into color-coordinating ya hat to ya kicks on the daily, than NYC ever put into the beloved yellow chariot. Aside from the once-cool checkered paint jobs, a NYC taxi is usually a hacked Crown Vic with a divider wedged between the front and rear. But the Design Trust for Public Space is spinning the remix.

When the DTSP embarked on "Designing the Taxi: Rethinking New York City’s Moveable Public Space" they used an all-city perspective to address taxi headaches. Drivers, fleet owners, architects, designers, city officials and taxi regulators all met at Parsons the New School for Design last summer to brainstorm. Seventeen top design firms dreamed up solutions, ranging from cabbie rest stations to mini one-passenger taxis.

"When you think about the taxi systemically, they really are a public space issue," Design Trust’s director Deborah Martin says. "It’s an integral link to the transportation system. In the end, form has to follow function."
"The first problem people have with a cab is finding the cab," adds Antenna Design co-founder Sigl Moesling. Her firm proposed an LED light on top, automatic door sensors, cell-phone plug-ins and touch-screen displays with GPS and credit card capabilities. "We think the more realistic approach is a smaller system of elements that can be adopted to existing car models."

Some designers focused on improving the driver's ride, starting with overhauling the partition. Now they just need to redesign the drivers so they will travel to Queens and Brooklyn late night, saving your feet from making the hike... TAMARA WARRER


designs: citystreets; antenna design new york; birel-seck; pentagram
courtesies of the new school, university-tisch school of design

veynon, bmw m5 less exclusive, but still the daddy. /// bmw 1-series headed stateside to fight audi's a3 in the "premium compact" segment. snob value is high, but not much bang-for-the-buck. /// $75,000 base for the new, lighter, faster jaguar xk, $60,000 premium for the convertible, worth every penny come resale. /// new benz s-class hi-tech luxury barge scores a direct hit, but wait until they sort out all