

Next-Generation Ford Transit Connect Taxi: Taxi of the Future with Increased Space, Performance and CNG/LPG Capability

- Ford introduces all-new 2014 Transit Connect Taxi, prioritizing passenger and cargo space, livery-duty durability and low operating costs
- New 2.5-liter four-cylinder gas engine expected to have best-in-class highway fuel economy, and available prep package allowing conversion to efficient, clean-burning compressed natural gas or liquefied petroleum gas
- Redesign lowers vehicle floor for improved access to the cabin; vehicle can be modified to be wheelchair-accessible through Ford's Qualified Vehicle Modifier program

Ford, America's commercial truck and van leader, introduces the all-new 2014 Transit Connect Taxi, providing best-in-class performance, low operating costs, and improved comfort and flexibility for the North American taxi market.

The redesigned Ford Transit Connect Taxi was unveiled today at the 2013 International Association of Transportation Regulators Conference in St. Louis. It has been engineered to Ford's light-truck commercial durability standards.

"We're leveraging our longtime leadership and expertise in the North American taxi market to ensure Transit Connect Taxi exceeds the expectations of taxi operators and their passengers," said Tim Stoehr, commercial truck marketing manager for Ford. "Transit Connect Taxi has been popular in major metropolitan cities since it debuted in 2010, and it has only gotten better."

The 2014 Ford Transit Connect Taxi comes with a new powertrain – the 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine paired with a new, fuel-efficient six-speed automatic transmission – providing drivers with quick

response as well as durability, low-rpm cruising and an expected best-in-class highway fuel economy rating.

Ford Transit Connect will be the only taxi offered with a compressed natural gas/liquefied petroleum gas engine prep package. Conversion to CNG/LPG is supported by a Ford Qualified Vehicle Modifier, enabling significant fuel cost savings.

Improved people mover

The redesign of Ford Transit Connect Taxi features a decreased vehicle height, providing improved clearance for taxicab companies to place advertising on the cabin roof. An interior hood release was added, giving drivers easy access to check fluid levels prior to starting a shift.

The second-generation Transit Connect Taxi is also longer, offering seating for five and increased cargo capacity. The roomy, flexible interior is perfectly suited for livery service and conversion to CNG and LPG. The vehicle's cargo space accommodates a compressed gas tank, while leaving ample room for luggage and passenger headroom and legroom. It features an anticipated best-in-class 60.5 cubic feet of cargo volume behind the second row.

In contrast to a competitor's compact van-based taxi, which uses a rear suspension with leaf springs and solid axle, Ford Transit Connect Taxi uses a modern, durable twist-beam rear suspension that prioritizes passenger comfort and cargo carrying capability.

The vehicle's floor has been lowered for improved access to the cabin, and can be modified to be wheelchair-accessible through Ford's Qualified Vehicle Modifier program.

Technology for the driver also has been upgraded, with useful options like rear view camera, 6.5-inch touch-screen display with

navigation, and SYNC[®] with MyFord Touch[®] – Ford’s acclaimed voice-activated mobile communications system.

“The new Transit Connect Taxi has been designed with the for-hire transportation driver and their passengers in mind, creating a product that combines stylish looks and improved comfort with legendary Built Ford Tough quality,” said Gerald Koss, fleet marketing manager for Ford.

Taxi operators will benefit from Transit Connect Taxi’s rigorous testing and durability evaluations, which included opening and closing its sliding doors through 250,000 door-slam cycles.

Ford began offering Transit Connect Taxi with the 2011 model year, providing a commercial vehicle that is tested to the company’s toughest truck standards.

“Transit Connect was originally selected from Ford’s global portfolio of high-quality products to bring the advantages of alternative fuel as well as an outstanding interior package to the for-hire transportation industry,” Stoehr said.

The 2014 Ford Transit Connect Taxi will go into production and arrive in dealerships by early next year.