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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

MTA Awards \$26.6 Million in Contracts to Minority-Owned And Women-Owned Small Businesses

Voucher-Based Car Services Help MTA Reduce Paratransit Expenses

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today announced that New York City Transit has awarded voucher-based car service contracts to eight minority-owned or women-owned companies based in New York City. The awards, estimated to be worth \$26.6 million over three years, dramatically increase the proportion of minority-owned and women-owned firms that are providing this service to MTA customers.

The awards result from a period of concerted outreach to small businesses that had not previously done business with the MTA. Over the past several months, MTA officials called companies that are or are expected to be State-certified as being minority- or woman-owned and invited them to a special pre-bid conference. At the conference, MTA officials explained the nature of the bidding process, explained the nature of the work that was being requested, and answered questions. Valuable assistance and guidance in this initiative came from Senator Malcolm Smith and Assemblymen Bill Scarborough and Richard Brodsky.

"One of my priorities when I returned to the MTA last year was to increase contract awards to minority-owned and women-owned firms and disadvantaged small businesses. These recent awards send a clear signal to the vendor community that the staff of our Department of Diversity and Civil Rights and I are working hard to do that," said MTA Chairman Jay H. Walder. "As we continue to transform the MTA into an organization that makes every dollar count, we have to be as proactive as possible in assisting small businesses, which account for nearly half of all private sector jobs in New York City and beyond, become viable vendors."

Senate President Malcolm A. Smith said: "I would like to applaud MTA Chairman Jay Walder for his leadership in awarding voucher-based car service contracts to minority and women-owned businesses. This change in MTA's policy toward a more inclusive and diverse transportation team speaks volumes to their true commitment in enhancing and helping minority- and women-owned businesses grow in NYC. This is a great first step."

Assemblyman William Scarborough said: "I am very pleased to see that the MTA is moving forward on its commitment to inclusion in its contracting of car services. I understand that this will be an ongoing effort on the part of the MTA, and this represents a wonderful beginning. I commend Chairman Walder and the MTA for this initiative."

Assemblyman Richard Brodsky (D-Westchester), Chairman of the Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions stated, "This is yet another major step in our efforts to expand MWBE contracting across New York State. The MTA's announcement is an encouraging development; we are making important strides in the name of equitable contracting."

Voucher-based car service, used by the MTA since 2001, helps reduce the expenses associated with New York City Transit's paratransit service, Access-A-Ride. Customers are provided with contact information for two car service companies. The customer selects which car service he or she want to use, and makes a trip. The customer is responsible for the normal fare of \$2.25 and MTA New York City Transit reimburses the car service company directly for the cost of the completed trip. A trip using a car service is approximately \$18 less expensive to provide than one provided by dedicated Access-A-Ride vehicles. In addition to the eight MWBE firms, 16 companies have been awarded three-year contracts to provide voucher-based car service.