

Shuttle Service to Begin in West 30's

By DAVID M. HALBFINGER

Shuttle bus service is to begin today for commuters who work west of Pennsylvania Station, offering free rides during rush hour in a loop along Seventh Avenue, 31st Street, 10th Avenue and 34th Street.

The 34th Street Partnership, an organization of property owners, has contracted with New York Waterway Inc., the ferry and bus operator, to run a 25-seat bus for a two-month test at a cost of \$200 per day, said Daniel A. Biederman, the president of the business improvement district.

Property owners will absorb about two-thirds of the cost, and the partnership will pay the rest, he said.

The shuttle will run weekdays

every half hour from 6:30 to 9 A.M. and from 4:30 to 7 P.M.

New York Waterway began operating similar bus service in 1995 along a downtown loop between the South Street Seaport and Battery Park City in a contract with another business improvement district, the Alliance for Downtown New York.

Arthur E. Imperatore Jr., president of New York Waterway, said his company had begun to replace some of the minibuses in its fleet with larger coaches because its other routes had drawn more passengers.

That left some of the smaller vehicles available for the new service, he said.

"It's our intention to make it easier for Penn Station commuters

to access the far west side," Mr. Imperatore said.

He said advertisements on the shuttle bus would also help New York Waterway promote its more profitable ferry services, although the new bus service is not connected to Mr. Imperatore's ferries.

The area west of Penn Station, particularly west of the Postal Service's main branch, missed the building boom of the 1980's, but Mr. Biederman said several thousand people worked in the area to the west of the railroad terminal at a handful of older office buildings. Among the companies in the area whose workers might use the shuttle are The Daily News, Smith Barney, Group Health Inc. and Eastman Kodak.