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Remember the old double-decker buses which used to carry millions of American transit riders in New York, Chicago and other major American cities?

Well, those who are old enough to remember with nostalgia will be happy to know that the famous double-decker, which disappeared from the American transit scene in the mid-1950's, may soon be making a comeback.

Under a grant announced today by Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe, the National Transportation Center (NTC) in Pittsburgh will receive \$226,080 to analyze the feasibility of using high-capacity buses, such as double-deckers, in American cities again. The double capacity transit coaches are being successfully operated in many European cities, the most notable being London.

The NTC non-profit research project, nicknamed Super Bus, will be done in cooperation with transit agencies in seven U. S. cities -- Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, Oakland and Pittsburgh. Federal management of the entire project will be done by the Department of Transportation's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA).

Secretary Volpe noted that Project Super Bus was an unprecedented example of intergovernmental cooperation, mainly because of the deep financial and management involvement by the transit agencies in all seven cities.

"President Nixon has placed intergovernmental cooperation high on the list of priorities for his Administration," Secretary Volpe said. "This program is another example of the Department of Transportation's commit-

ment to the President's pledge. We believe that the Federal Government should facilitate and strengthen local decision-making, and not supplant it. There is a wealth of experience and competence in local transit agencies, and this program relies on it."

UMTA Administrator Carlos C. Villarreal pointed out that Project Super Bus "is one more step in the Nixon Administration's goal of improving the lot of the American transit rider."

"High capacity buses will help eliminate rush-hour overcrowding by providing a seat for every passenger. This project may well take a page from the past, rewrite it to modern specifications and provide a major advance in comfort and convenience for bus riders in most of our big cities," Administrator Villarreal said.

In addition to considering double-deckers, the NTC feasibility project also will study the possibility of using coupled urban transit buses in tandem or "articulated" fashion, the Administrator said. Both types of buses are used extensively throughout the world. Many American transit operators now consider that higher capacity buses are necessary to achieve adequate service on some heavily traveled routes to meet the growing transit needs of urban commuters.

Project Super Bus will determine the requirements for a high capacity bus, the availability of such equipment and also come up with a general specification for a Super Bus, including a conceptual design.

The group of sponsoring agencies will be headed by Alan Bingham, General Manager of AC Transit, Oakland, California. AC Transit pioneered high capacity bus service with its popular "articulated" single-deck vehicle currently in service from the East Bay to San Francisco. Also sponsoring the program are the Dallas Transit System, Port Authority of Allegheny County, City of Chicago, Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority, Southern California Rapid Transit District and the New York Transit Authority.

For further information, contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043, or Langhorne Bond, Executive Director, National Transportation Center, 945 Union Trust Building, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219 at (412) 391-6700. (UMTA Project No. PA-06-0007)