



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

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UMTA 76-83

A \$610,000 grant to demonstrate the feasibility of combining shared-ride taxi and other paratransit services with conventional scheduled bus service in Westport, Connecticut was announced today by Robert E. Patricelli, Administrator of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA).

"Reduced trip time, increased transit coverage and improved productivity is expected to result from the coordinated effort by Westport's private and public transit operators," Patricelli said. "A crucial element to accomplish the integration will be the use of a single control center to dispatch and monitor the operation of all transportation services."

"The two-year project will evaluate the applicability of such an integrated approach to any low or medium density community," the Administrator added.

The project includes a specially coordinated taxi service, supplementary bus service, and demand-responsive services. A significant feature of the demonstration is an expanded role of the Westport Transit District as "transportation broker" for the community. In this capacity, the District would function as a coordinator which identifies community transportation needs and meets those needs with the most appropriate available service. In addition to the taxi and bus service options; the "broker" acts as an agent to promote ride-sharing and organize carpools and vanpools.

The Transit District will contract with an existing taxi operator to provide the specially coordinated taxi service, which will include both shared and premium-ride service as well as small package delivery. The service will be coordinated through a single dispatch center and will use six new 12-passenger vans. This shared-ride taxi service will complement scheduled bus service at times of low demand.

The project is expected to provide feeder service to twice as many commuter trains and, in addition, will increase service during the evening hours using smaller vehicles.

Special demand-responsive service will be made available to elderly and handicapped persons, day care centers and other special user groups on a subscription basis.

The project duration is for two years beginning July 1, 1976, with actual start of service to begin in mid-September, 1976. Carpooling and vanpooling support activities are scheduled to begin in early 1977.

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A local source for additional information is Mr. Richard H. Bradley, Executive Director, Westport Transit District, 311 East State Street, Westport, Connecticut 06880, (203) 226-0422, (CT-06-0007-01).

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