



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

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The U.S. Department of Transportation's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) today announced an agreement under which the West Virginia University Board of Regents will accept ownership of the Morgantown, West Virginia University Personal Rapid Transit system.

At a press conference today, UMTA Administrator Frank C. Herringer told newsmen that the Department will help to fund the costs of one-year system start-up and debugging.

Subject to the availability of funds, UMTA intends to provide \$5,037,900, including both capital assistance and demonstration funding, to assist the University in the start-up activities of the system, to determine actual operation and maintenance costs, system availability and system safety. The program also includes personnel training necessary to establish an acceptable operating proficiency and maintenance capability. In addition, assistance for architectural and engineering design for an expansion to a five-station configuration is being provided.

Pending satisfactory operation of the current system, and the availability of funds, the UMTA Administrator intends to approve a capital grant for an expansion of the system to a five-station configuration, if significant cost reductions can be achieved through economical design approaches. In turn, the University has agreed to accept ownership and operation of the system that is currently in place in Morgantown and agrees to the elimination of the Coliseum station originally proposed.

The 45 automatically-controlled vehicles, operating on a dual guideway, are designed to transport people between the University's two campuses and downtown Morgantown at a rate of approximately 3500 people per hour per lane.

The system can operate either in a demand or scheduled mode depending on the anticipated number of passengers expected to use the system. In either mode a passenger entering a station will first insert a fare card into the fare collection entry-gate which triggers the destination selection panel. The passenger then selects, by pressing a button, the destination station of his choice to obtain a non-stop operation between his origin and destination. In demand mode operation, a car may be immediately available upon a passenger's request with a maximum waiting time of two minutes.

In scheduled mode, vehicles are routed throughout the entire network on a scheduled basis commensurate with the estimated passenger demand. In this mode, passenger waiting time will not exceed a maximum of five minutes. The system operates with a 15 second headway between vehicles.

The West Virginia University is providing a one-fifth local share of the \$3.8 million capital assistance portion of the funding.

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For further information contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043.

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