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SPOKANE EXPERIMENT
DESIGNED TO INCREASE
OFF-PEAK USE OF TRANSIT

Non-rush hour transit users in Spokane, Wash., will be receiving discount shopping tokens in an experimental program announced today by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The three-year demonstration program has been funded by the Department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration to find out whether special incentives such as discounts from downtown merchants can be used to increase historically low non-rush hour transit ridership. The Spokane Transit System has received a \$380,817 grant from UMTA to conduct and issue a report on the demonstration.

During non-rush hours, boarding passengers will receive tokens exchangeable for discounts on goods and services offered by participating merchants. The program will include a promotional campaign emphasizing the long-term relationship between the business community and public transportation.

UMTA Administrator Theodore Lutz commented, "I am delighted to see us support experiments of this type. There should be a payoff to the transit system in increased non-rush hour ridership and payoff to the business community in increased customer traffic in the downtown area. We'll be reviewing this project periodically to see how it develops."

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