



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

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Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe today announced an additional grant of \$157,864 to the University of Pennsylvania for the Minicar Transit System Study.

The additional grant will finance work by a study subcontractor, Minicars, Incorporated, of Santa Barbara, California. Minicars, Inc. will study terminal and maintenance subsystems, run safety tests on the minicar design, develop and install a hybrid engine in a prototype minicar and conduct a clinic to get outside opinion about the features, problems, and desirability of the system.

The Minicar Transit System (MTS) is one of several concepts for new public transportation systems being studied and developed by the Department of Transportation's Urban Mass Transportation Administration.

Carlos C. Villarreal, Urban Mass Transportation Administrator said that, "if we are going to find better urban public transportation systems, we must explore a wide range of possibilities. This study is an outgrowth of the rent-a-car approach, except that much smaller, non-polluting cars would be used, trips would be limited to metropolitan areas and cars would be readily available at many parking terminals through highly automated operations."

The experimental minicar is 9-feet long, 6 1/2 feet wide and carries three passengers. It is powered by a hybrid internal combustion engine (40 horsepower)-electric motor (25 horsepower). It has a cruise speed of 60 miles per hour and a range of 200 miles on the hybrid engine or 2.5 miles on the electric motor if used exclusively.

Specifications of the MTS concept are being worked out in detail so that economics and operating problems can be fully accessed. Some prototype development work, mostly on the vehicle itself, has been started. The conceptual phase should be completed by the summer of 1970 and the Department will then consider whether a prototype demonstration should be tried.

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