



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
November 28, 1969

DOT -- 25269
Phone: (202) 963-5154

"One of our biggest national urban transportation problems is downtown mobility," Administrator Carlos C. Villarreal of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration told an Atlanta audience November 28.

"Getting around in the central city has become a problem of national proportions. Virtually every major American city has crushing downtown congestion. Downtown access and mobility is something we must improve and we must do it now. Atlanta is today making one improvement to help with its downtown congestion."

Mr. Villarreal spoke at the inauguration of an UMTA demonstration project for downtown Atlanta -- a shuttle bus route that will connect Atlanta Stadium, the Civic Center and the central business district.

The purpose of the project is to provide continual bus service between the 1,400 parking spaces at the Stadium and at the Center with the downtown business district. The service will begin today. Buses will run at 10-minute intervals from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The project is the preliminary stage of "Project Intercept," a three-year venture designed to improve access and mobility in Atlanta's downtown.

"This project and others like it will make downtown thrive," the Administrator said. "We are concerned today with metropolitan regions, and downtown is the hub on which the metropolitan wheel turns."

- more -

"Your Atlanta business and government leadership is to be congratulated for showing the initiative and imagination in this project.

"We in Washington were willing and able to process and approve this project in a single day. Secretary Volpe and I want to move with improvements to transportation in the city. We will do our part when the city first does its part. Atlanta is making progress and we are pleased to be a part of it. If we neglect the center city, the entire metropolitan region suffers the consequences.

"The key to downtown transportation is flexibility. The family car is the most flexible form of transportation. But what happens when you get it downtown? There's heavy traffic; that grates on the nerves. If there's parking space at all, that grates on the pocket-book. The result is the automobile loses much of its flexibility.

"One answer to this downtown traffic problem begins here today--peripheral parking, with continual bus service from that parking to the center city. Later will come more bus routes, and hopefully rapid transit for the Atlanta region.

"Eventually, Atlanta will have full metropolitan mobility, as flexible in the center city as driving to town. And it all begins here, now--just in time for the Christmas rush."

The project, two-thirds funded by UMTA, will cost \$45,000, all for development of ridership and commuter acceptance. The City of Atlanta will administer the grant. No new buses are required.

#