



# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

## URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

# NEWS

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An entirely new concept in American mass transportation officially began today when the U.S. Department of Transportation awarded a grant of nearly \$1.5 million to start a personalized door-to-door mass transit system known as Dial-A-Ride in Haddonfield, N. J.

The grant of \$1,492,350 was made to the State of New Jersey Department of Transportation which, along with the U. S. Transportation Department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA), will jointly develop the new concept.

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe, who made the grant announcement in Washington, said the project will start this spring in the Borough of Haddonfield, which is located in the Delaware River Valley approximately seven miles from downtown Philadelphia.

Primarily, Dial-A-Ride will carry suburbanites between their homes and a commuter station on the new high-speed Lindenwold rapid transit line, which is operated between Southern New Jersey and Philadelphia by the Port Authority Transit Corporation.

Initially, 12 small vehicles will start the Dial-A-Ride system. Each one will have a capacity of up to 15 passengers and one vehicle will accommodate wheelchairs. The total estimated project cost is \$1,730,350, of which UMTA will provide all but a \$238,000 local contribution which will be made by the New Jersey Department of Transportation.

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NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION WEEK / MAY 16-22  
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Dial-A-Ride is a personalized door-to-door mass transportation service which is expected to provide comfort and convenience similar to an automobile or taxi at low cost to system users. If the 18-month UMTA demonstration project is successful in Haddonfield, it is expected that the Dial-A-Ride concept will spread to other cities across the nation.

Here's how Dial-A-Ride will work:

A rider will telephone from his home or office to a control center which will dispatch by two-way radio the nearest Dial-A-Ride vehicle to the customer's door. The process will be similar to calling a taxi but, unlike a taxi, the Dial-A-Ride vehicle may stop several times to pick up or discharge passengers. During the customer's ride, the vehicle will follow a general but not fixed route to the ultimate destination of all passengers, making additional stops along the way if necessary.

"The big bonus will be that each Dial-A-Ride vehicle will be programmed to arrive at its ultimate destination at a guaranteed time, regardless of the number of stops it makes," commented Secretary Volpe. "This will give the rider something to depend on and provide a reliable service which coordinates with other modes of transportation."

Urban Mass Transportation Administrator Carlos C. Villarreal said the new system will "dramatically meet the changing needs of the commuting public." The new service will be available 24 hours a day.

The UMTA demonstration project will measure the public's acceptance of Dial-A-Ride under actual operating conditions, Mr. Villarreal said. The test also will determine the economic feasibility of the system and will provide UMTA with a basis for deciding the course of future experiments in the field of demand-responsive mass transportation.

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