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SECRETARY CARD ANNOUNCES
SELECTION OF THREE PROPOSALS
FOR LIGHT RAIL DEMONSTRATIONS

Secretary of Transportation Andrew H. Card Jr. today announced the selection of three proposals in a national competition to design and build a light rail system using new technology.

After reviewing 17 proposals, a panel of experts selected proposals submitted by the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART), Milwaukee County, Wis., and Montgomery County, Md.

"This is a bold stroke, an exciting effort to improve mass transit using the latest transportation technology," Card said. "A major consideration was to ensure that the systems selected under this program will indeed serve a legitimate mass transit need, and not merely provide an interesting exhibit."

Those selected can now move ahead with feasibility and benefit studies for the Suspended Light Rail Technology pilot project. The program was established to demonstrate a form of rapid transit in which vehicles hang from a steel rail.

Once the feasibility studies are completed, the department's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will select one of the three proposals for further planning refinements, preliminary engineering, and preparation of a draft environmental impact statement (EIS).

The FTA will pay up to 80 percent of the costs for the refinement of all three plans and \$35 million to design and build the winning system.

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FTA officials say they expect to announce the winner of the three-way competition by late spring of 1993 and then decide whether or not to construct the system.

The Suspended Light Rail Technology pilot project was established by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), which President Bush signed last December.

Although private firms can supply the technology, the applications had to be submitted by local or state governments, transit authorities, or educational institutions with legitimate roles in providing public transportation.

BART will now refine its plan for the use of suspended light rail technology as an intermodal connector between its Coliseum/Oakland Airport station and the Metropolitan Oakland International Airport. The project envisions a 3.7 mile double-track system.

Milwaukee County proposes to construct a three-mile suspended light rail loop to connect an existing medical complex with a research and development center that is to be developed in the near future.

Montgomery County will evaluate a proposed rail connector between Washington Metro's Grosvenor station and the Montgomery Mall, a major shopping complex. The proposal calls for a double-track guideway of 2.5 miles.

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**Federal Transit
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