



U.S. Department of  
Transportation

# News:

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**SEVEN UNIVERSITIES SHARE  
\$500,000 IN RESEARCH FUNDS  
FROM FEDERAL TRANSIT AGENCY**

Brian W. Clymer, Administrator of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Transportation, today announced approval of research and training grants totaling more than \$500,000, to assist seven universities conduct research into problems of urban transportation.

"These projects will examine a wide range of mobility opportunities, Clymer said. "For example, a grant of \$84,000 will help the New Jersey Institute of Technology develop an innovative ridesharing system. The system will utilize a computer-based dispatching service which can be reached by phone to match riders with car and vanpools."

The grants are being awarded under UMTA's University Research and Training Program. This program supports college and university based research, education and training efforts that seek to resolve critical transportation problems facing the nation.

"Two other projects will focus on transportation for those with special needs," Clymer said. "The University of Arizona will receive \$77,000 to determine how transit agencies will be affected by the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements for supplemental paratransit service. The other grant, \$84,000 awarded to Oregon State University, will be used to find technological and operational ways of making public transportation more accessible to those with disabilities."

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Two grants will carry out studies related to parking policies: California State Polytechnic University will receive an UMTA grant of \$57,800 to study the economics of employer-provided free parking in suburban areas and how it affects mass transit use. Another grant, in the amount of \$77,000, will go to the University of California, Los Angeles, for a project entitled "Cashing Out Employer-Paid Parking Subsidies." This research effort will investigate the way tax revenues and travel patterns would change if employers were required to offer employees an option of receiving a taxable cash travel allowance equal to the fair market value of their parking subsidy.

Florida International University will receive a grant of \$69,000 to help finance an evaluation of the state-of-the-art of commuter rail systems in the United States. The University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, is receiving a grant of \$84,000 to identify more accurate and meaningful ways to measure the benefits of public transit.

UMTA's University Research and Training grants are awarded competitively and have an estimated completion date of 12 months. UMTA funding of \$532,800 for the seven projects will be matched locally with \$109,482, raising the total project funding to \$642,282.

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