

U. S. Department of Transportation

news:



Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE MONDAY
August 4, 1980

DOT 69-80
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DOT AIDS RIDESHARING PROJECTS IN 19 STATES

Secretary of Transportation Neil Goldschmidt today announced 22 grants totaling \$2.1 million to promote greater use of carpools and vanpools in 19 states.

The 22 ridesharing projects will conserve gasoline and reduce air pollution and traffic congestion, Goldschmidt said.

Of the 22 grants, 13 will fund new projects and the other nine will continue demonstration programs announced last August.

The grants, which range from \$178,000 to \$35,000, generally will enable state and local governments and employers to expand their ridesharing services. Under the grant program, each \$3 of federal money must be matched by \$1 of state, local or private funding.

The largest grant, \$178,000, is for a new project in Dade and Broward Counties, Fla., to encourage the area's major shopping malls to establish a ridesharing promotional campaign and a computer matching system for shoppers. In addition, ridesharing by tourists will be promoted through the efforts of travel agents and tour operators in the United States and foreign countries.

With a \$150,000 grant, Commuter Services, Inc., a non-profit corporation in Birmingham, Ala., will demonstrate the use of market research to establish an effective ridesharing program and work with employers to get maximum results from their ridesharing efforts, and develop an Alabama ridesharing manual.

Other grants for new projects include:

- o \$140,000 to Orange County (Calif.) Transit District to demonstrate innovative ways that employer ridesharing programs can effectively increase the number of people who share the ride to work. Government agencies and private companies in the area will work together to promote and expand ridesharing.

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- o \$115,000 to the Omaha (Neb.) Metro Area Transit to expand and improve ridesharing services to employers and to develop neighborhood ridesharing programs sponsored by community and residents' associations.
- o \$113,000 to the Maryland Department of Transportation to develop and promote a joint transit, carpool and vanpool marketing program to provide people with a wide range of commuting options. Low-cost loans for vans also will be made available to encourage owner-operated vanpools.
- o \$100,000 to Fort Worth, Texas, to enable the city to train ridesharing coordinators in large companies or agencies and assist employers in providing their employees with such ridesharing incentives as preferred parking for pool vehicles and discount bus passes.
- o \$95,000 to the Minnesota Department of Transportation to develop a ride-sharing plan that will allow workers living in rural areas outside Minneapolis-St. Paul and other Minnesota cities to fill job openings at companies located in these urban areas.
- o \$90,000 to Indianapolis, Ind., and the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee in part to work with representatives of local companies to encourage their employees to use some form of ridesharing.

The remaining grants for new projects were awarded to the Westport Transit District, Connecticut, \$70,000; Ada County Highway District, Idaho, \$70,000; Economic Development Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania and the Service Corps of Retired Executives, \$65,000; Coastal Area Planning and Development Commission, Brunswick, Ga., \$55,000; and Dane County Regional Planning Commission, Wisconsin, \$35,000.

The nine grants for continuing projects were given to the Southern California Association of Governments for Los Angeles and San Bernadino Counties, \$150,000; Colorado Department of Highways, \$80,000; Georgia Department of Transportation, \$70,000; Chicago Regional Transportation Authority, \$75,000; Massachusetts Department of Public Works, \$50,000; North Carolina Department of Transportation, \$93,000; Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District of Portland, Ore., \$60,000; Houston Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Texas, \$93,000; and Seattle/King County Commuter Pool, Washington, \$163,000.

In addition to these grants, Secretary Goldschmidt pointed out that the states are authorized by law to use federal highway construction funds for ridesharing programs. In 1979, the states allocated \$41.5 million of such funds for ridesharing, 60 percent more than for all previous years, but Goldschmidt urged the states to spend even more of their federal highway money this year on energy-saving ridesharing projects.

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FOR RELEASE TUESDAY
August 12, 1980

DOT 71-80
Contact: William Bishop
Tel.: 202-426-4321

CALIFORNIA CONFERENCES
WILL HELP MINORITY FIRMS
GET GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

The U. S. Department of Transportation is sponsoring two conferences in California to encourage increased participation of minority contractors in projects DOT funds both directly and through its grant recipients.

Headed by Carl Horton, Special Assistant to the Secretary, a panel of DOT officials will meet with contractors and state and local officials in San Francisco on Aug. 19 and in Los Angeles on Aug. 20.

A feature of each conference will be a workshop to educate minority contractors on the procedures to follow for participation in DOT's minority business program.

Through its own procurement offices, DOT awards some \$1.5 billion in contracts annually. It also awards some \$13 billion annually in grants to states and municipalities, much of which is used for the construction of such transportation facilities as highways, airports and public transportation systems.

In March, DOT issued a new regulation designed to increase substantially the participation of minority contractors in projects resulting from the department's grants to state, county and municipal agencies.

The rule requires recipients of DOT financial assistance to submit to the department for approval programs for increasing the share of contracts to minority, including women-owned, businesses. The grant recipients are required to set goals for minority business participation both in their overall programs and for individual contracts.

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All DOT grant recipients must adopt a policy of ensuring maximum participation by minority business enterprise. For example, an applicant for a \$250,000 grant must include an affirmative action program that spells out (1) the minority business firms available to compete for contracts, (2) the procedures that will determine the eligibility of minority business enterprises and (3) the overall percentage goal for the dollar volume of work to be performed by minority firms.

The increased opportunities for minority contractors resulting from the new DOT regulation and how to take advantage of them will be explained at the conferences.

DOT officials also will discuss minority business participation in the department's direct procurement program and the activities of DOT's Minority Business Center, which works to increase the participation of minority firms in both federally-and privately-financed projects of the railroad industry.

The Aug. 19 conference in San Francisco will be held at the Fort Mason Conference Center, Beach and Buchanan Sts.

The Los Angeles conference will be held on Aug. 20 at the Davidson Conference Center on the University of Southern California campus.

Both conferences will begin at 9 a.m. and are scheduled to conclude at 4 p.m.

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FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
August 15, 1980

DOT 72-80
Contact: Wilbur Martin
Tel: 202-426-4321

DOT PRESSES PROBES OF CONTRACT BID-RIGGING

Tightened scrutiny of contracts by the Department of Transportation is reflected in the more than \$2 million in fines levied against three companies charged with bid-rigging on federally-funded airport and highway construction projects in Virginia and North Carolina, DOT Inspector General Frank Sato said today.

The companies involved in the recent cases were Ashland-Warren, Inc., of Atlanta; Rea Construction Co., Charlotte, N.C., and Central Contracting, Inc., Farmville, Va.

"We are intensifying our efforts to assist the Department of Justice in investigating alleged bid-rigging," Sato said, noting that there are a number of such investigations now underway. He said no specific details could be disclosed at this time "because of restrictions placed on disclosure of ongoing criminal investigations."

The bid-rigging conspiracy charges stemmed from construction projects at the Richard E. Byrd International Airport in Richmond, the Douglas Municipal Airport in Charlotte, and highway projects in the Charlotte, Richmond and Tidewater, Va., areas.

Ashland-Warren last month was fined \$500,000 in federal court after pleading guilty to the charge involving Byrd airport's \$2.3 million project. On Aug. 8 the company also was fined \$1 million after pleading guilty to the charge on the Virginia highway projects.

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Central Contracting was fined \$125,000.

Rea Construction in June was fined \$350,000 on charges stemming from the Charlotte airport and highway project and \$150,000 involving the Virginia airport contract.

Two officers of the company were sentenced to a year in prison, with all but 120 days suspended for Norman M. Black, Jr., chairman of the board, and all but 60 days suspended for Norman D. Wilhelm, president.

Because of Rea Construction's conviction on a highway project in the Charlotte area, the Federal Highway Administration declared the company unacceptable for employment on federal-aid highway projects for three years, with 18 months of this time suspended because of company cooperation with the Justice Department.

A routine audit of a contract for the Richmond airport led to the bid-rigging charges.

In February, 1979, the Office of Inspector General was established by DOT and took over the investigative jurisdiction. The IG's office monitors contracts issued by the department and its operating administrations.

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Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY
August 20, 1980

DOT 73-80
Contact: Wilbur Martin
Tel.: 202-426-4321

(Press copies of report available in Room 10413, Nassif Building,
400 Seventh St., S.W., Washington, D.C.)

DOT OUTLINES POLICY DIRECTIONS TO MEET CHALLENGES OF THE 80S

Secretary of Transportation Neil Goldschmidt today called for a "national transportation investment strategy" for the 1980s to help in the retooling of industrial America.

He said there is need for "new vision" to meet the challenges ahead, and that:

"We need to develop long-range, strategic plans. Federal transportation programs should be used to stimulate private investment in transportation-related and transport-dependent industries. A decade-long transportation investment program should be developed which will assure a nationwide pattern of public and private sectors investments."

He termed the decade ahead both a period for the U.S. to conserve its resources and at the same time renew its production base.

"There will be no simple solutions," he said, "tough decisions and sensible compromises will be needed. Government's task will be to make decisions wisely and swiftly, relying on the marketplace wherever feasible."

The Secretary noted the challenges ahead in a "Transportation Agenda for the 1980s: Issues and Policy Directions," which was released by DOT today.

He called the document "the beginning of a dialogue directed at developing solutions to the challenges of this decade."

"We find ourselves at the end of an era of cheap and abundant resources and at the beginning of a decade in which petroleum and other natural resources will be increasingly scarce and costly," Goldschmidt said.

"These changes will force us to revise many of our assumptions about transportation priorities, America's place in the world market, and government/industry relationships."

The issues and suggested policy directions are in the areas of energy, productivity, world trade, manufacture of transportation equipment, personal mobility, community revitalization, safety, air quality and noise prevention.

Goldschmidt said more than \$2 trillion would be spent on domestic transportation in the 80s -- \$1.5 trillion by the private sector, \$350 billion by state and local governments, and \$235 billion by the federal government.

To make the right decisions for this investment, Goldschmidt said, "We are in need of a new vision and new, realistic assumptions about the future of transportation and how it can best serve the nation."

The report noted:

* Despite the fact that U.S. consumption of oil dropped by 9.7 percent in the first five months of 1980 and gasoline usage declined to its lowest level since 1971, the nation still imports 42 percent of the oil it consumes. This is the equivalent of sending \$10.6 million overseas every hour, and the excessive dependence upon foreign oil leaves the nation vulnerable to foreign blackmail and supply interruptions.

* For the 80s, conservation and efficient use of energy should be major objectives in transportation planning and decisions, with a conservation ethic to be cultivated. This means, among other things, building more fuel-efficient cars; expanding transit and traffic management programs; encouraging ridesharing and van and carpools and pressing development of alternate fuels.

* In the area of productivity, the decline has been most pronounced in transportation, where the average annual rate of growth fell from 2.9 percent in 1965-73 to 0.9 percent in the 1973-78 period.

* Suggested policy directions call for eliminating government red tape; encouraging innovation in technology; developing stronger incentives for industry for capital investments and seeking the cooperation of labor in developing work rules that promote productivity.

* A major priority for the 1980s should be arresting the deterioration of the nation's highways.

* In mass transit, where the federal government has spent \$16 billion this past decade to improve local systems, federal regulations should be evaluated to determine their cost effectiveness and impact on growth.

* Rebuilding the transportation manufacturing industry should be a high priority in this decade, and the federal government must develop policies to encourage capital investment; streamline regulations that cause waste and impair productivity; reward investments in retooling, plant replacement, and entrepreneurial aggressiveness in international trade.

A principal issue will be how to maintain mobility for all segments of the population in the face of soaring transportation costs.

Some of the directions to achieve this are to integrate highway and transit planning; strengthen existing transit systems; and develop more flexible forms of transit and paratransit systems, such as walking, bicycling, ridesharing and car and vanpooling.

Policies must pay increasing attention to the needs of the poor, elderly and handicapped.

Providing greater transportation safety will require the combined efforts of government and the private sector. One severe safety problem will be the increasing number of small cars on the road mixed with large cars and trucks. To improve highway safety, the 55 mph speed limit and drunk driving penalties should be enforced, seat and shoulder belt usage increased and vehicle safety continually upgraded.

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Single copies of the report may be obtained by writing to U.S. DOT Publications, M443.1, 400 Seventh St., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590