

December 4, 2008

Congressman Jim Oberstar
Chairman, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
2365 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Jim,

I have written you several times concerning the need in the United States for Personal Rapid Transit Systems, i.e., *carefully designed* PRT systems. We have started calling our version of PRT an “Intelligent Transportation Network System (*ITNS*)” because that is a more descriptive title. Now we have a web page, listed above, so it is much easier to tell the world what we are doing. Indeed, our activities now span the world and our webmaster is in New Zealand. On the above web page anyone can download a DVD that is a presentation I have given enough times with enough success that I decided that I should record my voice explaining the slides. This presentation summarizes the process we have gone through to design our PRT system. It gives the results and in particular compares its cost per trip with the cost per trip of the Minneapolis so-called “light-rail” line.

**Light rail: 100% of capital costs
and 2/3rd of the operating costs
paid out of government funds.
ITNS: 0% of all cost paid out of
government funds.**

We found that we can build and operate our system for less than one twelfth (1/12th) the cost per trip of the light rail system. This is the direct result of applying systems-engineering techniques to a system of small, automated vehicles and off-line stations – ideas invented in the *United States* back in the 1950s. But what is actually happening?

- 1) A PRT system, designed by a group at Bristol University in Wales, is under construction at Heathrow International Airport in London. It is to be operational within a year.
- 2) A test PRT system, designed by the large Korean steel company Posco, has been built in Uppsala, Sweden. Why Korea? Why Sweden? Because more studies of PRT systems have been performed in Sweden and Korea than in any other country in the world.
- 3) A PRT system designed by a Dutch firm has been selected for deployment in the remarkable, sustainable Masdar project in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, and is to be operational in August 2009.

All three of these designs were inspired by the Chicago PRT project of 1990-1994, which failed for reasons I am very familiar with. But it inspired work on PRT in many countries by engineers not discouraged by a failure in Chicago. The Chicago project was a direct result of my decision in 1981 while at the University of Minnesota to begin to design a new PRT system. It was a great calamity for me that my former company Taxi 2000 Corporation was in turmoil four years ago. Fortunately I have been able to recover and now work with small groups in 14 states in the United States who are trying to get PRT underway. I also am in negotiations with people over-

seas. But, with zero government recognition let alone support, we limp along watching our ideas take form overseas. In Minnesota, because of past events, PRT is understandably shopworn, but that is not true elsewhere. Many of my friends have written to **Change.org** to urge consideration

Benefits of *ITNS*:

- ✓ **High ridership – reduced congestion.**
- ✓ **Energy use per passenger-mile is 30% of LRT.**
- ✓ **Uses renewable energy – no oil!**
- ✓ **No CO₂ release.**
- ✓ **Greater capacity than light rail.**
- ✓ **Uses only 0.02% of urban land.**
- ✓ **Extremely safe.**
- ✓ **Serves those who cannot or should not drive.**

of PRT in the United States as part of President-elect Obama's plans and your plans to improve infrastructure. We know exactly what to do to build *ITNS*. I have a team of engineers and engineering companies primed and ready to go as soon as we can obtain financing. Several people work with me to try to find private financing for the test system described in the above-mentioned DVD.

Congressionally funded studies, performed in 1967-1968, showed that if only conventional transit would be deployed in U. S. Cities, congestion would continue to worsen, but if the new personal transit systems were deployed, congestion could be decreased. Time has proven those investigators to be correct, but the power of the conventional transit lobby has suppressed the new ideas almost completely in the United States. President-elect Obama wants **CHANGE**, and he is inviting Americans to make suggestions through Change.org. The so-called "light-rail" systems being deployed have the same service concept as the first electric streetcar deployed in Richmond, Virginia, 120 years ago. By use of modern systems engineering and the technology available today, we can do far better, but we can't do it without funds. The lack of encouragement from the Congress of the United States since the huge cost overruns of the Morgantown so-called PRT system, which could easily have been avoided, has of course been an important factor. But that occurred over 30 years ago. We can show that we can build *ITNS* for less than 20% of the cost per mile of conventional surface-level rail systems, and we can increase transit ridership from the present 3% of trips in most U. S. Cities to at least 30% of urban trips.

If it would be possible, I would like very much to talk to you in person about how we can help America take advantage of this new, highly efficient form of infrastructure. The first introduction would be the DVD on www.prtinternational.com.

Sincerely yours,



J. Edward Anderson, Ph.D., P. E.

Managing Director

PRT International, LLC

Former Professor of Mechanical Engineering, University of Minnesota and Boston University

"Our recommendation is therefore clear—a PRT system provides such a broad range of desired qualities that it should be given highest priority in research, development, testing, and demonstration for implementation in the urban environment." Göran Tegnér, TRANSEK Consultants Company, Solna, Sweden. *Infrastructure*, Vol. 2. No. 3, (1997).