

Boeing man tells of personal transit

By LAURA BRENNER
Of the Emerald

Possible ideas for mass transit in Eugene and ways of getting the public involved in Eugene's transportation problems were discussed at the L-COG Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) for Transportation Planning Tuesday night.

Richard Hacker from the Surface Transportation Group of the Boeing Co. spoke on "New Concepts in Urban Transportation." Although his main concept concerned transportation for larger cities of over 250,000 people, he did offer suggestions for cities the size of Eugene.

Right now Boeing is in the process of developing a mass transit system for Morgantown, West Virginia and the University of West Virginia, which is located in Morgantown. Boeing's idea is a Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) system. This system is operated electrically on tracks running along the ground. The reason it is called Personal Rapid Transit is that when "the patron enters the station, he is taken directly to his destination by computer control without having to stop at other stations along the way," said Hacker.

During peak hours the destination of each car will be posted on the car and the passengers will not be able to go non-stop to their destination. However, at non-peak hours the people will be able to choose their destination by computer. The cars will be run without drivers and will switch off main lines by the computer.

At suburban stations "the cars will run about 15 seconds apart. The system has two lanes, handling about 10,000 passengers an hour. Two lanes of the PRT can handle as much traffic as an eight to ten lane freeway. It can be used in the shuttle mode during peak hours and in off peak hours it can be operated as a demand system which only goes at request. It will cost around ten to fifteen cents per person in fares," Hacker said.

"At no time of day will the people wait more than two minutes for a ride. It has the smallest operating cost per mile of any other transit system, around 30 cents, as opposed to about \$1.15 for a bus. We see two main uses for this system. One as a connector between activity centers such as business and campus, and secondly as a distributor from outlying areas to the central area," continued Hacker.

At this point Hacker opened the discussion to questions from the committee. The first question concerned the primary market for this type of transportation.

Hacker feels the primary market will be cities of 250,000 and above, because the system needs continual use to be effectively cheaper.

"In Lane County you have to begin to consider some new technical systems to handle your specific problem," Hacker advised.

The next question concerned the possibility of connecting an intra-city transit system with an inter-city transit system between Eugene and Portland.

"The definition we use for transit is if the stations are located more than one mile apart, the system can be a high speed system. If they are less than one mile apart, high speeds will not reduce the time," Hacker said.

The PRT can be used in connection with the high speed system for long distance and intra-city travel as both systems can work on the same tracks.

To install the system will cost approximately \$7 million a mile for the basic cost. After installation the cost will be about \$3½ million per mile. This compares to \$50 to \$100 thousand for buses. However in five years the cost should be offset by the efficiency of the system.

At the present time, this transportation system cannot transport less than 500-1000 people an hour to be economical. Boeing is now

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John Dellenback

No amnesty at this time

Congressman John Dellenback said Thursday that the nation can not and should not enter into a discussion of amnesty for draft evaders at this time.

"This discussion should not come until the draft is laid to rest and the emotions tied up to the end of the Vietnam War are out of the way," he said in a morning press conference.

Dellenback said he was against an unconditional amnesty but said the Congress and the nation should eventually move to a conditional amnesty. "We can't say flatly to these men that there is no way that they can ever be a part of American society again."

Dellenback, along with several other Republican Congressmen, issued a statement last week calling for a bettering of relations with Cuba, said the statement was prompted by the fact that "Castro has changed philosophy on how he is going to expand his revolution to other countries." "Our agreements with him concerning airline hijackings signifies a change of attitude on his part towards us," Dellenback said.

The Fourth District Republican said the United States role in Laos, Cambodia and Thailand should be one of providing stabilization and bringing about an early cease-fire.

Dellenback said the newly-formed Joint Committee on Congressional Operations on which he serves, "has the potential to make Congress more effective."

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