

# Borough readies 25¢ bus system

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In two weeks two bits will buy a bus ride just about anywhere in the borough.

Borough Mayor Jack Roderick announced Friday the borough's new "people mover" transit system will cut fares in half when it begins providing bus service July 1.

**THE FARES** for all the borough buses will be a flat 25 cents and transfers will be free for passengers going in one direction. In addition, the borough will operate two shoppers' shuttle buses downtown for a fare of 10 cents.

"We hope to lure Anchorage area residents out of their cars and into the buses," said Roderick. "We hope to make Anchorage a one car per family town."

Borough bus service will stretch from Ocean View to Eagle River. Half hour service will be provided at each bus stop except in Ocean View and Eagle River, where buses will arrive every two hours.

**RODERICK ADMITTED** the 25 cent fare would require that the bus system be subsidized, but said he felt the lower fares could provide a much-needed alternative to the automobile. He does not foresee any increase in the .2 mill tax now levied throughout the borough to support the system.

Lindsay Mercer, head of the borough transportation department, estimated the system would lose from \$35,000

to \$55,000 in the first year of operation. The .2 mill levy brings in about \$387,000 annually and the borough also received \$750,000 in state shared revenues this year for mass transit. Fares are expected to funnel another \$200,000 into the system's coffers.

The brightly painted people mover fleet will eventually have about 35 buses operating. Roderick hopes 20 or more buses will be on line by July 1, including the six buses now being operated by the City of Anchorage.

**RODERICK ALSO** promised the buses would be kept sparkling clean and tuned up so they won't belch exhaust fumes into the air.

Initial routes will follow the established city bus routes. All of the buses have been purchased by the borough with funds from the Urban Mass Transit Administration (UMTA). Roderick is expecting enough federal grant money to come in by July 1 to start building 50 warm-up huts at various bus stops.

Although the first 26 buses are used and have been purchased from cities in Canada and the lower 48, Roderick hopes to purchase 16 brand new buses with UMTA funds in nine months.

According to Mercer the older buses will cost about 56 cents a mile to operate, but the new buses will probably cost close to 30 cents a mile.



Borough Mayor Roderick