
What is a People Mover?



The term "people mover" refers to one of the ~~three categories~~ of a transportation system called Automated Guideway Transit (AGT). AGT systems consist of driverless vehicles which operate over exclusive guideways. The guideways can be located on elevated structures, at street level, or below ground. The three categories of AGT systems are: shuttle and loop transit (more commonly called people movers), group rapid transit, and personal rapid transit.

A people mover or shuttle and loop transit (SLT) system is the simplest type of AGT system. The vehicles in this system may be of various sizes and travel on a fixed path which may have provision for several stations, but few or no switches. Vehicles may travel as single units or coupled together as trains to accommodate heavier passenger flows. In a shuttle system vehicles move back and forth over a single guideway while in loop transit they move over a closed path.

Although the UMTA Downtown People Mover Project is mainly concerned with shuttle and loop type people movers, descriptions of the other two categories are included in order to better define the relationships among the three categories.

Group Rapid Transit (GRT) differs from shuttle and loop systems in network and operational complexity since it is designed more to serve groups of travellers with similar origins and destinations. For this reason, group rapid transit has switching capabilities which allow for branch routes, and off-line stations



so that vehicles on the main line are not delayed by those waiting at stations.

Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) systems are characterized by small vehicles, usually carrying less than six people traveling together by choice. The headway, or time interval between the arrival of successive vehicles, is very short (usually less than three seconds), and the guideways are smaller and less obtrusive than SLT or GRT. Plans for PRT systems call for a broad range of several policies and require a high degree of technical sophistication.

Despite the differences in physical arrangement and complexity of the three AGT categories, there are two important features which are common to all:

1. Vehicles travel on an exclusive guideway; their own permanent right-of-way.
2. Vehicles are operated automatically; there is no driver on board the vehicle.

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