

Georgia Monorail Consortium, Inc.

2nd generation monorail systems

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PRESS RELEASE

Subject: Florida Silver Bullet (High Speed Rail)
For Immediate Release - 2/17/03

On Wednesday, February 12th, Georgia Monorail Consortium, Inc. received requests by Senator Sebesta, Chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee and Representative Gardiner of the House Transportation Systems Subcommittee to present a summary of its proposals to their committees, focusing on the technology and financial plans presented to the FHSRA. The Senate Transportation Committee meeting will be held Tuesday, February 18, from 4:00pm to 7:00pm. The House Transportation Systems Subcommittee meeting will be Thursday, February 20, from 2:30pm to 4:00pm. Mr. Bill Owen, PE, will present a 5- to 10-minute PowerPoint presentation on behalf of the Consortium.

The Consortium included the two high-speed rail alternatives as requested in the RFP (Greenway and Bee-Line routes), but also submitted a second proposal adding local transit & commuter rail service to Orlando and Tampa-St. Petersburg. Providing a comprehensive network makes the overall system more viable, even providing revenue adequate to expand the system after construction costs and operation costs have been met. The Consortium's best option (Proposal 2 - Bee-Line Rt. alternate) requires only the 20% Federal funds contribution for construction. No state or local funds would be needed to facilitate construction or operation in this scenario. Press kit folders containing Consortium background information, technological keypoints and copies of the proposal (on CD-ROM) are expected to be made available from Mr. Owen following the presentation.

The HighRoad dual-sided transit monorail and Silver Bullet high-speed technologies have been under development since 1985 and have been designed from their inception to be lower-cost, higher-capacity alternatives to more expensive systems. Using off-the-shelf components in its design, the HighRoad system uses only a single beam to provide two fully-separated pathways for vehicle transport. Because of this distinction from traditional straddle-type monorails, it has been termed the 2nd generation of monorail technologies. Some have used the term "monobeam" to draw a similar distinction.

The beam is constructed of pre-stressed, post-tensioned steel-reinforced concrete technology and offers the additional advantage of a third pathway atop the beam for emergency access. This is a key feature as it provides quick access to vehicles, bypassing traffic jams and other obstacles, should emergency personnel be needed quickly. This also is a safety requirement of the National Fire Protection Association's Publication 130 (NFPA-130). Vehicles typically are configured in one- or two-vehicle groupings to allow passengers more frequent departures, shorter wait times and smaller station footprints. Because the system is elevated, vehicles can be driverless, helping to keep operation costs down. Silver Bullet vehicles have attendants for galley service, similar to airlines. The maximum speed of the Silver Bullet vehicles is 214 mph. The maximum speed of the HighRoad transit vehicle (urban/suburban application) is 70 mph.

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