

Congressman Pascrell's Livable Communities Newsletter – Solutions for Cleaner, Safer Living

October 31, 2001

Issue I

Dear Colleagues:

At the beginning of the 107th Congress, I had the great fortune of being chosen to join with Congressman Blumenaur and several others to lead to the Democratic Task Force on Livable Communities.

I decided then that in this new role I wanted to focus on two ways to clean our air and improve our quality of life. First, I want to explore and support ways to get people out of their cars and onto public transportation. Second, I want to focus our resources on revitalizing America's urban downtown centers and other forgotten landscapes that are ripe for renewal.

My efforts in achieving these two goals will be two-fold: education and outreach. As part of my education

initiative, I hope that this newsletter will provide you with information about transportation alternatives to the automobile and urban renewal opportunities that you were not aware of before.

Every issue of this bi-monthly newsletter will highlight a transportation alternative and an urban renewal opportunity. If your office seeks additional information, please feel free to contact my staff and me and we will be happy to provide you with whatever you are looking for.

As part of my outreach initiative, I am planning to host a brownfields redevelopment forum this winter. Bringing together representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency and other relevant federal agencies I hope to provide you and your staff with

the necessary information to assist municipalities in your districts with obtaining available funding.

Welcome to the inaugural issue of my Livable Communities Newsletter. I look forward to working with you on the issues that matter most to all of us.

Sincerely,

Bill Faverell J

**Alternative Transportation
of the Month: Small
Electric-Hybrid Vehicles**



While mass transit ridership is up, there will always be commuters who prefer the comfort and independence of their own

cars. If we can't get commuters out of their cars, can we make the cars cleaner?

Small businesses around the country would answer yes. There are several small automobile manufacturers on the West Coast that are producing small electric single and double passenger vehicles for commuter use.

As Tom Corbin, President and founder of Corbin Motors in Hollister, California, points out, "If you look at the national statistics, 87 percent of America goes less than 18 miles one way to work each day. And 93 percent of the time they are alone." Considering these facts, Corbin Motors has begun producing and selling a single seat electric car that sells for under \$15,000, the "Sparrow." (Pictured at left)

The Sparrow's mission is to keep it simple. Its efficiency is based on small size and light weight, not on high technology. It uses basic lead acid batteries and standard brakes.

The Neighborhood Electric Vehicle Company (NEVCO) manufactures the

"Gizmo," an electric vehicle only available for local use, in Eugene, Oregon. NEVCO designed the car based on studies that show that 75% of all driving is done locally for distances under 40 miles at a time.

In Spokane, Washington, Commuter Cars Corporation is underway with their "Tango" electric vehicle. The Tango can carry two passengers, is highway-capable, and can go 80 miles to the charge.

These innovative businesses are not proposing that these cars act as a family's primary-purpose vehicle. Rather, these small, light, clean cars can be used for daily commuting and local errands. It will supplement the family car, not replace it.

In an effort to create consumer incentive for these efficient and environmentally friendly vehicles, this month Congressman Pascrell will be introducing legislation to expand the current Qualified Electric Vehicle Tax Credit to include eligible three-wheeled vehicles. Current law permits a 10 percent tax credit, not to

exceed \$4,000, for purchase of an electric-hybrid vehicle. Congressman Pascrell's legislation will expand that to include smaller zero-emissions electric vehicles.

**Profiles in Healthy Living:
The National Park Service's
Urban Park and Recreation
Recovery (UPARR) Program**



The Urban Park and Recreation Recovery (UPARR) program was established in November 1978, authorizing \$725 million to provide matching grants and technical assistance to economically distressed urban communities.

The purpose of the program was to provide direct

Federal assistance to urban localities for rehabilitation of critically needed recreation facilities. The law also encouraged systematic local planning and commitment to continuing operation and maintenance of recreation programs, sites, and facilities. Only cities and urban counties meeting established criteria are eligible for assistance.

Three types of grants have been available through the UPARR program - Rehabilitation, Innovation, and Planning.

Rehabilitation grants provide capital funding to renovate or redesign existing close-to-home recreation facilities. Innovation grants usually involve more modest amounts of funding aimed at supporting specific activities that either increase recreation programs or improve the efficiency of the local government to operate existing programs. Planning grants provided funds for the development of a Recovery Action Program plan. To be eligible for Rehabilitation or Innovation grants a jurisdiction is required to maintain a

current Recovery Action Program plan approved by the National Park Service. The Recovery Action Plan serves both as a guide to local action planning and as a statement of a community's commitment to the revitalization goals of the UPARR program.

The National Park Service was appropriated \$28.9 million in FY 2001 for this innovative program. This is a significant increase from the meager \$2 million appropriated in FY 2000. The enormous rise in funding reflects the awareness by Congress of the importance and success of the UPARR program. For FY 2002, Congress included \$30 million in funding.

The grant round typically begins in February and awards are announced in June. This year, over \$55 million worth of requests were submitted to the National Park Service.