## Problems plague People Mover

Federal money intended for three other transportation projects may endup being used to help pay the rising costs of the domition People Mover.

Among other things, the project is faced with cost overrums and the discoverty that a portion of the train's completed support beams are defective. Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority (EEMTA) logos to use federal money for three other projects of the control of the project of the control of the con

and new train cars for the now-defunct Pontlac to Detroit commuter tain—for the People Mover.

"The People Mover is our top priority," said board chairman Dewitt Henry during "Tuesday's meeting of the SEMTA board of governors.

"We want to prove to people here and the nation that we can build a major public transportation project."

THE 2.9 MILE elevated rall system with up to 13 stations at key downtown Detroit spots was started in April. The first beam was installed July 9 at the new Millender Center, an apartment-

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botel-office complex being built around the construction.

All beams are expected to be in place by winter, with the system expected to open in March 1988.

To help cover an expected \$32.3 million cost overun on the \$10.55 million federally funded project. SEMTA beard members voted, Tuesday to reprogram \$16.235,000 worth of capital resources.

reprogram supersystems.

The amount includes \$3,594,351 in federal funds given to SEMTA for the commuter, faul which ran from Postlace to Detroit. The train was discontinued last fall during SEMTA cutbacks.

The transportation authority also hopes to get another \$12,841,549 for the People Mover in federal money expected to be awarded for two other priorities — buses and the Woodward Avenue light rail from downtown Detroit to Bount Oak.

SEMTA will also ask for \$10 million in new funds on the basis of the projects' extraordinary costs."

Henry expects the federal money to be "reprogrammed" without any problem. "The federal government has been lenient. It does this this all the time," he told reporters.

SEMTA BOARD MEMBERS MEMTA BOARD MEMBERS seemed relatively inconcerned about the discovery that a third of the galdway beams, which will support the People Moves have Raws. Construction was interrupted for a week because 38 of the completed beams have problems and 10 of those are "extensive problems."

sid-10 of those are "extensive problema."

At least three beams are to be completely reast became the side! "rebar" (re-enforcing steel) limide them
shifted during casting. The steel is not
evenly or adequately covered by concrete and could rust if modisting or sail gets inside.

Of 173 People Mover beams, 91 have
been finished.

Henry blamed the problem on 'short
cuts' taken because the project was behind schedule. "too much concrete was
going in at once and the rebar shifted,"
he explained.

A feam of experts was scheduled to
study the structural problems and report back to the beard, SEMTA's chief
said none of the defective beams were
put in place.

"The beams will be structurally
sound or they will not be used." said
SEMTA acting general manager Albert
A. Martin.



