

Recession Special: NASA cuts space shuttle price

January 15 2010, By MARCIA DUNN , AP Aerospace Writer

(AP) -- Here's a recession bargain: the space shuttle. NASA has slashed the price of these 1970s era spaceships from \$42 million to \$28.8 million apiece.

The shuttles are for sale once they quit flying, supposedly this fall.

When [NASA](#) put out the call to museums, schools and others in December 2008, seeking buyers, about 20 expressed interest. NASA spokesman Mike Curie expects more interest, what with the discount.

"We're confident that we'll get other takers," Curie said Friday.

Discovery is already promised to the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum. Atlantis and Endeavour are up for grabs. It's possible that Enterprise, a shuttle prototype that never made it to space, also will be available. Enterprise currently is at the Smithsonian.

Curie said no decisions will be made before summer.

The new lower price is based on NASA's estimate of the cost for transporting a shuttle from Kennedy Space Center to a major U.S. airport, and for displaying it indoors in a climate-controlled building. The travel cost may vary based on location. NASA has moved up the delivery date to the latter half of 2011, instead of 2012.

Potential customers have until Feb. 19 to put in a request.

As for the [space shuttle](#) main engines, those are now free. NASA advertised them for \$400,000 to \$800,000 each in December 2008, but no one expressed interest. So now the engines are available, along with other shuttle artifacts, for the cost of transportation and handling.

Assembly will be required, however.

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