

# Cities vie to hop on super-speedy hyperloop rail

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Hyperloop One global field operations senior vice president Nick Earle (L) and co-founders Rob Lloyd (C) and Josh Giegel at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas

US startup Hyperloop One disclosed a list of locations around the world vying to put near-supersonic rail transit system to the test.

The startup company keen to revolutionize the way people and cargo travel said that 35 contenders remained from a field of 2,600 teams in a

Hyperloop One Grand Challenge launched in May 2015.

Viable submissions had to be condoned by government agencies that would likely be involved in regulating and, ideally, funding the futuristic rail.

Projects in the running included hyperloop rail connecting Sydney and Melbourne; Shanghai and Hangzhou; Mumbai and Delhi, and London and Edinburgh.

There were also 11 US teams in contention.

"There has been a lot of talk about reviving the infrastructure in the United States," Hyperloop One co-founder and engineering president Josh Giegel told AFP at Consumer Electronics Show.

"If that is the plan, there is a good chance we would start working with them," he said, referring to the incoming administration of Donald Trump.

Hyperloop One wants to get three systems underway, according to chief executive Rob Lloyd.

"The end goal is to increase our pipeline of real projects," said Hyperloop One [senior vice president](#) of global field operations Nick Earle.

Dubai late last year agreed to a deal to evaluate construction of a hyperloop link that could slash travel times to Emirati capital Abu Dhabi to minutes.

The cash-flush city state, which has hosted other hi-tech transport pilots, said it would conduct a "feasibility study" with Hyperloop One to sound

out the scheme.



Dubai Road Transport Authority's director general Mattar al-Tayer speaks to the press after the signing of a deal to evaluate construction of a hyperloop link

## **Broadband for cargo**

The company executives said that a hyperloop test system is being constructed in the desert outside of Las Vegas.

Hyperloop One had originally promised a full-scale demonstration by the end of 2016, after a successful test of the propulsion system.

"We are not only proving it will work, which we will do in the next few months, but we want to focus on cutting down cost and manufacturing

time," Lloyd said.

The startup's reasons for being at the Consumer Electronics show included collaborating with the self-driving car industry to make sure autonomous vehicles will inter-operate with the hyperloop system, loading themselves into pods to be whisked off to far-away destinations, according to Earle.

"A self-driving Uber would be able to go inside the [hyperloop](#) and come out the other side," Earle said.

"It's like broadband internet for transportation" with self-driving vehicles carrying cargo or people in a real-world spin on data packets being taken quickly from one point to another over the internet, he maintained.

Hyperloop One, which has so far raised more than \$160 million (145 million euros), was set on an idea laid out by billionaire Elon Musk, the entrepreneur behind electric car company Tesla and private space exploration endeavor SpaceX.

Pods would rocket along rails through reduced-pressure tubes at speeds of 1,200 kilometers (750 miles) per hour.

Hyperloop One says the system offers better safety than passenger jets, lower build and maintenance costs than high-speed trains, and energy usage, per person, that is similar to a bicycle.

Port colossus DP World Group of Dubai last year invested in the concept, joining backers including French national rail company SNCF, US industrial conglomerate General Electric and Russian state fund RDIF.

Hyperloop One late last year settled a lawsuit filed by a co-founder who

accused former colleagues of nepotism, threats and mismanagement.

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