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In a growing effort to help small and medium sized towns solve their public transportation problems, the U.S. Department of Transportation today made a grant of \$597,057 to the city of Worcester, Massachusetts, for the purchase of 34 new buses.

The grant, made by the Department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration, will help the city buy 29 new 45-passenger air conditioned buses and five new 19-passenger mini-buses. The city will lease the new vehicles to the Worcester Bus Company, which operates a fleet of 159 buses.

The new buses will replace 27 older transit vehicles which average nearly a quarter of a century in age. The project is part of the Department of Transportation's effort to help save existing transit systems by paying up to two-thirds of the costs of new buses and equipment.

According to Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe, the new buses "will enable the Worcester Bus Company to provide better and more dependable service."

An additional \$199,019 in UMTA funds will be available to Worcester after the city meets its full regional planning requirements. This will bring the Federal share of new bus purchases up to \$796,076, or two-thirds of the total \$1,194,115 project cost, according to UMTA Administrator Carlos C. Villarreal. The remainder of the project cost will be met by the city of Worcester.

For further information, contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043, or Mr. Francis J. McGrath, City Manager, City Hall Worcester, Massachusetts 01608.