



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

P. M. RELEASE

Monday, June 5, 1972

UMTA 72-42

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The Department of Transportation has approved a grant of \$4,150,000 for the City of Philadelphia to conduct the engineering and planning analyses for the Philadelphia Center City Commuter Train Connection project, Secretary John A. Volpe announced today.

The funds, which are made available through the Department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration, will provide two-thirds of the total cost of the project and derive from President Nixon's \$3.1 billion program to provide assistance to public transportation in America's urban areas.

Work to be performed under the technical study grant includes the engineering and design of the proposed tunnel, updating of travel demand studies, preparation of an environmental impact statement, and updating and quantification of transportation benefits.

Secretary Volpe noted that "two commuter lines, the Penn Central and the Reading, carry more than 115,000 riders each day into two 'dead-end' terminals in the heart of the city. The City has proposed building a tunnel connecting the two railroad terminals to improve commuter services."

The Philadelphia area, the nation's fourth largest metropolitan area, has a population of nearly five million. The area is served by a complex public transportation system which includes a combination of bus, trolley, subway, elevated rapid rail, and commuter rail services.

Urban Mass Transportation Administrator Carlos C. Villarreal pointed out "the proposed tunnel will allow the joining of twelve separate

lines operated by Penn Central and the Reading Railroads into six pairs of connected lines. Many trains will begin their run on one line and will terminate on another, stopping en route at three Center City stations."

Philadelphia Mayor Frank L. Rizzo and James C. McConnon, Chairman of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), the area's major carrier, have called this project "the top transportation priority for the entire Philadelphia region."

"By enabling trains to run through the center of the city, more commuters should be attracted by the added convenience, and this should make an overall contribution to alleviating congestion in the Philadelphia area," Administrator Villarreal said.

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For further information contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs (202) 426-4043, or the Office of the Mayor, City of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107. (PA-09-0010)

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