



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

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The Department of Transportation has approved a grant of \$3,698,743 to the Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA), Secretary John A. Volpe announced today.

The funds, made available through the capital grants program of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration, will provide two-thirds of the total cost of acquiring 74 new 45-passenger air-conditioned transit buses, the assets of Southern Coach Lines, the Lookout Mountain Incline Railway and three suburban bus lines.

Secretary Volpe said, "President Nixon has called upon us to write a mass transportation success story for the 70s. In Chattanooga the public will benefit through having new equipment, new routes, and improved schedules. This should induce increased ridership and start us toward that success story."

Southern Coach Lines is the principal transit operator in the Chattanooga area, while the Lookout Mountain Incline Railway provides a transit link between the bus system in Chattanooga and the three routes operated on the top of Lookout Mountain. It is also an area tourist attraction.

"This project will enable Chattanooga to maintain transit operations which were scheduled to cease in June," Urban Mass Transportation Administrator Carlos C. Villarreal said. "The vast improvement to the rolling stock will lower maintenance costs while increasing service dependability."

Administrator Villarreal, pointing to the threat of lost transit services, said: "The Chattanooga area has made a strong local commitment to maintaining public transit and I am glad that we can help

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them do this. Because you have to be able to get to a job to hold it, and people have to have mobility to get to their schools, health facilities and recreation areas."

Average age of the bus fleet in Chattanooga now is more than 18 years. With acquisition of new equipment, local transit service will become more attractive as well as more dependable.

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For further information contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs (202) 426-4043, or Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority (TENN-UTG-4).

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