



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

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UMTA 72-61
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Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe today announced \$290,000 in grants to help finance development and demonstration projects providing transportation for the elderly and physically handicapped in Lincoln, Nebraska and Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

The grants were made available by the Department of Transportation's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA). Both grants represent the Federal share of service development and demonstration project funding in the nation's cities, Secretary Volpe said.

"These grants represent one phase of the Nixon Administration's \$3.1 billion, five-year transit improvement program," commented the Secretary. "It is the aim of this program to make available to everyone who relies on public transit service comfortable and readily accessible transportation facilities."

The demonstration grant of \$118,907 to the City of Lincoln will be augmented by a local share of \$15,000 to meet the total project cost of \$133,907 for the 24-month program. These local funds will be provided by the City of Lincoln and the League for Human Dignity.

This service development program is designed to test the feasibility, effectiveness, and economics of providing public transportation for the physically handicapped who presently do not have access to regular public transit. Modified equipment with radio dispatch capability will provide flexible service on a portal-to-portal basis. This operating system will be incorporated into a similar system designed for the elderly which will be operated by the City of Lincoln through the publicly-owned and -operated municipal bus transit service now in existence.

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The City of Baton Rouge and the Parish of East Baton Rouge have been awarded a service development grant of \$171,050 to carry out a demonstration project for public transit service for the physically handicapped. This 18-month program will provide a combination fixed route and demand-responsive transportation system. A local share of \$85,525 will supply the funds necessary for the completion of the \$256,575 demonstration project. This local money will be provided by the City of Baton Rouge and the Parish of East Baton Rouge and the Easter Seal Society of Louisiana. The modified equipment for this service will be integrated into the community's existing public transportation services as an additional specialized aspect, and will effect no real changes in the existing services or facilities of the Baton Rouge Transit System.

UMTA Administrator Carlos C. Villarreal pointed out that the UMTA Office of Civil Rights and Service Development is sponsoring these demonstrations "to further aid communities in making public transit service more available and more accessible for all commuters."

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For further information, contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043, or contact the individual grantee. When calling or writing for information, please refer to the project number and to this press release number. (NE-06-0002) (LA-DMG-1)

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