



# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# NEWS

## URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

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The U. S. Department of Transportation today made a \$5.4 million grant to Fort Worth, Texas, to help the city purchase the assets of a defunct transit company and buy new equipment, including 100 new air-conditioned buses.

The \$5,412,748 grant, made by the Department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA), will allow Fort Worth "not only to save public transit in the city but to substantially upgrade bus service in the entire Fort Worth urban area," commented Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe.

At the end of July, the principal mass transit carrier in the Fort Worth area -- Fort Worth Transit Company, Inc. -- went out of business as a result of operating losses and declining ridership. Although a continued deficit is contemplated by the city, new equipment along with better service is expected to increase ridership and keep operating losses at a minimum, Secretary Volpe said.

"By purchasing 100 new buses and refurbishing 22 present coaches with the help of two-thirds funding from this UMTA grant, the city will, in effect, be able to put a brand new fleet of buses on the streets of Fort Worth," the Secretary said. "This is part of President Nixon's \$3.1 billion program to save and upgrade mass transit in every major American city."

The 100 new 40-45 passenger diesel transit buses "all will be air-conditioned and all will have environmental improvement packages to help cut down on air pollution, another of President Nixon's major programs," according to UMTA Administrator Carlos C. Villarreal.

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The total estimated costs of acquiring the defunct privately-owned transit company and buying the new equipment, including the 100 new buses, is estimated at \$8, 119, 122, with the Federal two-thirds share of \$5.4 million being matched with one-third local funding of \$2, 706, 374. Funds for the local share will come from a \$3 million bond issue overwhelmingly approved by Fort Worth area voters last April. In addition, the city has made a five-year commitment to finance any deficits incurred by offering expanded service.

Fort Worth officials say they plan to institute seven new bus routes as well as a new mid-city loop, in addition to improving service on the 19 routes previously served by the former private bus operator. Since August 1, when the city hired the McDonald Transit Management Company to keep the bus system going while awaiting Federal funding, a few improvements have been made but the purchase of new equipment was dependent on today's UMTA grant.

In addition to the 100 new buses, the entire upgrading project includes:

- \* The rebuilding of 22 present Fort Worth buses and the purchase of 15 EIP kits.
- \* Purchasing 134 two-way radio units and a radio base station to provide an improved communication and service network.
- \* Buying 500 bus stop benches, 46 bus stop shelters, nine protable park-and-ride shelters and 2,000 bus stop signs.
- \* Purchasing 17 pieces of service support vehicles, including 10 supervisor cars, four pick-up trucks and a heavy-duty wrecker.
- \* Constructing a new office and maintenance facility, and,
- \* Buying a new fare collection system, including 126 registering fare boxes.

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For further information, contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043, or Mr. Roger N. Line, City Manager, Fort Worth, Texas. (UMTA Project No. TX-03-0008).