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The U.S. Department of Transportation today made a grant of nearly $260,000 to Terre Haute, Indiana, to help the city buy 12 new buses and related transit equipment.

The $259,980 grant, made by the Department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA), covers two-thirds of the $389,970 project, with the remaining one-third local share to be provided by the city from its general funds. The 12 new buses will replace outdated and deteriorating vehicles in the existing fleet.

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe said the grant will help the city-operated transit system acquire the 12 new 31-35 passenger air-conditioned buses, each equipped with fare boxes and spare parts.

Like many cities of comparable size, Terre Haute took over the local transit system after financial difficulties forced the discontinuation of private operations. The new buses will substantially upgrade the quality of mass transit in the community, especially for those dependent on public transportation for their mobility, Secretary Volpe said.

Terre Haute, located in southwest Indiana, is a major center for a growing area of 114,500 persons. Although comparatively small in population, "it is typical of the size city President Nixon and Secretary Volpe have made special efforts to help," according to UMTA Administrator Carlos C. Villarreal. "Using funds from the President's Urban Mass Transportation Assistance Act of 1970, we are now able to help transit riders in Terre Haute and dozens of other cities the same size."

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For further information, contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043, or the City of Terre Haute, Terre Haute, Indiana. (UMTA Project No. IN-03-0013.)

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