



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

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The U. S. Department of Transportation today made a \$300,000 grant to the Luzerne County Transportation Authority to help finance an emergency transit demonstration project in the Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania urbanized area.

The \$1.5 million demonstration project will be financed jointly by the Departments of Transportation and Housing and Urban Development and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. It will begin at the termination of free transit service instituted by President Nixon after the devastating floods resulting from hurricane Agnes. Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe said "continuation of transit service under the Department's demonstration grant is a result of the President's high priority program to save and improve transit systems nationwide and his recent directive to render every possible assistance to hurricane Agnes flood victims. Success of this project will be a key factor in revitalizing the Wilkes-Barre central business district."

The grant, made by the Department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration was announced by Frank Carlucci, President's Special Representative, at a press conference today in Wilkes-Barre.

William A. Allison, Deputy Administrator of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration told the press, "the objectives of the project are to design and implement a transition program to return normal-service to the community and to prepare a Transit Operations Manual for future civil emergencies."

"The project will seek to retain a maximum number of the emergency generated riders; reduce the transit operating deficit to a level within the financial capacity of state and local interests; institute special local programs

- 2 -

such as exclusive busways, bus preferential lights at intersections; and restrictive measures to reduce automobile congestion in the central business district," UMTA Administrator Carlos C. Villarreal said.

During the 21 month period of the demonstration the fare structure will increase from a basic 15¢ to a final fare of 25¢. To offset the fare rise, marketing will be emphasized and capital improvements introduced into the bus system to keep passengers on mass transit. The Luzerne County Transportation Authority will provide transit service through an agreement with two private transit operators in the area.

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For further information contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043, or the Luzerne County Transportation Authority, County Court House, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania 18711. (UMTA Project No. PA-06-0028)

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