



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY
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UMTA 50-74
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U. S. Secretary of Transportation Claude S. Brinegar today announced an Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) grant of \$474,852 to the County of Hawaii, Hilo, Hawaii, to assist in the purchase of ten new 31-35 passenger coaches, five 15-passenger coaches, supervisory vehicles, bus signs and related support equipment.

Secretary Brinegar commented that "energy conservation is of primary concern to most American cities. In Hilo, implementing measures such as mass transit to conserve available energy is even more critical because of the distance from energy sources," the Secretary added. Transit ridership declined after World War II until the private bus company was forced to discontinue service. The only remaining public transportation on the island consists of four antiquated privately owned 13-passenger vehicles operating in selected areas.

UMTA Administrator Frank C. Herringer noted that this capital grant results from recommendations made in a recently completed study funded under UMTA's technical study program. Based on results of the study a county-wide bus system will be implemented.

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The 31-35 passenger coaches will be used to provide daily transit service in the Hilo area and bring 80 per cent of the City's population within one-eighth mile of a bus route. In addition, commuter and shoppers' service will be provided between outlying towns and Hilo. The 15-passenger coaches will serve the Kona area, a community consisting of retired persons in addition to areas presently served by the older vehicles.

The one-fifth local share of the project cost is being provided by the County of Hawaii.

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For further information contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043 or Mr. Walt Wood, Transit Manager, Office of the Mayor, Hilo, Hawaii 96720 (UMTA Project No. HI-03-0003)

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