



# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# NEWS

## URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY A.M.  
May 7, 1974

UMTA 64-74  
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U. S. Secretary of Transportation Claude S.

Brinegar today announced an Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) grant of \$36,307,496 to the Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle (Metro), Seattle, Washington.

The grant will assist in the purchase of 605 new buses and will provide for design and engineering work on 36 fringe parking lots, 23 express bus stations, and modern maintenance and office facilities.

In announcing the grant, Secretary Brinegar noted that "Seattle's all bus approach shows the results of a careful consideration of all alternatives. In many cases, imaginative bus service can more practicably meet the transit needs of large urban areas than can rail systems," the Secretary added.

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Also funded are the rehabilitation of the trolley bus overhead electrification system, purchase and installation of 6,000 bus stop signs, the retrofitting of 241 present buses with pollution control devices, and other related improvements. Of the 605 new buses, 150 will be articulated (jointed) 72 passenger coaches and 50 more of the same design will be used in trolley service. Two hundred will be standard 40 foot buses and 150 will be smaller, 30 foot vehicles. An additional five 30-foot buses will be specially equipped for use by the handicapped and elderly. Metro hopes to purchase buses with a number of advanced features, including lower floors, wider doors, and reduced noise levels.

UMTA Administrator Frank C. Herringer pointed out that "Seattle's proposal is the most sophisticated and comprehensive bus system improvement program in which UMTA has ever been asked to participate." The present grant will help finance the first stages of an ambitious transit improvement project. It is expected to cost more than \$130 million

to complete within the next three to four years. The improvement program was approved by the people of King County in a September 1972 referendum and is designed along the lines of the current Blue Streak express bus service which was initially funded as part of UMTA's research and demonstration program.

Since public take-over on January 1, 1973 the Seattle Metro has expanded route coverage, lowered fares, reduced waiting times, established a free-fare area in downtown Seattle and has consequently enjoyed marked increase in ridership. The current improvement program is expected to attract an additional 3 to 4 million riders each year bringing total ridership to over 54 million by 1980.

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

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For further information contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043 or Mr. Charles V. Gibbs, Executive Director, Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle, 410 W. Harrison Street, Seattle, Washington 98119, (206) 284-5100. (UMTA Project No. WA-03-0016)

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