



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY
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UMTA 73-74
Phone: (202) 426-4043

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Claude S.

Brinegar today announced an Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) grant of \$1,100,720 to the city of La Crosse, Wisconsin, to assist in the acquisition of the privately owned La Crosse Transit Company, 11 new 45-passenger buses with fareboxes, 600 bus stop signs, 4 bus stop shelters, and related support equipment and vehicles. In addition, the grant provides for the construction of a new transit maintenance facility.

"In many communities throughout the nation, financial deficits dictate public takeover of heretofore successful private transit systems," Secretary Brinegar said. In La Crosse ridership declined from 1,788,959 passengers in 1968 to only 806,246 in 1973, making continuation of the privately owned

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system impractical.

UMTA Administrator Frank C. Herringer pointed out that this capital grant project is the result of a previously UMTA funded technical study to develop a five-year transit development program. This grant implements the first year of the recommended five-year program. Second through fifth year improvements include the acquisition of twelve additional buses, four shelters and 200 bus stop signs.

Public acquisition of the company will assure continued transit service in the community, and is particularly significant to the young, the old, and other transit deprived. The eleven new buses will replace fifteen buses nearing 20 years of age. The new buses' improved reliability, and greater comfort coupled with expanded service to 4,500 additional residents without bus service is expected to substantially increase ridership.

The one-fifth local share of the total project cost is being provided by the city of La Crosse and recently enacted legislation allows state general revenue funds to be used to underwrite up to two-thirds of any operating deficit.

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For further information contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043 or Mr. Ronald Bracegirdle, Director of City Planning, City Hall, La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601. (UMTA Project No. WI-03-0014).

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