



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

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U.S. Secretary of Transportation William T. Coleman, Jr., today announced a \$7,044,988 grant to the Tidewater Transportation District Commission for transit improvements in the Norfolk, Virginia area.

The Federal grant includes funds for the acquisition of the physical assets of the privately owned Community Motor Bus Company and the South Norfolk Transit Company. The planned improvements also include the purchase of 115 new transit coaches ranging in size from 31 to 45 passenger capacity. In addition, to the new buses the grant helps acquire two-way radios, fareboxes, service and maintenance vehicles, passenger shelters, bus stop signs and other transit related equipment. An existing garage is being renovated and rehabilitation of 39 used buses are included in the project.

Secretary Coleman said, "Urban transportation is a vital instrument in combating the Nation's energy problems, reducing pollution and congestion and meeting the needs of urban citizens." The Secretary added, "The urban poor in particular, benefit from transit improvements that make accessibility to employment and governmental services easier for them."

The grant was made by the Department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA). Administrator Frank C. Herringer pointed out the improvements planned in Norfolk include two especially equipped buses for transportation of elderly and handicapped riders. These vehicles are to be used in a demand-responsive mode and coordinated with other agencies providing service to the handicapped.

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The Norfolk improvement program upgrades capital facilities and unifies separate transit systems into a single coordinated regional transportation network under the ownership and direction of the Tidewater Transportation District Commission. The system, although showing substantial increases in ridership over the past few years, is expected to further increase ridership on receipt of the new equipment and implementation of other improvements. In addition to the two specially equipped buses, 92 buses are being acquired as replacements for 92 obsolete coaches averaging more than 17 years old and the remaining 22 buses are needed to provide new and expanded services.

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For further information contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043 or Mr. James Echols, Executive Director, Tidewater Transportation District Commission, (804) 490-1204. (UMTA Project No. VA-03-0007)



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