



# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# NEWS

## URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

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Four grants totaling \$160,000,000 for transit improvements were made to the New York City Transit Authority by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA). Of the total amount, \$80 million will be temporarily available to defray current operating costs.

The grants were announced today by UMTA Administrator Robert E. Patricelli at a formal signing ceremony in City Hall, New York City. Mayor Abraham D. Beame; David L. Yunich, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority; Patricelli and other city and federal officials participated in the ceremony.

Patricelli noted the grants "provide funds for new subway construction, modernization of the existing subway and bus systems, and assistance to meet transit operating costs, which are all critical to achieving a balanced transportation program for this, the most extensive and heavily used transit system in the nation."

In expressing appreciation for the federal assistance, Mayor Beame said, "This grant represents the fruits of our long and successful campaign in Washington to establish the principle of federal operating subsidy for the mass transportation systems throughout the country. It is our judgment that government subsidies to hold down transit fares are counter inflationary and offer us added dividends in terms of energy conservation, environmental improvements and the economic growth of urban areas throughout the nation."

The four grants announced today provide for additional construction on the new 63rd Street Line to Queens, bus and rapid transit improvements, construction of equipment for a power supervisory control center, and subway noise abatement.

Patricelli noted that provisions of the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964 allow up to 50 percent of funds approved for capital improvements to be used for operating expenses. "Of the total \$160 million," Patricelli said, "New York is borrowing \$80 million for current operating expenses." These funds, when added to operating assistance made available by 1975 UMTA grants, bring the total amount borrowed by New York City for operating expenses to \$204,500,000. As required by the Act, both New York City and the State of New York have pledged to repay within the next 15 months the \$80 million borrowed for operating expenses with state and local funds, thus insuring the prompt completion of the several capital projects.

MTA Chairman Yunich acknowledged that, "Operating subsidies from three levels of government -- federal, state and city -- are an absolute must for keeping buses and subways running in New York. Today's federal grant which will enable MTA to borrow up to \$80 million for operating assistance is the first of three vital ingredients necessary to holding transit fares at the present level for the balance of this year. This grant will also enable us to forge still another link in the construction of the new subway line to Queens and make other much needed improvements in the existing system."

The first grant, for \$95,000,000, will assist with the construction of an additional segment of the 63rd Street Line, the last portion of that line remaining to be put under contract in Manhattan. The new construction will run from approximately 3rd Avenue to east of York Avenue, where it will join the already completed East River Tunnel. The section will be constructed by means of rock tunnelling and is expected to take up to five years to complete. (UMTA Project No. NY-03-0045-01).

The second grant of \$52,800,000 helps implement a three-year program of improvements to all operating sections of the surface and rapid transit divisions. The top priority activities to be performed with the assistance of this grant include the retrofit of 400 IRT rapid transit cars with air conditioning, signal modernization and replacement of emergency alarm units. In addition, the grant provides for the modernization of power substations, replaces obsolete escalators, helps buy 165 new air-conditioned diesel transit buses and makes possible related bus and rail transit improvements. (UMTA Project No. NY-03-0095).

The third grant of \$7,200,000 provides for the construction of a power supervisory control center needed to centralize control for all three rapid transit operating divisions. Centralization of control in conjunction with the substation modernization is expected to result in substantial savings in operating costs of the system. (UMTA Project No. NY-03-0086).

A fourth grant of \$5,000,000 provides second-year funding for a comprehensive 10-year noise abatement program. The rail welding and installation of resilient track fasteners being performed under the grant has been determined to be an extremely effective technique for reducing noise. The rebuilding of track in this manner in 10 subway stations will improve significantly the riding environment of transit patrons. (UMTA Project No. NY-03-0074).

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