



# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# NEWS

## URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

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UMTA 76-28

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The U.S. Department of Transportation's Urban Mass Transportation Administrator Robert E. Patricelli today announced three grants totalling \$63,317,744 for both commuter rail and bus transit improvements in the Chicago metropolitan area.

Patricelli said, "I am pleased that we can help the Chicago region in its continuing efforts to improve its extensive public transportation system. Upgrading of both commuter rail and bus transit service is absolutely essential to ensure the jobs and mobility of thousands of commuters as well as local residents employed in downtown Chicago."

A \$32,079,000 grant to the Regional Transportation Authority will assist in the purchase of 50 new commuter rail passenger cars and other improvements on the Rock Island Railroad. Patricelli described the grant as "vital to continued rail passenger service to Chicago's growing southern suburbs." The grant also provides for the purchase of 21 new diesel electric locomotives, major spare components, purchase and installation of electrical equipment and related improvements.

Patricelli noted that the Rock Island has served the area more than a century but because of financial losses suffered in recent years the railroad's capital equipment has been neglected. This grant will enable the railroad to retire 75 single-level non-air-conditioned cars, most of which were built before 1930 and all of which are operating well beyond their useful life. (UMTA Project No. IL-03-0049)

The second grant, for \$21,480,944, is a supplemental grant to the Chicago Southern Suburban Mass Transit District. It provides assistance in the purchase of 35 new bi-level commuter rail cars and the construction of a 2.14 mile rail extension to the community of Park Forest South. The original \$7,660,160 grant provided for the purchase of 15 new cars and preliminary

work on the Park Forest South extension. It also helped fund safety modifications following an accident in which the new design "Highliner" cars were involved.

In developing the project, all transit alternatives were considered and the rail alternative was found to be the most effective. The new cars and extension, Patricelli said, "will help meet the ever increasing demand for service from the fast-growing newly developed area and Governors State University in the southern Chicago suburbs." (UMTA Project No. IL-03-0023-02).

The third grant, also to the Regional Transportation Authority, provides an additional \$9,757,800 to assist in the purchase of 147 new 40 to 45-passenger buses and three new 31 to 35-passenger buses and related improvements to the bus system. "Nearly one-third of Chicago's transit bus fleet will be new as a result of the program for replacement of the older buses," Patricelli said.

The three smaller buses will operate as commuter train feeders in the Bensenville Suburban area of western Chicago. Other improvements include the purchase and installation of 364 bus stop shelters, 162 fareboxes, 155 new two-way radios and major spare bus components. (UMTA Project No. IL-03-0050).

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Local sources for additional information include Mr. Leo J. Cusick, Director of Transportation, Regional Transportation Authority, P.O. Box 31858, Chicago, Illinois 60654, (312) 836-4060. (Project No's IL-03-0049 and IL-03-0050) and Mr. Jack Pigott, Executive Director, Chicago South Suburban Mass Transit District, 148 East 154th Street, Harvey, Illinois 60426, (312) 339-4343. (Project No. IL-03-0023-02).

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