



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY
June 25, 1974

UMTA 100-74
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U.S. Secretary of Transportation Claude S. Brinegar today announced a grant of \$10,003,200 to the Twin Cities Area Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) to assist in the purchase of equipment and other mass transit improvements in the Minneapolis - St. Paul, Minnesota area.

Federal assistance and a strong local commitment to improve and expand transit in the area has had a favorable impact on transit usage. At the end of 1973, ridership had increased approximately 8.0 percent since 1970. Much of the new equipment to be purchased under this grant will be to alleviate overloading on some present routes and to establish service in areas presently without or with very little transit service.

Today's grant was made by the Transportation Department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA). The grant will assist in the purchase of 179 new 49-53 passenger, air-conditioned, diesel transit buses, 10 small buses, specially equipped with lifts and restraints, for use by handicapped patrons, 200 passenger waiting shelters, various support equipment and the installation of computerized bus scheduling equipment. In addition, the three existing maintenance facilities will undergo extensive rehabilitation and improvement.

Secretary Brinegar noted the MTC improvement program was originally intended to be implemented over a nine-year period from 1973 to 1981. "The energy shortage," he said, "and the community's enthusiastic desire to improve its mobility quickly, has resulted in a greatly accelerated

program." The accelerated program's capital cost is set at \$109.5 million.

UMTA Administrator Frank C. Herringer said that the ten specially equipped buses will enhance an already advanced program for transporting the elderly and handicapped in the metropolitan area. Free bus service is presently provided for persons 65 years and older during off-peak hours, weekends, and holidays. The 10 new buses for the handicapped will be used by those persons who currently cannot use regular transit service.

The one-fifth local share of the total project cost is being provided by the Twin Cities Area Metropolitan Transit Commission through the sale of general obligation bonds.

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For further information contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043 or Mr. Camille D. Andre, Executive Director, Twin Cities Area Metropolitan Transit Commission, 330 Metro Square Building, ST. Paul, Minnesota, 55101 (UMTA Project No. MN-03-0012)

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