



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

NEWS

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U.S. Secretary of Transportation William T. Coleman, Jr., today announced, subject to Congressional action, an intended long-term \$600 million commitment of Federal assistance to the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) which combined with nearly \$200 million in grants already would bring total Federal aid to almost \$800 million in Atlanta, Georgia.

Secretary Coleman said "This action would represents the most significant single Federal transit commitment ever made to any urban area in the nation." He added, "The commitment represents more than 10 percent of the total discretionary capital grant program authorized by the National Mass Transportation Assistance Act of 1974 for the nation over the next six years.

The Department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) has already made grants of \$199.9 million to MARTA to assist in the construction of its rapid transit system. The additional \$600 million commitment, UMTA Administrator Frank C. Herringer noted, is being made after full consideration of a number of factors. Included are the merits of the MARTA proposal and the demand on UMTA resources from other urban areas throughout the nation--both those already with rapid transit systems which are in need of major modernization, upgrading and extensions, and communities like Atlanta which are planning and developing new rapid transit systems. Additional factors include the degree of local fiscal effort--past and current--being exerted to improve public transportation, past Federal transit assistance, population, current and projected ridership and other factors.

Under the long-term plan, a projected schedule of annual UMTA grant approvals for the \$600 million commitment will be arranged and a list of specific project activities provided. It is expected that MARTA will devote a portion of the UMTA funds, in concert with available local resources, to construction of the East Line, for which substantial funding has already been provided. A local selection and UMTA review of one or more additional segments to be constructed with Federal assistance will be made. The long-term commitment of Federal assistance to MARTA when matched with local funds is designed to assure that rapid transit is operating in the metropolitan Atlanta area in this decade.

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For further information contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043.

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