



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

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A \$26,660,950 grant to the Connecticut Department of Transportation for acquisition of the privately owned Connecticut Company, purchase of 280 new 45-passenger, air-conditioned, diesel transit buses and other transit improvements was announced today by Robert E. Patricelli, Administrator of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA).

In presenting an \$8,509,160 check to Governor Ella Grasso to cover the federal share of acquiring the Connecticut Company, Patricelli commended state officials on "a solid record of achievement in improving service and ridership throughout the state." Since March 1973 when the State began supporting public transportation and expanding service, long ridership declines were reversed to a gain of 8.5 percent in passengers.

"The improved availability of service anticipated on delivery of the 280 new buses is expected to enable the Connecticut Department of Transportation to increase service by 20 percent," Patricelli noted.

A second grant also announced provides \$625,622 operating assistance to the Connecticut Company's Hartford Division from November 26, 1974 through June 30, 1975. The formula apportioned funds are made available under the section 5 provisions of the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964, amended.

The Administrator acknowledged "a high degree of public support and community acceptance of the state's mass transit programs." He noted that the \$26.6 million grant is UMTA's largest single award for bus transit improvements within the state.

"Grant assistance previously has been provided by UMTA to 110 cities throughout the country to help buy out privately owned bus transit companies for operation by public authorities," he said.

Patricelli said, "One hundred and forty eight of the new buses will be placed in service in Hartford, 97 in New Haven and 35 in Stamford. The new air-conditioned buses will provide a higher degree of comfort and reliability than has been experienced by Connecticut transit riders in many years."

The Connecticut Company, and the Orange Street Bus Line Company which is also being acquired, provide service to more than 25.5 million passengers each year in the Hartford, Stamford and New Haven metropolitan areas.

The new buses will replace 280 obsolete vehicles, many of which are presently inoperable, and provide for a total fleet expansion of 15 buses. The new State-owned bus fleet will continue to operate under the names of the Connecticut Company and Orange Street Bus Line Company. The National City Management Corporation will operate the systems under a contract with the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

In addition to the acquisition of the two companies and the purchase of 280 new buses, the UMTA-assisted project will help rehabilitate bus maintenance facilities in each of the three cities. The bus facility at New Haven will be altered to provide for an indoor bus washer, while the Stamford maintenance facility requires extensive repairs to the roof and heating plant, in addition to a new indoor bus washer.

The Hartford garage was formerly used as a trolley barn. It requires extensive repairs and remodeling to accommodate two indoor bus washers.

Fourteen supervisory automobiles, seven service trucks, 413 two-way radios with a base communication station, 357 registering locked fare boxes and spare bus parts also are included in the planned improvements. (UMTA Project No. CT-03-0016).

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A local source for additional information is Mr. John Sullivan, Federal Aids Coordinator, Department of Transportation, State of Connecticut, P.O. Drawer A., Wethersfield, Connecticut 06109, (203) 556-2601.