



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

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UMTA 76-123

FEDERAL TRANSIT GRANT FOR
HOUSTON, TEXAS

An \$8,253,200 grant to assist the City of Houston, Texas purchase a fleet of 100 new 53-passenger, air-conditioned transit buses, 25 new air-conditioned mini-buses and related equipment was announced today by Robert E. Patricelli, Administrator of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA).

Patricelli commended local officials for their efforts to increase public transit ridership. "The dramatic increase in ridership from 24.5 million in 1974 to 27.8 million last year is a result of the strong determination by local officials and community residents to support improved public transportation," he said.

"The steady increase in Houston's transit ridership over the past 2 years is attributed to a fare reduction, inauguration of new services, availability of new equipment and a strong marketing program," Patricelli noted.

Houston's bus improvement program includes replacement of all obsolete buses and will expand Houston's fleet size by more than 27 percent", he added. "This grant will assist in providing a fully integrated system to provide maximum mobility for Houston's public transportation riders".

The Administrator pointed out that the City of Houston is using their FY 1975 and FY 1976 Section 5 allocation and \$1.1 million of Federal Aid Urban System funds for the purchase of transit equipment. He said, "This is solid evidence of the community's efficient use of Federal funds for public transportation.

The new buses include 100 new 53-passenger, air-conditioned, diesel-powered coaches, 50 of which will be used to replace older equipment and 50 for fleet expansion. The grant also includes assistance in the purchase of 25 new 23-passenger, air-conditioned mini-buses. The additional 25 mini-buses will provide for further expansion of service to peripheral facilities and will link the Houston bus circulation and distribution system to currently planned corridor improvements.

All of the 53-passenger coaches will be equipped with special features including an assist step, padded handrails and stanchions, large print destination signs, lighting in the stepwell, door and curb area and slip resistant floors, intended to provide increased mobility for elderly and handicapped commuters.

In addition, the UMTA grant helps buy 2,000 bus stop signs, and spare engine parts and air-conditioning units for the new buses being acquired.

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A local source for additional information is Mr. Barry Goodman, Administrator, Office of Public Transportation, City of Houston, Texas, (713) 222-5217. (UMTA Project No. TX-03-0032)

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