



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

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UMTA 75-56
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U.S. Secretary of Transportation William T. Coleman Jr., today announced the award of a \$2,418,698 grant to the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) to help pay for operating costs of the Atlanta, Georgia, transit system.

Secretary Coleman pointed to the significance of the grant, awarded under Section 5 provisions of the National Mass Transportation Assistance Act of 1974. "For the first time," Secretary Coleman said, "Federal funds are available to urbanized areas for local operating costs. With today's energy and environmental constraints, the nation must rely more and more on public transportation," he added.

UMTA Administrator Frank C. Herringer noted the grant approval follows assurance by the State and local governments that non-fare box revenues will be maintained for provision of mass transportation services on a level equal to or exceeding assistance provided for the two preceeding local fiscal years. Other requirements are to improve or continue service and to establish a procedure for charging not more than one-half of the peak hour fare to elderly and handicapped persons during non-peak hours.

Section 5 provides -- for the first time -- Federal assistance to local transit systems to meet operating as well as capital costs of maintaining and improving public transportation. The 1974 amendment authorizes \$3.975 billion for the program for fiscal years 1975 through 1980. The grants are awarded to urbanized areas on a statutory formula apportionment basis. Section 5 provides for Federal funding up to 50 percent of operating assistance and up to 80 percent of capital assistance projects.

The Section 5 provisions give transit systems the opportunity to assess total transit service needs and make the necessary trade off decisions between capital and operating expenses.

The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority is providing the local share of the total project cost.

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