

# U.S. Department of Transportation news:



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DOT AWARDS \$19M GRANT TO  
CITY OF HOUSTON FOR 226  
ADVANCED DESIGN BUSES

Administrator Richard S. Page of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Urban Mass Transportation Administration today announced the award of \$19,300,000 to the City of Houston to help purchase 226 standard-size advanced-design buses, spare parts and support vehicles.

The new buses will be equipped with lift devices to enable elderly and handicapped persons, including wheelchair users, to board and exit with ease.

This project will enable the Houston Transit System to continue its program of fleet modernization and expansion to meet the needs of a growing community. The new buses will replace 163 vehicles more than 12 years old, with 63 of the buses used for service expansion.

"When the City bought out the private transit system in 1974," Page said, "the average age of the fleet was more than 13 years old and upgrading was critical.

"These 226 buses, combined with the 251 advanced-design buses already ordered, will enable HOUTRAN to provide better service to all area residents, including those whose age or handicaps prevent them from using current buses."

Fully-accessible public transportation a primary goal of the City. Over the next five years, lift or ramp-equipped buses will be purchased until at least 50 percent of the HOUTRAN fleet is accessible to mobility-impaired riders.

The HOUTRAN system currently has 407 full-size transit buses plus a small fleet of minibuses for demand-responsive transit service. The City has determined that a fleet of 621 buses will be needed in 1980; by the 1990's, the projection is a fleet of 1,000 to 1,500 buses.

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The 20 percent local share of funds for this project will be provided by the Texas Department of Highways and Public Transportation Fund and City of Houston revenue sharing on a two-thirds/one-third basis.

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A source for additional local information is Mr. Barry Goodman, Public Transportation Administrator, City of Houston, City Hall, Houston, Texas 77001, (713) 222-5541 (TX-03-0039).

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