



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

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Secretary of Transportation Claude S. Brinegar approved today a grant for \$69.5 million to the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) to help finance the first phase of Atlanta's \$1.75 billion rail-busway rapid transit system.

Final approval was given the grant at a ceremony at the Department of Transportation which included Atlanta's top transportation officials. Secretary Brinegar noted that the \$69,533,333 grant was the second largest ever made by the Department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA).

"We may make larger transit grants in the future," said the Secretary, "but we will never make one for a better purpose. The system the people of Atlanta are building has all the ingredients to make it a success."

The Secretary went on to say that this grant would finance the first phase of MARTA's multi-phase capital investment program for the new system. When completed, the project will consist of 50.1 miles of rapid rail transit and 14.4 miles of exclusive busways forming a single, coordinated rapid transit system serving the transportation needs of the City of Atlanta and DeKalb and Fulton Counties.

At today's ceremony with Secretary Brinegar were UMTA Administrator Frank C. Herringer, Allen Hardin, Chairman of MARTA and MARTA's General Manager, Alan Kiepper who joined in the signing and acceptance of the award. Members of Congress, officials from Fulton and DeKalb Counties, and members of MARTA's board of directors witnessed the signing.

After the ceremony, Administrator Herringer observed that this funding represents the first step in a long-range construction program for Atlanta. He said that previous grants totaling \$33 million have helped MARTA establish a sound bus transit system in the area and that this new funding illustrates President Nixon's pledge to continue to provide Federal assistance for mass transit in America's cities. Herringer added that this was especially important in the light of the energy crises and pollution problems facing the nation.

Specific programs to be funded by today's grant include project management, conceptual and preliminary design, detail design, land acquisition for right-of-way and relocation costs.

The local one-third share is being provided by the people of the City of Atlanta and the Counties of DeKalb and Fulton through a one percent sales tax they voted for mass transit use in a November 1971 referendum. Funds from this tax are expected to amount to \$43 million yearly, and will be available for capital funding during the construction period and to provide operating subsidies as long as they are required.

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For further information contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043 or Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority, 100 Peachtree Street, N. W., Suite 1300, Atlanta, Georgia 30303. (UMTA Project No. GA-03-0008)

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