



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

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UMTA 11-74
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Secretary of Transportation Claude S. Brinegar today announced an Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) grant of \$638,400 to the Grand Rapids Transit Authority to assist in the purchase of 19 new 45-passenger air-conditioned, diesel buses. The project is the first step in an overall comprehensive effort to improve and expand transit service in the metropolitan area.

"The history of transit in Grand Rapids and many cities throughout the nation has been one of decline and decay since the early 1960's. Federal aid through the Urban Mass Transportation Assistance Act of 1970 is slowing and reversing this trend in many communities," Secretary Brinegar said. Grand Rapids' five-year transit improvement plan results from a \$98,228 UMTA technical study grant awarded in 1972.

Frank C. Herringer, UMTA Administrator noted that the five-year plan recommends a fleet of 79 new 45-passenger buses, a new garage, bus support equipment and a vastly increased level of service. The 19 new buses being acquired to institute the plan will replace deteriorated, seventeen to eighteen year old coaches. The safer, more attractive, and dependable service, and other measures to attract new riders are expected to result in a turn-a-round in the system's trend of declining patronage.

In an effort to meet the needs of the elderly and handicapped the new buses will be equipped with non-slip flooring, vertical stanchions, grip bars and handles, and improved lighting. A reduced fare plan for the elderly already is in effect.

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The one-fifth local share of the project cost is being provided by the State of Michigan.

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For further information contact the Urban Mass Transportation Administration Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043 or Mr. Joseph R. Grassie, Chairman, Grand Rapids Transit Authority, City Hall, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49502 (UMTA Project No. MI-03-0027)

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