



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

NEWS

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Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe today announced four grants totaling nearly \$33.6 million to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority for new equipment and improved transit facilities in the Boston area.

The combined grants, made by the Department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration, will:

- * Provide \$18.8 million to MBTA for construction of a new rapid transit repair facility and bus garage in South Boston.
- * Pay \$8.1 million of the \$12.2 million needed by MBTA to purchase 310 new air-conditioned buses.
- * Add nearly \$3.7 million to previous UMTA grants to complete 6.6 miles of Boston's South Shore rapid transit line.
- * Provide \$3 million for overall modernization of the MBTA system.

The combined grants will pay two-thirds of the total costs of the four projects, which are estimated at around \$50.4 million. The remaining one-third of nearly \$16.8 million will come from the MBTA.

The repair facility and the garage will be constructed for about \$28 million on a 25-acre site near Dover Street to be known as the South Bay Maintenance Center. The complex will include a rapid transit repair shop and yard for 124 vehicles, a surface connecting rail line and a bus garage with a 200-vehicle capacity. Construction is expected to be completed by late 1973, with UMTA providing \$18,800,000 of the project costs.

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Secretary Volpe said that the new maintenance center will enable MBTA to vacate its obsolete five-acre Bennett-Eliot Yards in Cambridge to make way for a proposed John F. Kennedy Memorial Library. The adjoining new bus facility will replace the Albany Street Bus Garage, which also is obsolete, the Secretary said.

The new repair shop and yard will have the capability of handling all maintenance and repair functions for the existing Cambridge-Dorchester Rapid Transit Line, as well as for the new South Shore Line. A new two-mile section of track will connect the facility with both lines, terminating in the vicinity of the Columbia Station.

The second grant of \$8,100,250 will help MBTA buy 310 new air-conditioned diesel buses, allowing for the replacement of 250 coaches in their current fleet which range in age from 15 to 26 years old. Fifty other new buses will be used to expand MBTA's highly-successful turnpike service. The remaining 10 new buses will be 25-passenger coaches which will be used for low-volume transit runs. All 310 new buses are expected to be purchased by the end of this year.

A third grant for \$3,657,263 will help complete construction of the South Shore rapid transit line from the existing Cambridge-Dorchester line to Quincy Center, a distance of about 6.6 miles. When completed, the new line will provide fast, efficient transit service to and from downtown Boston. It is planned that commuter trains will be able to run every four minutes during the rush-hour, cutting commuting times to about 20 minutes between downtown and the suburbs.

The final UMTA grant of \$3 million will cover two-thirds of MBTA's \$4.5 million system-wide modernization program. This project will include a number of short-range improvements, including refurbishing a portion of Boston's streetcar fleet, improving lighting at six Mattapan high-speed trolley stations and the modernization of 13 rapid transit stations. This project is expected to be completed within two years.

Administrator Carlos C. Villarreal of UMTA said the new facilities, equipment and modernization program "is part of our effort to upgrade and extend commuter mass transit service across the nation."

The Department of Transportation has made nearly 175 capital improvement grants totaling \$772 million during its first six years. Grants from UMTA have assisted MBTA to purchase 76 rail rapid transit cars and extend 10 miles of rapid transit tracks.

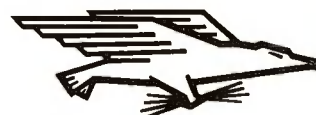
The MBTA currently operates more than 2,000 mass transit vehicles in the Boston Metropolitan Area. The publicly-owned corporation includes 24 route miles of rail rapid transit, 43 route miles of streetcar lines and 485 route miles of bus service.

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For further information, contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043, or Mr. Joseph Kelly, General Manager, Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, Boston, Massachusetts (617) 722-6550.

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