



# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# NEWS

## URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

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The U.S. Department of Transportation today made a demonstration grant of \$120,292 to the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation near New Town, North Dakota, to develop and evaluate their own public transit system.

The grant, made by the Department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA), is the first ever made by the Government to provide mass transit on an Indian reservation.

The 18-month demonstration project will provide public transportation for more than 7,000 Indians, interconnecting outlying communities on the reservation with the nearby urban area of New Town. At present, there is no mass transit service available in the area.

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe said the primary purpose of the grant "is to help the economic and social development of the entire region by interconnecting the various, and sometimes isolated, residential communities with employment, medical, educational and commercial services."

Currently, there are about 7,400 Indians on the reservation located in Western North Dakota. Many are unemployed, under-educated and live well below the national poverty level. Other Federally-financed programs currently under way on the Fort Berthold Reservation include Head Start Centers, Rehabilitation Centers, and Cooperative Programs.

Administrator Carlos C. Villarreal of UMTA said "the success of this mass transit demonstration project should greatly increase the mobility of the Fort Berthold Indians and substantially improve their socio-economic opportunities." One of the goals of the grant will be to make the new mass transit system economically self-sufficient at the end of the demonstration period.

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For further information, contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043, or Mr. Dale McGrady, Director, Three Affiliated Tribes Community Action Program, c/o Mr. Adam Mandam, Vice Chairman, Tribal Council, Three Affiliated Tribes, New Town, North Dakota 58763.

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