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UMTA CUTS PAPERWORK ON GRANT APPLICATION FOR OPERATING ASSISTANCE

A streamlined application procedure for Federal operating assistance grants to mass transit systems was announced today by Administrator Arthur E. Teele, Jr., of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration.

The new system is designed to focus responsibility on local authorities by eliminating or simplifying a variety of previously required paperwork as part of an ongoing principal commitment of the Reagan Administration.

For example, certain documents that previously had to accompany each grant application may now be submitted on a one-time only basis. All told, the minimum number of documents required for an application has been reduced from 13 to four.

Teele said applicants themselves will certify that statutory requirements have been met, subject to audit, in much the same way a taxpayer signs an income tax form.

Teele noted that heretofore a grant applicant had to hold a public hearing and submit a printed transcript of the hearing with the application.

The hearing may still be necessary but now the applicant need only attest that a transcript is available for review by UMTA if requested, "thus reducing both the size and cost of the application procedure," Teele said.

The new system also is expected to reduce the "turnaround" time for releasing funds to applicants to about 45 days. Currently it takes an average of four to six months for UMTA funds to be made available after a transit system has submitted a completed application, "in part because the agency was responsible for reviewing and certifying the accuracy of all the information in the application," Teele said.

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**Urban Mass
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