

RideKC STREETCAR™

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KC STREETCAR WINS \$20,000 SAFETY GRANT

Operation Lifesaver grant will assist with KC Streetcar Respect the Rail safety campaign

The Kansas City Streetcar Authority is the proud recipient of a \$20,000 grant from Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI). This grant will help with the public awareness and safety education efforts related to the Respect the Rail campaign while also utilizing OLI's "See Tracks? Think Train!" messaging. After months of review, a team of transit safety and education professionals evaluated applications from across the county based on criteria such as key safety messages and target audiences, evaluation methods, and timelines.

As part of the grant partnership, the KC Streetcar Authority will use these funds to increase public awareness of rail transit safety and how to stay safe on and around the KC Streetcar. The campaign will also leverage a partnership with local nonprofit BikeWalkKC in a coordinated effort to disseminate safety messaging for pedestrians, bicyclists and those with disabilities.

"We are thrilled to partner with the Operation Lifesaver team in deploying a streetcar safety campaign that will have local and national appeal," said Tom Gerend, executive director of the KC Streetcar Authority. "The streetcar safety messages encourage alertness during both the testing and full operations phases of the streetcars," Gerend continued.

The KC Streetcar Authority officially launched the Respect the Rail campaign in August while construction was still ongoing and streetcar vehicles were not yet in Kansas City. Since then, safety activities have included outreach about parking and driving on the streetcar route, the dangers of overhead wires, and new track access permits and procedures. Additionally, the KC Streetcar Authority produced several videos focusing on various messages such as pedestrian access and testing safety, which are available online at www.kcstreetcar.org.

"FTA strongly supports more innovative rail transit safety awareness outreach efforts to educate the communities where these systems operate," said Acting Federal Transit

Administrator Therese McMillan. "Whether as a passenger or walking, riding or driving near the tracks, safety must be everyone's top priority."

The "See Tracks? Think Train" campaign deployed by OLI was developed in partnership with the Association of American Railroads and the United States Department of Transportation. OLI's ongoing campaign's message is that whether driving or walking, when people see tracks, they should use caution and be alert for approaching trains, light rail vehicles or streetcars.

Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI), is a national non-profit organization aimed at educating the public about rail and transit safety. Operation Lifesaver's mission is to end collisions, deaths and injuries at highway-rail grade crossings and along railroad rights of way. A national network of trained volunteers provides free presentations on rail safety. To learn more about OLI, visit their website at www.oli.org.

For additional information, visit the KC Streetcar website at www.kcstreetcar.org or contact Donna Mandelbaum with the KC Streetcar Authority at 816.627.2526 (office), 816.877.3219 (cell) or email at dmandelbaum@kcstreetcar.org. The KC Streetcar is also online on Twitter (@kcstreetcar), Facebook (@kcstreetcar) and Instagram.

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