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KC STREETCAR MAIN STREET EXTENSION PROJECT ADVANCES FEDERAL FUNDING REQUEST

(Kansas City, Missouri) – The KC Streetcar project team recently applied for federal funding for the Main Street Extension to University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC), marking a crucial step in moving the street extension project towards construction.

Late last week, the KC Streetcar project team, consisting of the KC Streetcar Authority (KCSA), the KC Area Transportation Authority (KCATA), and the City of Kansas City, MO (KCMO), submitted the formal application to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for the New Starts Capital Investment Grants Program, seeking \$151 million dollars in federal funding and inclusion in the federal 2020-year budget to support the estimated \$316 million-dollar project. The New Starts grant program funds transit capital investments including heavy rail, commuter rail, light rail, streetcars and bus rapid transit systems. Both federal and local funding are needed to move this project into design and construction. Local funding was approved by the voters in the establishment of the Main Street Rail Transportation Development District (TDD).

Throughout the summer, the KC Streetcar project team continued to work on overall project development activities, station stop location and track alignments, NEPA/environmental documentation and development of a detailed financial plan in order to apply for federal funding. This work resulted in updated project cost estimates influenced by recent market escalations within the industry, forecasted inflation, overall market uncertainty and guidance from FTA officials.

Total project cost for the 3.6-mile route from Union Station to 51st Street is currently estimated at \$279 million in 2018 dollars, and \$316 million when inflating costs to 2023 dollars, the planned year of opening, and accounting for project contingency. Overall project contingency currently stands at 33% (\$104 million) of total project costs in an effort to pro-actively plan for this uncertainty and respond to recent FTA guidance in reaction to market escalations. Importantly, this increased project cost does not reflect any change in project scope nor does it affect the local funding already in place for the extension, with no additional local funding required to support the proposed program. The KC Streetcar project team is seeking \$151 million in federal funding to be combined with \$164 million in local funding from the voter-approved TDD, reflecting a 48% federal funding and 52% local funding match.

“We feel strongly that our New Starts federal grant submission will compete well with projects across the country based on our merits and the proven success of the downtown starter line,” said Tom Gerend, executive director of the KC Streetcar Authority. “Approved TDD funds will cover the local funding needed to move this project forward, in addition to creating a sustainable source of revenue for ongoing operations and maintenance,” Gerend continued.

KCMO will serve as the project sponsor and grantee for the New Starts program and will oversee design and construction for the streetcar expansion project. The KCSA and KCATA will serve as partners through this process as well as design, construction and operations.

As the KC Streetcar project team waits to hear about the federal funding process, they will continue to advance the project planning for the Main Street Extension to UMKC, including work to refine streetcar stop locations, track alignment for the southern portion of the route, and advance NEPA/environmental review. The Main Street Extension to UMKC consists of an outside running track alignment from Union Station to 51 Street, an additional six streetcar vehicles, and sixteen streetcar stops.

A full report about the analysis and design work for the proposed streetcar stop locations and track alignment, including images of streetcars traveling through midtown, are located on the KC Streetcar website, www.kcstreetcar.org/mainstreet-extension. The project narrative for the KC Streetcar Main Street Extension New Starts application is also located on the KC Streetcar website, www.kcstreetcar.org/mainstreet-extension.

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