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RIDEKC TO EMBARK ON EAST-WEST HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT/STREETCAR STUDY

(Kansas City, Missouri) – KC Streetcar Authority Board members approved a financial contribution to study a major East-West public transit corridor in the heart of Kansas City.

The KC Streetcar Authority (KCSA) and the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) will study multi-modal transit options for improved east-west connections. On Sept. 30, the KCSA Board approved funding a multi-modal transit study in an amount not to exceed \$75,000. This is contingent on comparable contributions from additional project partners, with a total study cost estimated at \$250,000 - \$300,000.

“Kansas City’s streetcar continues to be a great draw to our City’s downtown neighborhoods, bolstering businesses, increasing tourism, and helping get area residents to where they need to go. Still, there are so many more Kansas City communities—particularly those in our East Side neighborhoods—who could benefit vastly from an East-West Streetcar expansion, which would create more free transit opportunities for more people who rely on public transportation for work or for play. I applaud the KC Streetcar and KCATA for continuing to explore ways we can better serve Kansas Citians in all zip codes, and I look forward to further discussion about this possible expansion, said **Mayor Quinton Lucas.**”

“RideKC’s four pillars of transit are connecting people to jobs, education, housing and healthcare on a foundation of social equity,” said **Robbie Makinen**, KCATA president and CEO. “We are excited that KCSA has advanced matching funds to study east/west connectivity for the region’s essential healthcare workers and the Truman Sports Complex.”

Early discussions are underway to build funding partnerships to support advancement of an East-West high capacity, public transit and streetcar study. These efforts were initiated in-part by a request from the University of Kansas Health System to look at opportunities for improved connectivity with KU Medical Center and regional medical complexes in Kansas City, Missouri.

“There are countless benefits...The Health System would much rather invest in world class health care technology instead of paying to park more vehicles on the campus. In addition, the western extension would also have environmental benefits as vehicle traffic would be reduced. We believe the benefits of a western streetcar extension would be shared across the entire metropolitan area and fulfill the bi-state mission of the KCATA,” said **Bob Page**, President & CEO, University of Kansas Health System.

The East-West study is estimated to begin in early 2022 and take approximately 12 months to complete. As Congress considers additional funding for national public infrastructure and transit, it is incredibly important that Kansas City position itself to compete for federal funding. Developing plans and local consensus on regional project priorities is essential to this process.

“We are just months away from breaking ground for the Main Street Extension, which will serve as the spine for Kansas City’s regional transit system, and the time to think about future connections is now,” said **Tom Gerend**, Executive Director, KC Streetcar Authority. “The KCSA is excited to partner with the KCATA to bring high-speed public transit to more communities, connecting people where they are to opportunities like employment, education, health services, etc.”

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