



City of

PORTLAND, OREGON

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Portland lands \$75 million for streetcar

Eastside Loop will create 1,200 construction jobs over the next two years

Portland, Ore – 1,200 construction jobs, 90 manufacturing jobs, 6.6 miles of streetcar track, and one pivotal FTA decision. That’s what the City of Portland won today, when United States Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood this morning announced his intent to grant \$75 million to Trimet for the Portland Streetcar Loop. The project is the first Small Starts FTA grant for streetcars in the country.

The approval of the \$75 million means that the contracts for the \$147 million project can proceed immediately. The City of Portland will also place an order for 6 Oregon-manufactured streetcars from Oregon Iron Works. The vehicle order means 90 manufacturing jobs for skilled individuals in design and project management, welding, fabrication, electronics, and general labor. The total construction contract will add 1,200 jobs.

“Representative Earl Blumenauer, a true leader and a visionary for green transportation, put this announcement in motion three years ago, with the creation of the Small Starts legislation,” said Portland Mayor Sam Adams. “The streetcar is an incredible tool for us to continue our investment in leadership in sustainability and livability that we treasure in Portland.”

Though Rep. Blumenauer sponsored the Small Starts legislation in the last surface transportation authorization bill, the Bush administration prevented funding for streetcar projects. But Rep. Blumenauer did not work in isolation. Oregon’s federal delegation worked as a team to deliver this win. Representatives Peter DeFazio and Earl Blumenauer were leaders in creating the Small Starts program to fund streetcars. And, Senators Ron

Wyden and Jeff Merkley worked with Representatives DeFazio, Blumenauer, David Wu and Kurt Schrader to urge the Obama administration to fund the Portland Streetcar Loop. The project is in line with President Obama's strong support for livable communities and greener investments.

Continuing the theme of a team effort, both Metro and Trimet have used their substantial experience with the Federal Transit Administration to advance the project. The business community support was essential to secure funding for this project.

Portland has seen unparalleled private investment of \$3.5 billion within 3 blocks of the current streetcar line, translating into \$30 million per year in revenues for the city. These types of investments will continue along the eastside streetcar line, investments that are essential to Portland's economic vitality.

"The streetcar has been an important catalyst for change in Portland, literally turning brown fields into livable communities," said Michal Powell, Owner of Powell's Books and Chair of Portland Streetcar Inc.

The Portland Streetcar Loop project connects the Central City's eastside with the current streetcar line in NW Portland and the south waterfront. Mayor Adams knows streetcar, a green transportation option, is a direct investment in the economic development of the City and an important vehicle is shaping our future.

"There is no better time for these jobs to come to Portland. With unemployment at a record high, the 1,200 living-wage jobs will mean so much for families that are struggling right now," Mayor Adams said.

Today's action signals an important shift in the FTA policy which should result in more streetcars nationwide and more jobs for Oregon Iron Works. Streetcar is a transportation mode that has to the potential to unite the city creating real links from neighborhood to neighborhood.

TriMet General Manager Fred Hansen added, "With this streetcar project moving forward, it keeps our region on the forefront of leveraging transit investments to create livable communities and a more sustainable environment."

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