

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Please answer questions in space provided. Applicants should feel free to use photocopies of the application forms if needed. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

1. How has the project impacted the local community?

The project has had enormous impact on the community. Since 1997 when the streetcar was announced, a total of \$1.448 billion in development investment has occurred within two blocks of the Phase I Streetcar line. The next phase of Streetcar construction has begun to connect with the South Waterfront—a 130-acre vacant industrial area with significant areas of contaminated soil. The South Waterfront development agreement includes an additional \$1 billion in new investment including 1.5 million square feet of Oregon Health and Science University academic, research and clinical facilities and 2,700 housing units. Specific impacts include:

- Over the past year, 2 million people rode the Streetcar
- Since 1997 5,298 new housing units and 3.6 million square feet of commercial and institutional space have been constructed
- The streetcar, limited parking and excellent pedestrian amenities have combined to create a new urban living option in Portland
- 30% of the new residential units are reserved for either students or individuals from income levels at or below 30% to 80% median family income (MFI)
- The most significant building renovation occurred with the development of the historic and abandoned Blitz Weinhard Brewery which is part of a five-block development on the Streetcar line that has resulted in the largest single development project in Portland with commercial, residential and retail all included.
- Where once there was contaminated soil in the River District, a new neighborhood has emerged. New grocery stores, restaurants, galleries, shops and banks now line the streets. Portland Streetcar goes through the heart of this area, stopping every two blocks and providing high quality transit access for businesses and residents.
- The success of the first phase has led to the support for more Streetcar including an extension to South Waterfront which is projected to open in 2006, concurrent with the opening of the initial development projects in the District. At full build-out in 10 years, South Waterfront development will bring a minimum of 3,000 housing units and 10,000 jobs into the Central City along with a major river greenway, educational facilities and supporting retail goods and services.

2. Describe the underlying values of the project. What, if any, significant trade-offs were required to implement the project?

Improving Livability. The underlying values of the citizen-based project are to support improved livability for high density environments that will support the public goals of urban containment, sustainable living and reduced dependence on an automobile. But higher density development does not always mean a more "livable" community. In the case of development near Streetcar, however, the package includes parallel public and private efforts to ensure that affordable housing, public open spaces, brownfield redevelopment, high quality urban design and public art. There is something for everyone along the Streetcar alignment.

Economical Construction and Operation. A second value is to develop a rail project that is less expensive than the light rail technology. The underlying ethic of the project design is that the system must be economical to build and economical to operate. Consequently, there were four critical design principles: 1) use available rights-of-way; 2) limit the investment in facilities to essentials, 3) to the extent possible, use off-the-shelf equipment, and 4) operate the system on a safe, no-frills basis. The project was designed to avoid costly expenses associated with relocating utilities and stops were developed similar to bus stops to reduce system cost.

Fit In to the Urban Environment. Design tradeoffs were made to better fit the Portland Streetcar into the scale and traffic patterns of the neighborhoods through which it travels. Streetcar vehicles, manufactured in the Czech Republic, are 8 feet wide and 66 feet long. This is about 10 inches narrower and 1/3 the length of a MAX (regional light rail system) double-car train. They run in mixed traffic and, except at stops, accommodate existing curbside parking and loading. Streetcar stops occur every few blocks and shelters are smaller to fit within the neighborhood's architecture.

Minimize Disruption to Businesses and Residents. Project design and construction methods were oriented to build the Streetcar quickly and efficiently to minimize construction impacts on adjacent businesses and residents. In addition, design decisions were made with implications for the ultimate Streetcar operations by preserving on-street parking, keeping construction within the existing right-of-way and sharing the streetcar lane with autos. The project also placed a very high priority on responsiveness to complaints received from adjacent property owners throughout the construction process.

Partnerships Matter. The City of Portland owns the Streetcar while Portland Streetcar Inc (PSI), a nonprofit corporation is responsible for designing, managing construction and operating the system. The PSI Board is made up of individuals representing the perspectives of citizens, city agencies and property owners along the Streetcar alignment. The trade-offs made in this type of decision-making body have continued to make the Portland Streetcar a better project by serving the needs of a diverse community.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION (CONT'D)

3. Describe the key elements of the development process, including community participation where appropriate.

In 1990, the City of Portland initiated a feasibility study for the Streetcar, hired a project manager, established a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) and began hosting a series of public meetings with a plan emerging at the end of that year. The plan called for lines on both sides of the Willamette River, including major north/south alignments east and west of the Willamette and several significant east/west routes. Developers, land owners, neighborhood leaders and downtown residents were included in the process that continues today.

In 1992, the City of Portland successfully applied for a \$900,000 federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant, which together with a matching financial commitment from the City of Portland, greatly intensified the project planning. By late 1992, the community had come to a consensus on the form of the project. The first section of the line would be built on the west side, connecting downtown to established residential and retailing in Northwest Portland. An extension to the south of downtown would be next. The community agreed to the purchase of modern streetcar vehicles, similar to those used in Europe.

In 1995, the City issued a request for proposals to design, build, operate and maintain a streetcar system. Portland Streetcar, Inc., a local non-profit corporation, was selected to provide these functions. The members of the PSI Board of Directors consist of property owners, community leaders, neighborhood leaders and public officials. A list of the CAC and PSI Board members is included in the Supplemental Pages section of this application.

In May of 1999, construction began on the 2.4 mile first phase of the Streetcar with service starting in 2001 from Legacy Good Samaritan Hospital in northwest Portland, through the River District to Portland State University. The second phase, currently under construction and scheduled for a March 11, 2005 opening, extends the line .6 miles southward to RiverPlace. A third phase to the South Waterfront development area is funded and scheduled for revenue service in 2006. Conceptual planning is underway to extend the line across the Willamette River to the Lloyd and Central Eastside Districts.

4. Describe the financing of the project. Please include all funding sources and square foot costs were applicable.

The Streetcar is a unique transportation project in that the \$56.9 million first phase was locally funded from the following sources:

- \$ 28.5 million in bonds backed by revenues from City-owned parking garages after a \$.20/hour rate raise for short-term parking,
- \$ 9.6 million contributed by property owners through a local assessment district (LID) on non-owner occupied residential units(?)
- \$ 7.5 million in tax increment financing from the Portland Development Commission, the City's urban renewal agency
- \$ 5.5 million in reallocated transit funds from TriMet
- \$ 5.8 million in City funds

The total Phase I project cost was under \$25 million per alignment mile. Phase 2, currently under construction, is \$15.8 million for the .6 mile extension which includes a new roadway on a retained structure to provide access to properties along the riverfront in preparation for an extension to South Waterfront. The annual budget for operations and maintenance of the Streetcar for FY 2006 is \$3.1 million. On-going operations and maintenance funding is coming from TriMet, the City of Portland, fare revenues and Streetcar sponsorships from local businesses and property owners.

5. Is the project unique and/or does it address significant urban issues? Is the model adaptable to other urban settings?

On July 20, 2001, the Portland Streetcar opened and became the first modern streetcar system in North America. It is part of a unique public/private strategy to link investment in high quality transit service with major redevelopment.

Like many other cities, Portland is growing in population and is proactively looking for ways to promote economic development while managing growth. Keeping Downtown Portland healthy is critical to the region's economic stability. New residents need housing and jobs – and they need transportation to get them back and forth. Keeping Portland a livable city requires getting a handle on traffic congestion. One of the best ways to do that is to make transit so convenient that people will choose to ride rather than drive. Another way is to plan new communities around transit, the way Portland neighborhoods were originally designed. The streetcar provides a safe, convenient and accessible link through the Central City and the region with connections to buses and light rail. The more people in one small area, the more support there will be for a transit system.

The benefits of the streetcar are frequency of service, certainty of service (there's no question where the streetcar will go), ease of entry and exit. And there's the intangible – people like riding trains. An investment in a high quality transit system where it can serve the most people makes good sense. Northwest Portland is one of the most densely populated areas on the West Coast. The River District and South Waterfront also house a lot of people in a compact area. Portland State University has an established record of high transit ridership and has been able to limit new investment in parking structures thanks to the Streetcar.

A streetcar is uniquely suited for neighborhoods. Streetcars are smaller, they fit in with the size and scale of neighborhood streets and architecture, they don't require a separate travel lane, they are less disruptive to build – and they cost less than light rail systems.

In addition, the Portland Streetcar's success has made it a model for other communities across the country. People come to Portland to tour the Streetcar at a pace of two groups each week. New streetcar projects are underway in Little Rock, Arkansas, Seattle, Washington, and Washington, DC. These communities share a common goal for addressing significant urban issues and are adapting the Portland Streetcar Project to their own urban settings. Over 80 cities have come together as part of the National Streetcar Coalition with the primary goal to create projects that use streetcar as a model for sound urban investment that, in turn, make their cities more livable.

RELEVANT PROJECT DATES

Portland Streetcar Project – Key Milestones

- 1990 City initiates Streetcar Feasibility Study and establishes the Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee
- 1992 City of Portland receives \$900,000 federal HUD grant and matches with local funds
- 1995 City issues RFP to design, build, operate and maintain Streetcar. The non-profit corporation, Portland Streetcar Inc., is selected
- 1999 May, Construction begins from Legacy Good Samaritan Hospital to Portland State University
- 1999 September, Notice to Proceed for Skoda to begin construction of Streetcar vehicles
- 2001 January, project Substantial Completion
- 2001 April, Skoda vehicles begin arriving
- 2001 July, Begin passenger service
- 2005 March, Streetcar service to RiverPlace to begin
- 2006 Streetcar service to South Waterfront to begin