US HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE APPROVES $3 MILLION IN FEDERAL FUNDS FOR MODERN STREETCAR

The U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Committee approved $3 million for the Tucson Modern Streetcar Project in the fiscal year 2010 Transportation and Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill. This is in addition to the $2 million appropriation the City received last year. The City of Tucson continues to pursue additional federal funds through several Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grants.

“This announcement is great news for Tucson and is a show of confidence in our Modern Streetcar project on behalf of the FTA and Congress,” said City of Tucson Mayor Bob Walkup. “Typically, appropriations are not received until the FTA recommends full funding to Congress. We are clearly on that path. I’m grateful to the members of the Arizona Congressional delegation for their efforts.”

"This money is another down payment on the future of public transportation into Tucson," said Congressman Raúl Grijalva. "I am proud to support the streetcar project, and I will continue to advocate for its complete funding ."

The City of Tucson is seeking $75 million in federal funds to construct a four-mile modern streetcar system that connects the University of Arizona to downtown Tucson. The voter-approved Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) will provide an additional $75 million in local money to construct the $150 million system.

The City of Tucson has received its environmental clearances from the FTA and is far enough along in the design of the Modern Streetcar Project to be considered “shovel-ready.” The project is a strong contender for full funding based on the approved environmental clearances, previous earmarks, and the current presidential administration’s full support of sustainable projects like the Modern Streetcar.

“When complete, the modern streetcar will provide economic development and transit-oriented development opportunities in the central Tucson area. This will translate into more jobs, more visitors and I expect it to pull people back into the central city to live, play and work,” Mayor Walkup said.

The Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT) keeps Tucson moving smoothly and safely. The Department’s nearly 400 employees oversee the maintenance and reconstruction of nearly 4,400 lane miles of streets and are responsible for hundreds of drainage structures, public art pieces, street lights and signs, and traffic signs and signals in Tucson. TDOT also operates the City’s transit services, Sun Tran and Sun Van.

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