

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SPOKANE TRANSIT

MEDIA CONTACT

Brandon Rapez-Betty, Director of Communications and Customer Service

Brapez-betty@spokanetransit.com

(509) 344-1879

Tuesday, April, 9, 2019

FTA ALLOCATES \$53.4M TO SPOKANE'S CENTRAL CITY LINE

SPOKANE, WA – The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced today that it will allocate the full federal share of Spokane Transit Authority's (STA) \$53.4M Small Starts Grant request for the Central City Line—a 6-mile, all-electric, corridor-based Bus Rapid Transit service operating between Browne's Addition and Spokane Community College through Downtown Spokane and the University District.

The allocation comes from remaining funding in FTA's Fiscal Year 2018 Capital Investment Grants (CIG) Program, which invests federal funds alongside local contributions to fund important public transportation infrastructure. The expenditure of the federal allocation can begin after STA and the FTA enter into a formal grant agreement later this year. Spokane Transit is one of five agencies across the country to receive a portion of the \$1.36B allocation.

"This is a giant step forward for Spokane Transit, as well as its current and future riders," said Spokane City Council Member and STA Board Chair, Candace Mumm. "This project has been nearly a decade in the making. The Board of Directors is committed to working with the FTA and taking the necessary steps to execute a grant agreement and see the project completed as part of our ten-year plan. I would like to extend our thanks to our 3rd District delegation and the State Legislature for their role in making today's allocation possible."

The Central City Line will enhance mobility options throughout Spokane's urban core and the surrounding residential neighborhoods by offering frequent, all-day service on an easy-to-use transit line that operates much like more expensive streetcars in larger cities. It will be distinctly branded and include permanent stations with comfortable and convenient customer features like real-time information, shelters and leaning rails, area wayfinding signage and more. The new line is expected to provide nearly 1,000,000 rides in its first year and generate \$175 million in economic development over a 20-year period.

"The FTA allocation of \$53.4 million to the Central City Line is an acknowledgment of a visionary and level-headed approach to public transportation by our Board of Directors and many dedicated partners here in Spokane," said E. Susan Meyer, STA's Chief Executive Officer. "We started this journey many years ago with an objective to design a system that is sized and scaled for our transportation needs and resources, and the FTA is demonstrating that we are on the right track."

The Central City Line is one of more than 25 projects in the Spokane region's 10-year transit improvement plan for which voters in every jurisdiction in the transit service area approved local funding in 2016. The plan aims to maintain, improve and expand public transit in response to the growing population and increasing expectation of transportation options in urban areas.

Spokane County Commissioner and longtime STA Board Member, Al French, attributed the important milestone to strong local support of the regional vision and active involvement from Spokane’s federal delegation.

“Congresswoman McMorris Rodgers, and Senators Murray and Cantwell have all tracked this project to understand its transformational impact in and around downtown Spokane, and have put their efforts behind it whenever possible,” French said. “Credit is also due to the skilled leadership of our CEO and her dedicated team. Together they’ve demonstrated STA’s ability to compete nationally, against the best of the best, and win.”

###

STA provides public transportation services through fixed route (bus) service, paratransit operations and vanpool to the cities of Airway Heights, Cheney, Liberty Lake, Medical Lake, Millwood, Spokane and Spokane Valley and parts of the unincorporated County. The organization employs more than 500 people and is overseen by a 12-member regional board: nine voting elected officials from Spokane County and cities in the Public Transportation Benefit Area, two non-voting elected officials from area small cities, and a non-voting labor member. For more information about STA, please visit www.spokanetransit.com.