

Subject: \$100,000 EPA Grant To Help Eugene Neighborhoods Explore SmartTrips Options

Message Body:  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

\$100,000 EPA Grant To Help Eugene Neighborhoods Explore SmartTrips Options

A new project to promote environmentally friendly commuting in Eugene got a \$100,000 boost from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) this week.

SmartTrips Eugene is designed to reduce drive-alone trips and increase biking, walking, and public transit in targeted geographic areas of the city. A pilot project will start in the Harlow neighborhood this summer. The EPA announced today that Eugene will receive a \$104,126 EPA Climate Showcase Communities grant to continue the program in 2011, making it possible to offer this program to the Trainsong, Jefferson/Westside and Whiteaker neighborhoods. The 2011 SmartTrips program will provide customized outreach to approximately 12,000 residents.

Eugene was one of 20 U.S. communities to receive a total of \$7.8 million in grants to reduce greenhouse gases. It's estimated that by 2012 these 20 projects will reduce about 135,000 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions annually - equal to the emissions from 25,000 passenger vehicles - and save more than \$4.5 million per year in energy costs.

SmartTrips Eugene incorporates an innovative and individualized marketing program that hand-delivers packets of information to residents who wish to learn more about transportation options including transit, walking, bicycling, carpooling, and combining trips. Key components feature biking and walking maps and organized activities that get people out in their neighborhoods or places of employment to discover how many trips they can easily, conveniently, and safely make without using a car.

"It's great to see a city make it easy for citizens to use environmentally friendly ways of getting around," said Michelle Pirzadeh, Deputy Regional Administrator for the EPA. "We're excited to support this initiative. It's a big step in the right direction to energy efficiency."

Most of the Harlow neighborhood and a portion of the Cal Young neighborhood will be included in the 2010 pilot program. The SmartTrips Eugene pilot program is funded through a separate federal grant from the Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant program. Close proximity to downtown and the University of Oregon and good pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure were among the

considerations used to select the target neighborhoods for the SmartTrips Eugene project.