

Pennsylvania manufacturer will build Milwaukee streetcars

Brookville Equipment Corp. will deliver first car in two years

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The city of Milwaukee has selected Pennsylvania-based Brookville Equipment Corp. to build the the first four street car vehicles for \$18.6 million.

Brookville, a 97-year-old transportation manufacturer, is expected to have the first streetcar delivered in 24 months with subsequent streetcars delivered once a month after. A fifth car, which will cost about \$4 million, could also be ordered.

“We have reached another major milestone toward making the Milwaukee Streetcar a reality,” said Mayor Tom Barrett.

Brookville built the streetcars being used in Dallas and is currently building the streetcars planned for Detroit, said Michael White, sales manager for the company.

“We can modify the streetcars to make them what everyone wants,” he said.

The Milwaukee streetcars will be 8-feet-8-inches wide and 66-feet long with 32 seats that can hold 150 passengers.

They will feature bike racks and doors on both sides. Empty, the streetcars weigh 79,000 pounds.

The cars have a 30-year life and have a maximum speed of 42 miles per hour that can be increased if the manufacture chooses to.

The city’s contract includes two staff from Brookville who will be on-site in Milwaukee for two years.

The Common Council earlier this year approved the \$124 million downtown streetcar project. The cost to build the system will be paid for with about \$65 million in federal funds and about \$59 million from tax incremental financing districts.

Through October, \$8.8 million has been spent on the project.

Most of the federal funds for the project were allocated to Milwaukee decades ago to pay for a rail transit system.

Last month, the city received an additional \$14.2 million in federal funds for the project. The grant, awarded through the U.S. Department of Transportation’s TIGER program, will be used for the additional lakefront line to be added to the downtown streetcar route.



Milwaukee Streetcar rendering

Design of the main downtown line is about 90 percent complete and the line is expected to be operational in 2018.

The lakefront line will likely open eight to nine months later and be coordinated with the opening of the Couture, a \$122 million, 44-story 302-unit apartment tower planned for land that now houses the Downtown Transit Center, 909 E. Michigan St.

After Thursday's announcement at City Hall, Jeffrey Kober, president and CEO of Cudahy-based Milwaukee Composites Inc., announced his firm was donating the flooring for the four vehicles.

"This is a great day for Milwaukee," Kober said. "Supporting this program is our privilege and our honor."

Brookville is also working with two other Wisconsin companies to manufacture the vehicles, Mosinee-based Arow Global, of Mosinee, will make the windows and Franksville-based Fiber-Tech Inc, will make the fiberglass shrouding, White said.

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