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FOR INFORMATION CALL

May 10, 2006

Ald. Willie Hines
Common Council President
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Mayor Closes Road To The 21st Century, Vetoes Milwaukee Connector Resolution

Common Council President Willie L. Hines, Jr. minced few words in lambasting Mayor Tom Barrett for his veto today of a resolution passed Tuesday by the Common Council supporting the Milwaukee Connector project.

“When the business leaders and citizens of this city looked to Mayor Barrett for leadership, he offered none,” said Ald. Hines.

“It’s disappointing that when the City of Milwaukee had the opportunity to move into the 21st century, this mayor is driving a Studebaker stuck in the 1950s,” Ald. Hines said. “This is a \$ 300 million project funded largely with federal and state dollars, and it is a system that will be built by Milwaukeeans for Milwaukeeans. How the Mayor of Milwaukee would be opposed to such a project is mind boggling.”

The Milwaukee Connector is a 13-mile guided system of electric street tram buses that would serve key areas of the city. Estimates indicate that ridership on routes served by the Connector will increase 20%. In-line transit systems like the guided street tram have proven to spark neighborhood and downtown development throughout the country. Unlike traditional buses that run on gasoline, the Milwaukee Connector will run on overhead electrical wires and is not reliant on spiking gas prices. The Council resolution supporting the Milwaukee Connector – approved yesterday on a 9-6 vote -- does not authorize the expenditure of any funds and specifically prohibits the use of property tax dollars for funding the system.

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Council President Blasts Mayor's Veto/ADD ONE

“The same people who are opposed to the Milwaukee Connector are those who for years have been opposed to Milwaukee’s progress,” said Ald. Hines. “These same nay sayers opposed the demolition and redevelopment of the Park East freeway. They opposed the building of Miller Park in downtown Milwaukee. They opposed public investment in the Riverwalk and they said that downtown housing and the condo boom would never happen. History has proven them wrong in each case.”

Ald Hines continued: “Now, those same people have been joined by the Mayor of Milwaukee in opposing a new, clean and efficient transit system that will move people to jobs, foster new tax base and attract and retain young people. The Common Council of the City of Milwaukee cannot allow this to happen.”

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