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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Ald. Robert Bauman
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Council Introduces Measure Supporting ACLU Claim Against DOT

*Resolution Puts City on Record in Support of Discrimination Claim Against WisDOT
over Freeway Widening, I-94 North-South Project*

A resolution introduced before the Milwaukee Common Council today puts the city squarely behind the American Civil Liberties Union in its discrimination claim against the state Department of Transportation over the widening and expansion of I-94.

In its complaint filed earlier this month with the Offices for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration, the ACLU stated that DOT's plans to widen I-94, build a new interchange at Drexel Ave., and close much of the interchange at S. 27th St. and I-894 violates civil rights laws because it will negatively impact business and economic development in Milwaukee, the state's only minority-majority city.

According to **Ald. Robert J. Bauman**, chair of the Common Council's Public Works Committee, WisDOT's own environmental impact statement shows that building the Drexel Interchange is likely to hurt development in the city of Milwaukee. "The plans for the widening of the freeway, to shut off most of the S. 27th St. access, and the Drexel Interchange do absolutely nothing positive for the residents and business owners of Milwaukee, but do a whole lot for people living in the suburbs to our south and west," the alderman said.

Alderman Bauman also noted the stance to oppose the widening and expansion of I-94 – a \$1.9 billion project from Milwaukee south to the Illinois border – is also in line with the Council's "fix it first" position for local streets and roads. "Earlier this year the Council went on record, stating unequivocally that local street repair needs should come first, and that we should not be expanding highway capacity in southeast Wisconsin until we fix our existing roads, streets and bridges," he said.

-More-

Measure Supports ACLU Claim/ADD ONE

The case for Milwaukee's "fix it first" strategy for streets and bridges is made in a Comptroller's Office audit report of the residential street paving program, released last week. One of the report's key findings is that in order for the city to replace the roads identified as in need of "immediate replacement," it would take 36 years to do so at the current rate of budgetary allocation for roadway replacement. The report also states that 214 miles (approx. 20% of the city's streets) are in "poor" condition and require "immediate replacement."

The audit report lays out options to eliminate the city's street maintenance backlog involving recommended spending at levels of up to \$40 million per year – dwarfing the approximate \$6 million-plus the city has typically spent during the past several years. Also, the audit shows the replacement cycle has now *narrowed* to 106 years – down from 162 years as recently as 2005.

For more details, read the Council resolution (**attached**).