

May 20, 2019

Open Letter to the Mayor of the City of Milwaukee and the Common Council

Dear Mayor Barrett and Members of the Common Council,

We are writing to express our strong desire that plans to expand The Hop include a commitment for design and engineering of a route that will serve Walker's Point and the Near South Side of Milwaukee. Extending the Hop to South Sixth Street and National Avenue will offer equitable access to an important new transit option, and will contribute to the viability of the system both through ridership and economic development.

### **Strong Economic Development Potential**

The recent Transit Oriented Development Study showed that potential development along South First Street and National Avenue could reach 3800 new housing units, 45 new storefronts, and 7500 new jobs - almost double the potential cited by the same study for the Bronzeville leg of the streetcar extension.

### **Clear Community Support**

We hope that the signatures on this letter persuade you of both the unity and depth of support for the streetcar in our area. As your partners in this process, you have our commitment to work to reach whatever public threshold you seek in order to demonstrate that our community is united behind the extension of the streetcar going south on South First Street and west on National Avenue to South Sixth Street and National Avenue. There are many important benefits to this route:

**Provides a connection to the Hispanic Community:** Milwaukee's fastest growing population segment, responsible for 100% of the net population and job growth of the last decade.

**Serves a significant commercial corridor:** National Avenue offers development opportunities, destinations like MATC and schools, and a vibrant business district on S. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Sets up future southbound route on First Street:** As a next step, the Hop should continue south from National on 1<sup>st</sup> to leverage many large development parcels along South First Street, and serve significant employers and destinations including Rockwell Automation, Komatsu Mining Corp, UWM School of Freshwater Sciences, Freshwater Plaza, and Independence First. Eventually, we hope it would continue even farther south.

The route offers logical opportunities for continuation further south and west as funding becomes available. Just as the North Side of the city will be served by multiple routes to different destinations, the South Side will eventually need routes going both west and south.

We understand that engineering is required to establish the feasibility of routes, but we want to be sure you understand that our community is united in support of extension along this route.

Projects of this magnitude have their own internal logic and timing. If a southern extension is delayed, you will leave the fastest-growing segment of the city and the densest area of families with children in the state to forever play catch-up. While the extension of the streetcar is necessary to reap its full potential and to truly benefit the residents and families of the city, the timely extension of the streetcar into an area where it will provide the greatest benefit is respectful of the support and engagement that this community has shown.

We hope and trust that, with this public statement and framework of support, you will expand your proposal to include meaningful and impactful expansion into Walker's Point. We know that it will be a benefit to the Near South Side community and the City as a whole. We look forward to supporting the expanded version of your proposal in the near future.

Respectfully,

Nancy Hernandez  
Hispanic Collaborative



Kevin Wondra  
Walker's Point Association



Ivan Gamboa  
Harbor District, Inc.



Lilith Fowler  
Harbor District, Inc.



Val Klump  
Dean, UWM School of Freshwater Sciences



Darryl Morin  
Hispanic Entrepreneur  
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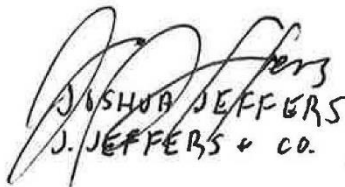
Dr. Michele Bria  
Journey House



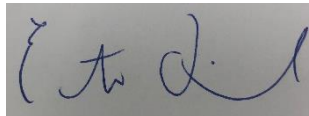
Eugene Manzanet  
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