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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Ald. Robert J. Bauman
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\$300 Million Guided Bus Plan Called “Boondoggle,” Waste of Taxpayer Dollars

Downtown Alderman Decries Plans, Says It Will Not Improve Public Transit Service

Milwaukee 4th District Ald. Robert J. Bauman says he strongly opposes a resolution introduced in the Milwaukee Common Council today which endorses construction of a 13-mile, \$300 million guided bus system in downtown and near west, north and east side neighborhoods.

Said Ald. Bauman, “In a time of diminishing resources to maintain basic public services like police, fire fighting and sanitation, and with taxpayer anger over increasing taxes, this misguided \$300 million proposal is a colossal waste of taxpayer dollars that will require a local tax increase to fund construction and operation.”

Ald. Bauman, who represents the downtown area and portions of the near west side, said guided buses will not operate in snow and ice, will actually diminish the quality of transit service in areas where the guided buses will operate, and will result in a loss of transit system jobs. He added the construction process will eliminate on-street parking, disrupt traffic flow and access to residential and commercial buildings and will interfere with deliveries.

(more)

Guided Bus Boondoggle/ADD ONE

“The guided bus system will eliminate all street parking on segments of Wisconsin Ave., Wells St., Prospect Ave., Farwell Ave., Oakland Ave., Van Buren St., Jackson St., 3rd St. and 4th St in the downtown area and on the east and west side,” said Ald. Bauman. “In addition, an unsightly canopy of overhead wires and apparatus will be erected over these streets to provide power for the guided buses, obscuring the views of such Milwaukee icons as the Calatrava Brise Soleil at the Milwaukee Art Museum.”

Ald. Bauman, chair of the Common Council’s Public Works Committee, says construction of the guided bus system would also prove to be another huge headache for downtown businesses, as it would mean ripping up the roadways and sidewalks that were recently rebuilt as part of the Wisconsin Ave. streetscaping project. “Wisconsin Avenue businesses do not need additional months of construction bringing more disruption to their businesses,” said Ald. Bauman.

“The guided bus system being proposed for Milwaukee does not operate anywhere in North America and only operates in one city in the world, Nancy, France,” said Ald. Bauman. “It is wrong to require Milwaukee taxpayers to take a \$300 million gamble on a transit system that only operates in one city in the world and cannot operate in ice and snow.”

It’s expected that the proposed resolution to endorse construction of the Downtown Connector Project will be heard at a future meeting of the Common Council’s Steering and Rules Committee.