

DIAMOND TOWER CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION, INC.

**1633 North Prospect Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53202**

April 26, 2006

Alderman Michael D'Amato
City of Milwaukee
City Hall Room 205
200 East Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

RE: Proposed Milwaukee Connector (Guided Bus System)

Dear Alderman D'Amato:

The Board of Directors of the Diamond Tower Condominium Association, Inc. opposes the proposed Milwaukee Connector System.

We are opposed to the Connector project for many reasons that we would be happy to discuss with you. We feel that it has a negative impact on traffic, safety, parking and general quality of life of our neighborhood. The costs to us as taxpayers are also in question. We feel the project would have a negative impact and would detract from an area that is growing to the future.

Sincerely,

Robert W. Wurtz, President
Board of Directors

cc: Mayor Tom Barrett
Alderman Robert Baumann
Alderman Willie Hines
County Executive Scott Walker
County Supervisor Gerry Broderick
East Side Condominium Owners Association

From: <sct72@sbcglobal.net>
To: <whines@milwaukee.gov>, <mmurph@milwaukee.gov>, <jwitko@milwaukee.gov>, <mdamat@milwaukee.gov>, <rdonov@milwaukee.gov>, <jldavis@milwaukee.gov>, <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>, <ahamil@milwaukee.gov>, <jbohl@milwaukee.gov>, <mmcgee@milwaukee.gov>, <wwade@milwaukee.gov>, <rpuent@milwaukee.gov>, <jdudzi@milwaukee.gov>, <twitko@milwaukee.gov>, <tzieli@milwaukee.gov>, <tmacdo@milwaukee.gov>, <mayor@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/25/2006 10:40:09 PM
Subject: Steering & Rules Committee: Proposal: Guided Bus

I would like this letter to be part of the official Common Council file, and also read at Thursday's hearing if possible. Thank you!

Good day. There are many concerns that I think are not being addressed in regard to this Guided Bus project, in favor of more rosy projections & talk of Milwaukee "innovation" – Miller Park and the Milwaukee Art Museum excluded, apparently.

To start with, I have yet to see how the current "Trolley Bus" service fits into this current plan. Started in 1997, the service has consistently lost money and has been discontinued more than once. The "trolley" service used to be year-round and seven days a week, but has been drastically reduced to a Wednesday thru Sunday service that only runs from late May to early September. Articles culled from the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel website show that when the federal aid ran out, the Milwaukee BID had to bail the Trolley service out. This covered a shortfall in donations, but this year the Trolley fares will double to \$2. Note that this will be only the ninth year of Trolley service – the plan to take a loan for twenty years seems about as impractical as 'naming rights' for bus stops!

After the last major stoppage in Trolley service, nine of the thirteen trolleys were sold off. If a likely similar fate were to befall the Guided Bus project, what would it cost to deconstruct the various segments? At least with the reduction in Trolley service, all that was affected were a few Transit vehicles. However, the more permanent aspects of the Guided Bus project would make any similar reduction in ridership much more costly.

The second and nearly just as important concern is parking. There is a reason resident parking goes for premium prices. I'm sure most of those involved in this project park in a driveway, instead of on the street. Now imagine having to pay \$75-\$100 A MONTH for the privilege of parking in that same driveway. Changing to angle parking on the major routes of Prospect & Farwell would reduce these avenues to one lane – which would significantly increase backups & congestion on these major Milwaukee thoroughfares. Special events, such as Al's Memorial Run and the July 3 fireworks, significantly reduce parking options severely – further removal of parking in these areas would have a severe negative impact on the community.

Speaking of the community, past the current senior living establishments and the apartments utilized by students and others, it's hard not to notice all of the multi-million dollar condos going up around the proposed eastern Guided Bus route. I don't know about you, but those that make up the residents of these current and proposed condos don't really seem like the type that would use ANY transit offering, Guided Bus or otherwise. The current Transit offerings are more than enough for those living on the proposed eastern route. And with a western route following Fond Du Lac in mixed traffic, any time savings over regular Transit may be negligible.

This Guided Bus project is unrealistic at best, and a potential financial disaster at worst.

Sincerely,
Scott F Cook
1732 N PROSPECT AVE # 707
MILWAUKEE, WI 53202

From: <DSchlieman@aol.com>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/27/2006 11:24:23 AM
Subject: Thoughts on light rail

Mayor Barrett, Common Council President Hines, Aldermen Bauman and D'Amato,

I am unable to attend the meeting today, April 27, on the proposed transit connector because I have a very inflamed, sore throat. Below are my thoughts.

I think that a fixed rail system on Prospect Ave. will not be productive, esp. if it is planned for the East side of the street. The majority of high-rise buildings are on the East side of the street and 3 or maybe 4 new high rises, 20 stories plus, are going to be built on the East side of Prospect starting this year and next. Prospect is a one way street going north. I travel this street frequently since I live on Prospect. Moving vans, UPS trucks, garbage trucks, etc., use this street daily to service the condos and apts. They park either in the parking lane or take up a lane of traffic. The moving vans set for hrs. in one place and it is necessary to be able to drive around them. If a fixed rail line is in place the moving vans will have to take up one lane of traffic, the rail lane will be in the parking lane and that leaves one lane of traffic for the public. Traffic is bad enough already but with one lane blocked and an additional 700 population on the street light rail will be a nightmare. Will the persons who are using the trucks have to carry furniture and etc., across light rail lines to get to the condos, plus have to worry about getting hit by a train? Fixed light rail will make matters worse. I also wonder if all the trees on the same side of the street would have to be cut down to make room for overhead wires. Lets not forget about snow.

What is wrong with nonpolluting buses? Milwaukee already has a great bus system. More people are using it since gas prices went up. Gas prices will not come down. It will not be long before we think of \$3.00 a gallon as inexpensive gas. Let's use and expand the system we have in place.

Thanks.

Donna Schlieman
1300 N. Prospect Ave.

From: Jim Schafer <schaferjimmyjoe@yahoo.com>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/27/2006 9:45:03 AM
Subject: Guided Bus System

Alderman Bauman,

I just wanted to express my Strong opposition to the guided bus system proposed for Prospect ave .

I believe this project is not desired by myself or others in this area of the city. I further believe this would be fiscally irresponsible, aesthetically displeasing, and further perpetuate the already growing parking problem down town. This system would not cause people to give up their cars and use a transit system.

I urge you to NOT move forward with this proposed project.

Respectfully,

Jim Schafer
1300 N prospect Ave. #114
Milwaukee, WI 53202

city resident.....10 years

Blab-away for as little as 1¢/min. Make PC-to-Phone Calls using Yahoo! Messenger with Voice.

From: "Tom Bauman" <TCB@rimrockcorp.com>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/27/2006 7:11:26 AM
Subject: Guided Busses

My son Dave and I own a Duplex at 2849-51 Maryland. Dave lives in the duplex and works on the east side. We are both opposed to the Milwaukee Connector ID 051610 and urge you keep up the good work.

Tom Bauman

phone (262) 432-0600 x112

fax (262) 432-0607

From: "Jonathan Lhost" <jrlhost04@alumni.amherst.edu>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/25/2006 4:26:26 PM
Subject: Oppose Guided Bus System

Alderman Bauman,

The hearing on the proposed Guided Bus System is on Thursday. I wanted to urge you to oppose it. In short, it is an absolutely horrible idea. Parking is already a big problem in the Prospect east side area. To eliminate all east side parking on Prospect would be a huge inconvenience for residents as well as visitors and patrons of local businesses, thereby hurting all and making the area a less desirable area in which to live and conduct business. Eliminating the #30 bus is also a big mistake. It is the only line going up Prospect and down Farwell connecting UWM and the east side to Brady, downtown, and beyond. It is worth mentioning the probable eyesore the overhead wires will be. And all of this with a \$300 Million price tag. Definitely a huge mistake. Please do everything you can to keep this from happening. Thank you for your time.

Jonathan Lhost

From: "Leys, Ann" <ALEYS@impactinc.org>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/25/2006 2:54:18 PM
Subject: \$300 Million Guided Bus System

Ald. Bob Bauman,

I am unable to attend the meeting on April 27, 2006 at 1:30pm, however, I would like you to know that I am very much against the idea of a Guided Bus System. I live on Prospect Avenue and the parking situation is already on overload, but my greatest concern is the cost. I believe that we could spend \$300 million in a much better way. This proposal just does nothing for me. I use the number 30 buses all the time and would be very lost if they were discontinued.

Please register my non-support on this proposal. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ann M. Leys

1570 North Prospect Avenue

Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

From: <sct72@sbcglobal.net>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/25/2006 1:20:24 PM
Subject: Guided Bus

Good day.

I wasn't able to get into the docs for your views on the Guided Bus proposal, but I also think it is unacceptable. Why? Two words - Trolley Bus. The Trolley Bus currently covers a lot of the same area that the Guided Bus does, but there's a more important reason - the Trolley Bus was actually discontinued for 1-2 years due to lack of funding. At least in that case there were only a couple of MCTS vehicles affected. When the Guided Bus project fails, and it will, the project will take on additional costs for deconstruction of all the roadway components. The parking issues this project will create are severe enough - but I don't understand how a transit system that always seems to be cash-strapped would take on such a potential financial disaster.

Thank you for your time.

Scott F. Cook
1732 N Prospect Ave # 707
Milwaukee WI 53202

From: "krisy jones" <jonzy2490@wi.rr.com>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/24/2006 10:02:17 PM
Subject: guided bus system

Alderman Bauman:

I am a resident in the 1522 Prospect condominium and I received your post card regarding the proposed guided bus system. I cannot make the meeting as I work during the day. Yet I wanted to share my opinion with you on this matter. We just moved from Brookfield and came down to Prospect to enjoy city life in a somewhat residential setting. We love it here. But creating a guided bus system and taking away the bike lane, parking, and buses which alot of students use as well, is incredibly stupid. The cost is outrageous!

I also would guess that this system with its unsightly overhead wires would drive down our property value. Please vote NO to this idea.

Next issue:

In choosing a place to move to, we definitely looked at surrounding buildings, overall character feel of the neighborhood and green space. Moving from Brookfield can be quite a culture shock if these things are not taken into consideration. My husband and I both love the quaint architecture of the historical mansions including the one next door bought my New Land Development.

Taking away from the character of yet another building along historic Prospect Avenue would not be beneficial for present property owners, driving down their values as well. In addition, if a building is allowed too close to the oak leaf trail and path, this will interfere with all the walkers, hikers, bikers, roller bladers who are enjoying the trail as it is now. Building a condo so close to the path will alter the view and overall esthetic beauty of the trail.

I know that you need to hear from your constituents on all matters especially those that alter living situations. Please take a stand for the historic preservation of Prospect Avenue and do not allow any further development of this property.

I think it is necessary to take a look at the eventual glut of condo projects that haven't started or are just starting and make sure we are balancing the needs with appropriate city planning in Milwaukee.

Sincerely,
Kristy Jones
1522 N. Prospect Avenue
#1803

jonzy2490@wi.rr.com

From: Barry Stuart <bstuarmke@yahoo.com>
To: "milbtw@yahogroups.com" <milbtw@yahogroups.com>
Date: 4/24/2006 3:36:40 PM
Subject: Milwaukee Connector: Unsafe at Any Speed?

Barry Stuart bstuarmke@yahoo.com wrote:

After hearing Ald.

Bauman's objections to the Milwaukee Connector as it was originally conceived, I'm reminded of why no bicyclist should support this ill-conceived boondoggle. Not is it a waste of \$300 million, but because of the groove in the street needed to guide it like an oversize slot car, it's unsafe for cyclists who wish to leave the street on which it runs. When there are grooves in the road because of railroad tracks, we cyclists are taught to cross the tracks at a right angle. We'd have to make an awfully sharp right turn or left turn to cross at a right angle. Most motorists in Milwaukee aren't aware that bicyclists must make that turn to cross the tracks safely. If we don't cross at a right angle bikes like mine tend to catch a tire on the tracks or on the guideway. I believe the guideways could be the cause of bike-tram wrecks. Not only can't I support

the Milwaukee Connector on fiscal issues, but safety issues, too. Can we write our Supervisors, particularly those on the Transportation Committee and ask them to kill this boondoggle? We're better off spending this money on bus-mounted bike racks.

New Yahoo! Messenger with Voice. Call regular phones from your PC and save big.

CC: "Robert J. Bauman" <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>

From: "Robert Wurtz" <robsu@execpc.com>
To: "Robert Bauman" <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/24/2006 12:10:03 PM
Subject: Connector

I agree with your opposition to the connector as proposed. I have asked members of ESCOA (eastside condo owners association) to weigh in on this issue. What else can I do to help influence this issue? There is a committee meeting and vote this week. When is it, what time and where? I plan on attending.
Take care
Bob Wurtz

From: "Becwar, William (GE Healthcare)" <William.Becwar@ge.com>
To: "Robert Bauman" <RJBAUMA@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/24/2006 11:23:31 AM
Subject: RE: One More Tool...

Thanks Bob,

I sure wish I could make it. Just another working stiff. Wanted to pass along that info for you to use. I will put out the word to some of the locals who are transit aware, though. Ever hear of Don Leistikow? Way back when, he was a motorman for Speedrail, one of the last two or three survivors we know of. I'll see if he can get down there. After Speedrail, he was a traffic manager for Roundy's, so he has local traffic patterns down 100%; freeway, rail and even river barge, besides his lifelong interest in rail.

Best of luck,
Bill Becwar (also billbb@wi.rr.com)

-----Original Message-----

From: Robert Bauman [mailto:RJBAUMA@milwaukee.gov]
Sent: Monday, April 24, 2006 8:52 AM
To: Becwar, William (GE Healthcare)
Subject: Re: One More Tool...

I am truly impressed with your knowledge of transit issues. Glad to see there are others in Milwaukee who follow these issues and are knowledgeable about the technology.

If you could spare the time, your informed insights would be of great benefit to the Steering & Rules Committee on Thursday, April 27 at 1:30 in the Council Chambers on the third floor of city hall.

Bob Bauman

From: "Becwar, William (GE Healthcare)" <William.Becwar@ge.com>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/24/2006 7:53:13 AM
Subject: One More Tool...

More ideas for the fight against the Bombardier "gadget-bahn" bus.

The facts that the Canadian company is the only one in the world to make this technology, and that their recent poor stock performance and low sales pretty much assure that this system will be orphaned when they stop making it. Check their status after the Las Vegas Monorail debacle - another "only one in the US" transit system they built. The stock of the company running it has gone junk bond, and the ridership isn't anything within sight of what was promised. They recently closed some factories, despite producing the LRVs for Minneapolis, which had some serious issues until corrected (under warranty, thank goodness).

Contrast this Las Vegas flop with the two-rail in Minneapolis, where the ridership is through the roof (already beating projections for 2020 that critics called absurdly optimistic before the opening). Both Portland and San Diego recover about 60% of their operating expense from the farebox. MCTS is doing something like half that.

There are currently 8-10 manufacturers of light rail vehicles (depending on how you count them), so one manufacturer does not have dominance in either price or availability. Both Portland and San Diego run mixed trains from different manufacturers, and Salt Lake City borrowed some Dallas LRVs when they hosted the Winter Olympics. (The manufacturers currently running are: Siemens, Bombardier, Alstrom, Adtranz, Kinki-Sharyo, Kawasaki, Gomaco, ABB Daimler-Benz, Nippon-Sharyu, Breda, Colorado Railcar, Rotem and CAF).

Also, Nancy's neighbor, Strasbourg, saw the technology in Nancy and went with conventional light rail trams (by Alstrom). No other cities besides the two in France (Nancy & Caen) use this technology, which has no benefits over conventional buses except the electric power. If that fuel saving is the point, then put up the double wires and go buy some trolleybuses. There are currently four or five companies that will supply these, so you won't be stuck with a one-of-a-kind amusement park ride made by no one in the world.

Best of luck, and hope you can "re-rail" Milwaukee's transit choices. Putting the \$91 million toward the Metra extension would make all the sense in the world - and would prove that Milwaukee can do rail. That's why the opposition is so determined that it never happen, I suspect.

Yours Under Wire,

Bill Becwar
Wauwatosa, WI

From: "G F Bird" <gfbird@wi.rr.com>
To: <MilwaukeeE-Notify@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/22/2006 8:22:30 AM
Subject: Re: News Release From Ald. Willie L. Hines, Jr.

Council President Hines and Council members --

In response to emails I have received regarding the Milwaukee Connector, please consider the following email I earlier sent to Ald. Bauman:

I haven't looked at the details of the guided bus plan [Milwaukee Connector], what with focusing more on shoreline issues and water quality, but my tendency is to agree with you.

I have several times advocated to you that "pipe-rail" transit be used for additional transit routes.

http://www.ultimaterollercoaster.com/coasters/history/1960_1970/late_70s.shtml

<http://www.tms.org/pubs/journals/JOM/0205/Byko-0205.html>

As can be observed from these sites, the technology for such systems is highly developed over many years with satisfied customer base already in place. Ability to place track supports in oddly-spaced existing footprints such as parkways and corners of parking lots, etc., without tearing up streets or disrupting traffic for weeks or days make pipe rail systems even more compelling.

Please tell me what you think.

I hope you are not rushing into spending long-unspent monies on technology, like the connector system, more expensive to install than pipe rail, and with a track record less proven and with less public acceptance. If the federal monies available require spending in a short time frame, please spend them on KRM-related activities as I've seen suggested by Alderman Bauman.

Gregory Francis Bird
2230 South Woodward Street
Milwaukee, WI 53207
414 737 6186

----- Original Message -----

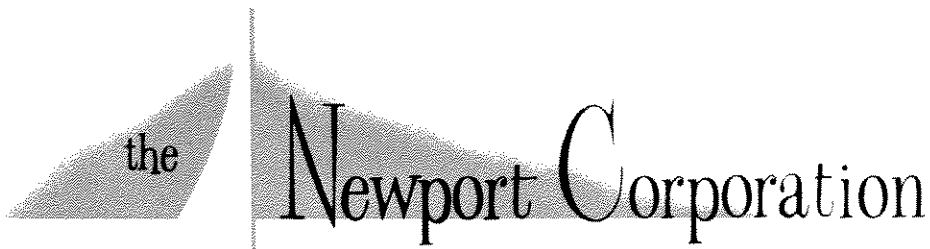
From: MilwaukeeE-Notify@milwaukee.gov
Sent: Monday, April 17, 2006 12:13 PM
Subject: News Release From Ald. Willie L. Hines, Jr.

You have a Milwaukee.Gov E-Notification for Common Council category.

Common Council President Willie L. Hines, Jr. Says Milwaukee Connector Project Key First Step, Will Augment Existing Transportation Services & Will Compliment Future Needs. (NOTE: Includes Letter From MMAC's Peter Beitzel in Support of Connector Project).

Please do not respond to this email. It is not set up to receive emails.
Please email to warnol@milwaukee.gov to reply.

You have received this notification because you subscribed to be notified for Common Council category from the City of Milwaukee at www.milwaukee.gov.



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April 21, 2006

Alderman Robert Bauman
City Hall Room 205
200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

RE: Proposed "Guided Bus System" Prospect Avenue

Dear Alderman Bauman:

The Board of Directors of Newport Corporation unanimously passed a resolution opposing the proposed "Guided Bus System" insofar as it relates to N. Prospect Avenue.

The Board opposes any reduction of available public parking along N. Prospect Avenue as it would hamstring ingress and egress from the many residential- mostly – high-rise buildings there. It would particularly impact moving vans for residents which daily use Prospect Avenue to effect people's arrivals and departures as residents.

We would be happy to further review this with you at your request.

Very Truly Yours,
The Newport Corporation

By Randy Bedore, President

cc: Mayor Tom Barrett
Alderman Michael D'Amato
County Executive Scott Walker
County Supervisor Marina Dimitrijevic
East Town Condominium Association Robert Wurtz

From: benzden@gmail.com
To: <WestSide_Milwaukee@yahoogroups.com>
Date: 4/21/2006 10:12:13 AM
Subject: Re: [WestSide] RE:\$300 Million Guided Bus Proposal

And, just who is going to operate this new transit system?! The same kind of people who can't figure out how to run (at a profit) the existing transit system!? Or, has there been a new kind of human being invented about whom we are all unaware?!

What I do see is another 'system' that will eventually (if not immediately) require public subsidies because IT IS TOO BIG (and beholden to too many special interests) to just let die.

Yahoo! Groups Links

<*> To visit your group on the web, go to:
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/WestSide_Milwaukee/

<*> To unsubscribe from this group, send an email to:
WestSide_Milwaukee-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

<*> Your use of Yahoo! Groups is subject to:
<http://docs.yahoo.com/info/terms/>

From: benzden@gmail.com
To: <WestSide_Milwaukee@yahoogroups.com>
Date: 4/21/2006 10:06:04 AM
Subject: Re: [WestSide] RE:\$300 Million Guided Bus Proposal

And regarding any other alternative, local transportation projects, including light rail.

I'm sure that at the second coming of Jesus Christ when the population is being parsed for journey to Heaven or Hell there will be someone from Milwaukee asking, "Hey! Can't we build a guided (or light or) rail system in Milwaukee, first?"

These proposals have had a life of their own (often on life support) for a couple (or more - I just came back to Milwaukee in 1987) decades - most consistently because of the 'Pot of Money' laying around somewhere in some Federal Government 'Pot of Money' locker.

I'll support any alternative to the present Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) when:

- the MCTS is making so much money it actually returns money (like the lottery but better) to public coffers to reduce our property taxes;

- the City of Milwaukee has so much extra money it doesn't need to raise taxes (via increased assessments or not) and can actually refund activities that enhance our quality of life, like:

- high school senior playground supervisors of younger children at every single playground (and park) in the city;
- hazardous waste pick-ups instead of forcing hundreds of thousands of residents to waste their own gas making trips (for those who have vehicles) to distant disposal sites;
- boulevards are maintained weed free and flowerful;
- garbage and recycled materials can be collected consistently on the same day of each week or month, respectively;
- voter lists can once again be prepared and placed on at least one light pole on each block in each ward of the city;
- ice skating can return to the frozen ponds of the various parks throughout the city (a county responsibility but the City of Milwaukee could take responsibility for activities within the parks);

- the parks are full of people on warm, sunny Sundays, especially caring adults, who can do something about a couple adolescents finding themselves in trouble and without help;

- any promises made in regard to the proposed alternative transit system are in writing with specific monetary penalties (property tax credits) when broken;

- the financial aspects, especially regarding how it's not going to raise our taxes, are in writing and prepared by people who know something about money, finances, the time value of money, opportunity costs and long term maintenance costs.

From: "Boese, Craig" <Craig.Boese@faith-technologies.com>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/21/2006 7:17:25 AM
Subject: Guided Bus System

Please put an end to this before millions of tax dollars are spent on further research.

Craig Boese
1260 N. Prospect

Donald Barczak
1626 N. Prospect Ave
Milwaukee, WI 53202

April 20, 2006

Alderman Robert Bauman
Milwaukee City Hall
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Alderman Bauman,

I am writing this letter with comments about the \$300 million Guided Bus System because I will not be able to attend the hearing on April 27th.

I do not know when the \$300 million dollar figure was established. I do know that the price of fuel, concrete, copper, steel and other materials for this project continue to rise at a very steep rate. Copper is now over \$3 a pound. No contractor will bid on this project without a clause to provide for all the increases in raw materials. Thus, the \$300 million dollar figure is a myth with the real figure being hundreds of millions more.

When hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars are spent, it should improve the quality of life. This project will decrease the quality of life in many different ways.

I have lived on Prospect Avenue for over 35 years. I have seen the parking situation go from difficult to extremely difficult to almost non-existent. Due to the ever-increasing number of new condos and apartment buildings street parking during the day is pure luck and at night is 10 times worse. Thus to eliminate any parking space, not to mention many blocks of parking spaces is a big reduction in the quality of life for many people. There are residents who cannot afford the \$60 a month for private parking and depend on street parking. Often there is no off street parking at any price. People who visit Lakeshore Medical Clinic and other establishments may be forced to go to other parts of the city due to a lack of street parking. There is no doubt that the reduction of blocks of parking spaces will have an economic impact on these establishments.

Prospect Avenue is great for taking a walk. I remember when Milwaukee had streetcars and electric buses and the huge tangle of wires overhead. While many people do not remember the overhead tangle of wires, I can assure you no one will be pleased with that sight nor say it adds to the beauty of Prospect Avenue. Adding overhead wires that will cost millions will only decrease the quality of life.

There is no mention how long it will take to tear up the streets to install rail and the unsightly overhead wires. Prospect Avenue carries a lot of traffic even during the day. Delivery trucks, garbage trucks, moving vans, furniture vans, construction trucks from WE Energies and Time Warner plus residents and thru traffic. With the exception of thru traffic most of these trucks and vans double park. Often, traffic now is reduced to one lane. What will it be during the years of construction. It will be a nightmare during rush hours. How does this improve the quality of life for the residents of Prospect Avenue?

The big advantage now of having a Transit Bus is that it is able to drive around any obstacles. That will not be true of the Guided Bus stuck on the tracks and will have to wait for the moving van to back into the drive on the east side of Prospect Ave.

Another factor that must be considered is what may be discovered or problems encountered when Prospect Avenue is dug up to install the rails. Many underground utilities are buried in the street along with sewer and water. No one knows what problems may be encountered. Remember the deep tunnel project and the damage that was done to downtown buildings. As a taxpayer who will pay for these unknown costs, I will cast a no vote. I do not want one penny spent on a system that decreases the quality of life. If buses are needed to provide additional service, I will support spending the money to buy buses.

I hope people have not forgotten that the Guided Bus System does not work in snow. When the previous Mayor of Milwaukee visited France, the Guided Bus System was shut down because of 2" of snow. Who in their right mind, knowing that Milwaukee averages several feet of snow every winter, would choose to spend \$300 million of dollars on a system that does not work. These officials are pretty loose with taxpayers money and should not be in office.

After 20 years of talking about extending Metra to Milwaukee, it is about time our city, county and state officials take action and do it.

I drive to Kenosha or Waukegan on the weekend at least once a month to take Metra. The adult weekend pass, with up to 3 children under age 12 free, is \$5, the best bargain in the state. The pass is good for both Saturday and Sunday on any Metra train throughout the system. As it makes many stops, the travel time of 1 hour and 40 minutes goes quickly as there is much to see out the large windows, especially the North Shore communities. By the time Metra arrives in Chicago it has anywhere from 800 to 1000 riders.

If Metra were extended to Milwaukee the economic impact would be huge. Just as I would take Metra to visit Chicago or the North Shore communities, I am sure many people from Illinois would visit Milwaukee. The idea of extending service to Miller Park is a good one. As the Cubs are sold out, many fans that like baseball will take Metra as it would be so convenient. I am sure some would take Metra to visit the Casino in the Valley and the soon to come Harley Museum along with other Milwaukee attractions.

I know many seniors would also enjoy the convenience of Metra and the half fare prices that also include students. Often those of us who drive forget there are many people who can not afford cars or can not drive.

I should mention the \$38 round trip fair to Chicago on Amtrak is far more that many people can afford or care to pay. Amtrak only makes 3 stops between Milwaukee and Chicago. Metra with its very reasonable fare and many stops would fill a void that Amtrak can not provide.

We already know many Illinois people take Amtrak to the Airport Station and fly out of Mitchell Field. I am sure many Illinois people from the North Shore communities will find it convenient to take Metra to Cudahy and fly out of Mitchell Field.

Metra in Milwaukee will also be a draw for many people living in the Milwaukee Suburbs. An opportunity for two adults and 6 children to take a train round trip to Chicago for \$10 is a great attraction. How many women would love to shop at Marshall Field and walk Michigan Avenue to do some shopping for \$5?

The transfer of \$91 million dollars to extend Metra will benefit many tens of thousands of people in two states. I am confident that the figure of \$150 million to extend Metra to Milwaukee will bring several times that amount in economic benefit while improving the quality of life. Even if the figure is \$200 million, Metra coming to Milwaukee has my full support, including paying taxes that go to support Metra. This project will greatly improve the quality of life for people in two states and should be given the highest priority to complete it as soon as possible.

In contrast, the Guided Bus System, which will decrease the quality of life and be more that double the cost of extending Metra, will mainly serve people who already use the current bus system. It will not be an attraction for Illinois resident or suburban residents of Milwaukee.

People who like to ride a vehicle that rides on rails with overhead sires can ride the electric buses in Kenosha for 25 cents. Yes, 25 cents. I would encourage those who support the Guided Bus System to take a few rides in Kenosha to see how much they like that system. I think they will be very surprised and rethink their support for a Guided Bus System. Even the Kenosha electric bus has a big advantage over the proposed Milwaukee system, that is they can move in snow.

I have talked to many people about the Guided Bus System and have yet to find anyone who supports it, that is among the voters and taxpayers. With all the negative aspects of the Guided Bus System that does not work, it is time to put this wacky idea to bed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Donald Burgak". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Donald Burgak".

From: AVedum@wi.rr.com
To: <HCNI@yahogroups.com>
Date: 4/20/2006 4:54:15 PM
Subject: Re: [HCNI] RE:\$300 Million Guided Bus Proposal

What could possibly be the upside to this? Replace some of the buses with less versatile "buses with overhead cables" in exchange for worse service and added expense? Why is this even on the table?

I like JSOnline's fair and unbiased reporting as well.... Alderman trying to doom connector project Doom?? How about "save us from Hines' folly."

----- Original Message -----

From: Robert Bauman
Subject: [HCNI] RE:\$300 Million Guided Bus Proposal

As some of you may know, the council will hold a public hearing on a proposed \$300 Million, 13 mile guided bus system on Thursday, April 27, 2006 at 1:30 pm. in the Common Council Chambers. I encourage West Side residents to attend the hearing.

I strongly oppose this \$300 Million guided bus system.

I oppose this \$300 Million guided bus system for several reasons which I will summarize. I have posted a more detailed discussion of these concerns on my city web site.

From: davidw@rocketmail.com
To: <WestSide_Milwaukee@yahoogroups.com>
Date: 4/20/2006 5:49:08 PM
Subject: RE: [WestSide] RE:\$300 Million Guided Bus Proposal

I agree that the so called guided bus is a waste. Some sort of light rail on existing/abandoned right of way makes more sense.

Cleveland is about the same size as Milwaukee; they have a good system there that combined an existing route (the Red Line) with newer extensions that revitalized some investment along the lines in their neighborhoods.

As far as tourism, I am going to Cleveland for a birthday weekend because I don't have to rent a car (and Southwest Air is very inexpensive)-the rapid transit goes directly from the airport to a station two blocks from where we are staying.

Kudos to Alderman Bauman for exposing this potential waste of a lot of money.

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[Non-text portions of this message have been removed]

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From: nwujdiv@yahoo.com
To: <WestSide_Milwaukee@yahoogroups.com>
Date: 4/20/2006 3:54:50 PM
Subject: Re: [WestSide] RE:\$300 Million Guided Bus Proposal

Bob:

What is the cost of the light rail proposal, which, as I understand it, would run on existing rail lines that would not disrupt traffic? And why was this proposal, rather than light rail, recommended by the County Board?

Also, how does the weather in Caen and Nancy compare to Milwaukee, to say nothing of their population and the way in which their system operates? How long have they been in operation and how much maintenance/repair (if any) is needed to keep them running regularly and in good order. Where are light rail systems running, and how do the cities in which they are located compare to Milwaukee?

What routes would a light rail system take, and how would they compare to those proposed by proponents of the Guided Bus system?

I'm sure I have other questions that will help me gain a better understanding of the issue, but those will help me a lot.

I'm not pushing one or the other at this point, and there might be some other alternative that I'm not aware of - I've heard light rail proposed here, which is why I'm assuming (perhaps mistakenly) that that's the alternative being tossed in favor of this Guided Bus deal, but please set me straight if there are other possibilities.

Thanks,

Amy Waldman

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From: wbacklund@wi.rr.com
To: <WestSide_Milwaukee@yahoogroups.com>, <HCNI@yahoogroups.com>
Date: 4/20/2006 3:00:13 PM
Subject: RE: [WestSide] RE:\$300 Million Guided Bus Proposal

Bob,

I agree it appears to be a waste of our money. I and a group of inn keepers opposed a bill that recently passed the state assembly that earmarked most monies collected as room taxes to be spent on tourism promotion. Unfortunately the language in the bill not only was vague as to what would be considered proper spending by all government agencies but also put no penalties in place for municipalities and agencies that misspent revenue. This appears to be the type of project that could rob these funds in part as part of it's financing with little real benefit to improving tourism and the services tourists need. At present I have about 10%-15% of my guests that choose to take public transportation and they are all happy with the present service, frequent stops and availability to downtown and metro sites that are serviced. I did have one couple from Boston who thought our prices were high but when we talked the expanse of Boston verses Milwaukee it was noted square mile wise we are significantly large in square miles compared to Boston.

In closing, I would much prefer to see improved bus service from locations like the new ferry port to downtown and surrounding area as well as express bus service from UWM to major hubs to decrease student ride times and improve availability of lower cost student housing in multiple areas. The later would improve to revitalize many areas that are in need of a renaissance. Light rail is another option that could be worked on as a much more viable investment in infrastructure if outlying communities could be made to bear part of the expense for services that benefit their residents.

Thanks for listening.

Walter Backlund, Innkeeper
The Acanthus Inn Bed and Breakfast
Milwaukee, WI 53208

-----Original Message-----

From: WestSide_Milwaukee@yahoogroups.com
[mailto:WestSide_Milwaukee@yahoogroups.com] On Behalf Of Robert Bauman
Sent: Thursday, April 20, 2006 11:37 AM
To: HCNI@yahoogroups.com; WestSide_Milwaukee@yahoogroups.com
Subject: [WestSide] RE:\$300 Million Guided Bus Proposal

As some of you may know, the council will hold a public hearing on a proposed \$300 Million, 13 mile guided bus system on Thursday, April 27, 2006 at 1:30 pm. in the Common Council Chambers. I encourage West Side residents to attend the hearing.

I strongly oppose this \$300 Million guided bus system.

From: lipscomb@urbanwealthllc.com
To: <WestSide_Milwaukee@yahoogroups.com>, <HCNI@yahoogroups.com>
Date: 4/20/2006 12:45:19 PM
Subject: [HCNI] RE: [WestSide] RE:\$300 Million Guided Bus Proposal

Thanks for the summary. I was tuned-in to the connector study early in the process but became disenchanted. The whole process seemed almost preordained to produce a mediocre outcome - it was a much less visionary process than I expected. I'd rather they improved the current bus system with better service and technology similar to suggestions in the near west side plan - such as using the bus system's current GPS to update clocks at bus stops to tell you how long until the next bus.

Can you speak to the viability of the alternative that you have proposed for the use of the federal dollars that are committed to the city for transit improvements? I was excited to hear of the prospect of commuter rail in the 30th Street Railway Corridor which could create high quality transit oriented development around various potential transit stops.

I am confused however because of information that I've read in the Journal Sentinel. Can the money be diverted to a different use and under what terms?

Also, Do we know which Aldermen are still on the fence in regard to Guided Buses?

~theo

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From: fear@goetia.net
To: <HCNI@yahoogroups.com>
Date: 4/20/2006 2:25:24 PM
Subject: [HCNI] Re: RE:\$300 Million Guided Bus Proposal

--- In HCNI@yahoogroups.com, "Robert Bauman" <rjbauma@...> wrote:

>

> As some of you may know, the council will hold a public hearing on a proposed \$300 Million, 13 mile guided bus system on Thursday, April 27, 2006 at 1:30 pm. in the Common Council Chambers. I encourage West Side residents to attend the hearing.

>

> I strongly oppose this \$300 Million guided bus system.

Wow,

I am all for mass transit, as it gets cars and SUV's off the road. But it seems like we already have a bus system. The current bus system is also a heck of alot more versatile and able to meet the needs of a city that tears out intersections all the time. That might not be much of an issue in france, but it is a clear and present danger to a system like this in Milwaukee. \$300 million would go a long way to upgrading the current bus system and making it suck less and perhapse *clean* it up to a point where when riding a Milwaukee bus you are not left feeling like you are there because you really screwed up and are being punished for it.

Real high speed rail between Milwaukee and Chicago would be far more useful.

Ivan

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From: "Promo Eler" <promoelert@wi.rr.com>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/20/2006 8:01:08 AM
Subject: Connector service

Having heard you at the HTWA meeting and reading about it again this morning, I couldn't agree with you more that this is a waste of money. The Metra expansion makes economic sense. Even the extension to the ball park and state fair and on to Oconomowoc make sense. The connector necessitates building huge parking structures at the three starting places and 35 & Wisconsin, Fond du Lac, and UWM (already with parking problems) leads one to wonder "what are they thinking?".

The "if you build it, they will come" crowd must still be waiting for the throngs at the Milwaukee Theater.

Guard the money! Stick to your guns as you have support. Let's build the needed Metra service and if that results in a need for other service it will be obvious.

Karyn Eler
141 N. Water Street #43
Milwaukee, WI 53202

From: "John Kaye" <jkaye@wi.rr.com>
To: "Robert Bauman" <RJBAUMA@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/20/2006 8:16:47 AM
Subject: Transit

Bob,

We've certainly disagreed over some things at times, but you've always been precisely "right on" in terms of transit issues.

Once again, the Journal is trying to portray you as "tilting at windmills." Even if the "political realities" might make that seem so, you're still right.

Keep it up, and thanks.

John Kaye

PS: Do you remember an older guy named Ken Kaye? My dad has been gone for at least 8 years, but he was very active in transit issues. You may have known him from meetings, etc.

From: Micah Roschke <micahr2001@yahoo.com>
To: Robert Bauman <RJBAUMA@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/19/2006 8:16:20 AM
Subject: Re: milwaukee connector

Ald. Bauman,
Thanks for the information. I will continue to contact common council members and share the news with others. Also, if my wife and I are able to get off of work on the 27th, we will be there to speak out as well.

Micah Roschke

— Robert Bauman <RJBAUMA@milwaukee.gov> wrote:

- > Just to follow on the \$300 Million guided bus
- > system, there are now six common council sponsors:
- > Hines, D'Amato, Murphy, Witkowiak, Zielinski and
- > Davis. Unless citizens with common sense speak out,
- > this will pass.
- >
- > Bob Bauman
- >
- >

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From: "Stephen C. White" <SWHITE@polacheck.com>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/18/2006 3:19:35 PM
Subject: Federal Transportation Funding

Mr. Bauman

I just wanted to express my appreciation for your support of commuter rail service over a tram system - I live, work, and park on the street in your district, and it is inconceivable to me that while a tram may hold some allure as a novelty, it could be at all a practical solution for Milwaukee's future.

Thanks again.

Steve White

Vice President

Office Properties Group

The Polacheck Company/CB Richard Ellis

777 E. Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 3250

Milwaukee, WI 53202

Direct: 414.274.1649

Facsimile: 414.273.4362

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From: "Lueders, Wayne R." <WLueders@foley.com>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/17/2006 8:21:28 PM
Subject: Guided Bus System on Prospect

<http://mm1.lettermark.net/foleylaw/card/OQGD_2.map>

Ald. Bob Bauman,

Thank you for sending the card concerning the hearing on the proposed guided bus system on Prospect. I am a resident of the city of Milwaukee living at 1300 North Prospect and wanted to contact you to express my opposition to the proposed bus system. I have not heard any real good reason for the system. On the contrary, at a time when finances are scarce, this seems like a waste of money although I do not know if any taxpayer dollars are involved, but if so, it seems unnecessary. Perhaps equally important, the parking on the east side of the street is very needed and the overhead wires will really be ugly as well as to a lesser extent the rail. If there are important reasons for the system, I would be interested in learning of them. Otherwise, I oppose the system and ask you to do so as well.

Sincerely,

Wayne Lueders

<<http://mm1.lettermark.net/foleylaw/card/OQGD.map>>

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From: "Janette Marsh" <jmarsh50@hotmail.com>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/17/2006 8:38:32 PM
Subject: Guided bus system

Dear Alderman Bauman,

I reside at 1626 N. Prospect and received your postcard about the hearing on the proposed guided bus system. I oppose this idea. First the current bus system is fair and efficient as it currently operates, but could be vastly improved with an influx of \$300 Million that is proposed for this system. It would eliminate parking along the east side of Prospect at a time when more condos are going up without sufficient guest parking, much less space for the moderate income renters in the neighborhood. The wires needed would present view problems and breakdown hazards. The rail system would most likely compromise the combined sewer system which does not function very effectively now, and construction in the street may break these lines, creating bluff slump and other environmental damage. I hope this plan was not designed to give the power plant to create more capacity. With cleaner fuels and other options busses will be the biggest benefit for the community for years to come. I object to having a mid day hearing on this issue, where folks who have day jobs would not be able to be present in person, but that is why I am writing this email. Thank you.

Jan Marsh
1626 N. Prospect Ave #2303
414 289 9303

From: <LADIWEISS@aol.com>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/15/2006 1:51:23 PM
Subject: hearing on Proposed \$300Million guided Bus System

Dear Alderman Bauman:

I live at 1610 N. Prospect Ave. and plan on attending the Hearing to find out more.

I would like to know your views, whether you feel this would be a good idea for the Eastside, can we afford it and what alternatives do you have for parking.

Sincerely,

Larry Weiss
ladiweiss@aol.com

From: "Jonathan Lhost" <jrlhost04@alumni.amherst.edu>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/16/2006 12:57:26 AM
Subject: Guided Bus System

Alderman Bauman,

I just returned home this evening and found your notice about the proposed Guided Bus System in my mailbox. I am not even sure where to begin. In short, it is an absolutely horrible idea. Parking is already a big problem in the Prospect east side area. To eliminate all east side parking on Prospect would be a huge inconvenience for residents as well as visitors and patrons of local businesses, thereby hurting all and making the area a less desirable area in which to live and conduct business. Eliminating the #30 bus is also a big mistake. It is the only line going up Prospect and down Farwell connecting UWM and the east side to Brady, downtown, and beyond. It is worth mentioning the probable eyesore the overhead wires will be. And all of this with a \$300 Million price tag. Definitely a huge mistake. Please do everything you can to keep this from happening. Please keep me informed about progress on this issue. Thank you for your time.

Jonathan Lhost

From: Jodi Soczka <jodisoczka@yahoo.com>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/16/2006 10:39:06 AM
Subject: NO to the Guided Bus System

Ald. Bob-

I received the postcard notice regarding the 'guided bus system' proposal for Prospect Ave. and I am very concerned. As a resident of Prospect Ave. I know that the parking is already VERY LIMITED. I don't know that constructing a 'guided system' on only one street would be beneficial. Prospect is a beautiful street as it is, with many gorgeous lake views which would be jeopardized with all of the hanging electrical wires needed to power the bus. Also, I am NOT in favor of a noisy rail system just outside my window. I enjoy the sound of birds in the neighborhood- I do not want that replaced with a screeching rail.

The months of noisy construction as well as limited access to a one way street would also prove very inconvenient for the residents of Prospect Ave. We are all already struggling with the years of construction and limited access to the freeway system as it is. Please DO NOT further inconvenience the residents of Milwaukee with MORE construction. Why tamper with something that doesn't need fixing? Please consider the people this is affecting. I am sure that there are many other beneficial projects that could be executed with this \$300 million budget.

This will not be my last email protesting this proposal. Please think of the people.

Sincerely,

Jodi Soczka
jodisoczka@yahoo.com

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From: Micah Roschke <micahr2001@yahoo.com>
To: Robert Bauman <RJBAUMA@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/3/2006 9:46:54 AM
Subject: milwaukee connector

Ald. Bauman,

Lately, I have heard a lot about the Milwaukee Connector Project. I agree with much of what you have said regarding the issue. As a concerned citizen, I am strongly opposed to our city spending so much money on a rubber-tired tram system. I recently read an article that just last week Orleans, France declined a transit system similar to the Connector, and instead supported a measure to bring in rail. Why wouldn't Milwaukee do the same?

What can I do (and others like me) to support a realistic, yet innovative mass-transit system other than the Connector Project? What are the possible benefits of the Connector Project that other aldermen are excited about? I just don't get it.

Sincerely,
Micah Roschke

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From: "jarred blaschko" <blaschko21@hotmail.com>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/2/2006 12:04:00 PM
Subject: Light Rail

Dear Mr Bauman,

I support your push for light rail! We already have a great bus system in Milwaukee and need an alternative. Minneapolis is a great example of light rail success! I would like to attend any upcoming meetings regarding this topic to show my support for light rail in Milwaukee.

Thanks,
Jarred Blaschko

From: "Daniel J. Cody" <djc@dancody.org>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 3/30/2006 4:15:56 PM
Subject: Guided bus feedback

Alderman Bauman,

We met briefly a few weeks ago at the 4th CD convention, which it was great to have you at. Thanks for stopping by and showing your support.

I just wanted to drop a note expressing my support for your opposition to the 'guided bus' technology as a solution for the Downtown Connector project. Beyond it's obvious technical problems and untested track record, the cost problems you pointed out should raise red flags with all Milwaukee area residents.

Light rail is a viable alternative not only because of it's benefits to Milwaukee area residents, low emissions, and lower cost "per mile", it is a proven technology used in hundreds of other metropolitan cities around the world and has one of the shortest 'time to markets' of any mass transit solution available today.

Thanks again for your hard work to bring a real transit solution to the residents of Milwaukee!

Daniel Cody

—

Vice Chair, 4th CD DPW

From: Robert Madison <rmadisonwi@gmail.com>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 3/28/2006 9:47:14 PM
Subject: Opposition to the Milwaukee Connector

Mr. Bauman,

As a regular transit user that does not own a car, I must express my strong opposition to the Milwaukee Connector project that is currently being considered by various governments and groups in the Milwaukee area.

They want to spend \$300 million on a plan that will make service worse for the people that use it, and has nothing that will attract much new ridership.

Without even going into the matter of whether the technology will work properly, let's look at things from a service point of view.

Right now, routes 23 and 30 cover most of the connector network (basically everything except that useless leg to Miller Park). The 30 provides service every 10 minutes throughout most of the day, every day of the week (a little bit better during the weekday rush, and a bit less at night). The 23 offers a similar level of service along Fond du Lac Avenue.

The connector (according to their website) will offer rush-hour headways of 6 minutes, slightly better than the eight-minute headways the 30 used to provide before all the cost-cutting that went into the new schedules these last few months (and that brings up another point; if we can't afford to keep the existing system running, where's the money going to come from to run the connector, which apparently will be more expensive on a vehicle-hour basis?). At all other times of the day, the connector will provide a headway that is worse than the existing route 30, including the ridiculously long 20-minute headways on Sunday (not to mention the fact that service would quit at 10 pm, whereas route 30 runs until 1 or 2 am). [To see where I'm getting the connector data from, check http://www.milwaukeeconnector.com/main_traveltime.html#frequency and MCTS schedules can be obtained at ridemcts.com]

This doesn't even begin to address the fact that all buses would be removed from Wisconsin Avenue under this proposal. So, right now, you have six regular routes operating on Wisconsin Avenue, each with a headway of 10-20 minutes during the weekdays. For those (such as myself) that just want a quick ride from one end of the avenue to the other, that averages a headway of about three minutes per bus (never mind the fact that bus stops are screwed up so you're never at the right bus stop when a bus goes by). If they could reconfigure the bus stops so that every route served every stop, and then evenly space them every two to three blocks (some blocks would lose their precious parking, but that ought to happen anyway), you'd have a pretty darn good setup for anyone wanting to travel along Wisconsin Avenue. Instead, they'll replace all of that service with this thing that would run every 12 minutes on weekdays, up to 20 minutes on Sundays. Who benefits from something like that?

To put this in perspective. At 12-minute headways, if you just miss a

connector at the Public Library, you could walk to Water Street (and, depending on how fast you walk, possibly all the way to the lakefront) before the next one shows up.

Secondly, they're replacing heavily used local service with this express-type operation. As a former regular on route 23, and a current regular on route 30 to UWM, I can attest to the fact that lots of passengers (many of whom are transit-dependent) are not going to appreciate having to walk farther to get to their stops. In some areas, this could be a safety issue, as these are not the greatest neighborhoods.

Just a few years ago, express route 1 operated along Fond du Lac concurrently with route 23, and both routes carried good passenger loads. I see no reason why local bus service couldn't be maintained along these corridors since they are the heaviest transit corridors in the system. On the east side, when I'm on my way to UWM, the 30 is stopping at virtually every stop in the morning taking students to school. I suppose they'd walk farther to get to the stop if they had to, but why force them?

Supposedly, this limited-stop setup in dedicated lanes will reduce travel time for the riders, and that's supposed to attract new passengers (assuming the longer headways don't scare them off, first). If you look at the sample travel times (at the same link I gave above), I see serious flaws in the way they calculated travel times. Despite that, it still shows that there are many trips for which travel time on the Connector will be longer than travel time by existing bus service.

The Midwest Airlines Center to Miller Park travel time is flawed because it assumes that current passengers would ride route 10 to 45th and Blue Mound and walk down. If there was a reason for people to be going to Miller Park (i.e. a Brewers game), route 90 would operate directly to the stadium, cutting down on much of that extra time.

Plankinton Building to UWM: takes me 25 minutes by bus, not 30, so the actual time savings should be 2 minutes, not 7. Considering the traffic signal priority and limited stops that the connector will be making (not to mention a more direct routing via prospect instead of via Van Buren and Ogden...where people are), two minutes in travel time savings is absolutely pathetic.

35th & Fond du Lac to Water & Wisconsin, somehow the Connector's total time is 5 minutes longer. Try and figure that one out.

Washington Heights to NML, a measly one-minute savings. Whoop-dee-doo. Schlitz Park to the Third Ward: travel time for me would be six or seven minutes on route 57, and 5-10 minutes of walking (depending on where in the "Third Ward" I'd be going). Well...you get the idea.

Then there's the fact that the consulting firm that is planning this project knows painfully little about transit. They sent somebody with a video camera to France to look at the system in operation out there, then raced here as fast as they could to show everybody the solution, and then looked for a problem.

Ending the northwestern route at 35th & Fond du Lac will severely

inconvenience the thousands of passengers that ride route 23 each day by forcing them to transfer (and, according to the connector website, their travel time into downtown will even be longer). This will not attract new, choice riders, as they are unlikely to take a long (30-minute or more) bus ride from their homes in the suburbs to 35th & Fond du Lac or 35th & Wisconsin, just to transfer to the connector to finish their commute. Supposedly, one could establish a park & ride lot at Miller Park (ignoring the inconvenience of having to check a baseball schedule to determine if the lot will be usable or not), but Park & Ride lots are generally good for weekday rush-hour traffic only. They see very little use during the mid-days (MCTS's current mid-day freeway flyer service shows this, as the buses carry only a couple of passengers per trip), evenings and weekends. This would not be enough to justify running the Connector down to Miller Park and back at the service levels suggested.

Therefore, once again, I urge you to continue your opposition the Milwaukee Connector. Milwaukee does deserve a good, world-class transit system. However, the Connector as currently planned does not have the ability to provide it.

—

Robert Madison

From: Beth Boddiger <bboddiger@fs.fed.us>
To: <rjbauma@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 3/27/2006 4:26:08 PM
Subject: Guided Bus proposal--what can I do?

Hello Alderman Bauman--

Do you have suggestions for any specific actions that I might undertake, as a District 4 resident, to help the Council realize what a poor idea the Guided Bus proposal is for Milwaukee's residents? I have seen your news releases on the subject, and hope to appear at the April 27 meeting to offer support to your stance, but is there anything you can recommend in the meantime? Are there any neighborhood efforts gathering steam yet?

Thanks for your continued support for our neighborhood.

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From: <waynedalton@northwesternmutual.com>
To: <tzieli@milwaukee.gov>, <TMACDO@milwaukee.gov>
Date: 4/25/2006 10:09:06 AM
Subject: Milwaukee Connector

I wanted to submit written comments that will also be part of the Common Council file concerning the Milwaukee Connector project:

In its present iteration, I do not support the Milwaukee Connector project. As a user of mass transit, I certainly appreciate the convenience and affordability offered by mass transit. That said, I never have a problem finding parking in the downtown area when I need to drive downtown, whether it be on the street or in a reasonably priced parking lot. And I am certainly not alone, as evidenced by the abysmal ridership numbers associated with the various iterations of the trolley service in the downtown area over the past few years. As such, I do not support any transit efforts that rely on fixed infrastructure (i.e. overhead cables) in the downtown area at this time.

BTW - What is the Transit Center on the corner of Michigan Street and Lincoln Memorial Drive used for? And more importantly, who paid for it?

Wayne Dalton

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