

Milwaukee City Substitute Resolution No. 241777

Zoning, Neighborhoods & Development Committee -March 18, 2025

Wisconsin & Southern Railroad Response

Background: The railroad corridor from Hampton Avenue to State Street (Glendale Line) is part of the 30th Street Industrial Corridor and was acquired by Watco/Wisconsin & Southern Railroad (WSOR) in 2020. Prior, the WSOR had been operating this corridor under a lease agreement with CP for almost 20 years. Over these 20 years, the WSOR utilized the Glendale Yard as a classification yard, thus creating value to our overall network and to rail customers located in Milwaukee County. During this time, the WSOR also redeveloped our yard off Cameron to allow for direct transloading rail to truck and vice versa. Over these 20 years, investments made to our Glendale Line have created greater value to our network and to customer service throughout the greater Milwaukee County region.

Strategic Value: This railroad corridor contains strategic importance for movement of freight commerce throughout the City of Milwaukee and the region. The WSOR recognizes real opportunity to grow freight across the state and region, including growing freight rail business along the railroad corridor itself. Transloading and multi-modal opportunities exist particularly to the north of the line and the WSOR envisions future capacity expansion south of the Talgo site. Future uses of the Glendale Line include: haulage for CPKCS and CN, classification, transloading, multi-modal, storage, and car mechanical repairs. The WSOR desires to work collaboratively with city redevelopment officials to attract rail industry users that will boost employment, bolster the supply chain, induce new spending and redevelop blighted parcels that adjoin the rail corridor.

Public Trash / Debris: There are pockets along the corridor littered with trash and other debris placed over time by adjoining landowners and other citizens. Much of this trash is thrown over fences or bridge overpasses and accumulates over time. The WSOR has agreed to work collectively with the City and a local neighborhood group to organize a joint clean-up in 2025. This is a big undertaking that will require numerous resources and potentially fencing at strategic locations including bridge overpasses. Education and awareness of the public safety hazards of this continued behavior would be part of an on-going message to community members, residents, and businesses.

Overhead Railroad Bridges: The WSOR completes annual inspections of all railroad bridges that WSOR owns, operates over and maintains. All of the above-grade railroad bridges along the Glendale Line are in very good shape from a railroad engineering standpoint, this includes the structure over Fond du Lac and Locust. These bridges may look unsightly visually. However, they are not in need of replacement “structurally”. In fact, a couple of these overhead structures are the cause of illegal dumping on the railroad right of way below. The overhead roadway bridges such as North Avenue,

Lisbon, Walnut, Galena, Cherry, Vliet, 35th, and Highland are all owned and maintained by the local roadway authority. The WSOR understands the city may be interested in painting murals on railroad abutments or piers to beautify local neighborhoods. The WSOR is open to discussing any proposals with city officials.

Ownership / Operations: The WSOR is the owner of the Glendale Line. The WSOR envisions continued freight service along this corridor, including future capacity expansion and service enhancements in the near future. The WSOR is currently marketing our service and infrastructure for organic growth as well as new opportunities that will arise. This corridor holds strategic value as it connects to the CPKCS at Muskego Yard and also connects with the entire WSOR network throughout Southern Wisconsin. WSOR's Class 1 interchanges at Granville, Ackerville, and Muskego Yard make this corridor extremely important for freight commerce and economic competitiveness.

The WSOR is not interested in selling any portion of this right of way for non-freight purposes and as such the corridor is not for sale.

Thank you and please let me know if you have any questions!

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