



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Milwaukee County

Brian Dranzik • Director
• Highway Commissioner

June 6, 2016

Honorable Tom Barrett, Mayor
The Members of the Common Council
City of Milwaukee
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Mayor Barrett and Council Members:

In 2015, Milwaukee County began work towards a feasibility study to evaluate transit investment in the East-West Corridor connecting major employment and activity centers between downtown Milwaukee, the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center (MRMC), and the Milwaukee County Research Park (MCRP). The goal of this study was to identify a strategy that would accommodate anticipated growth in travel demand and mitigate congestion within the corridor, support mobility options that match emerging demographic trends and preferences within the corridor, leverage the existing transportation infrastructure to expand network capacity and personal mobility within the corridor; and encourage sustainable development patterns that reduce reliance on single-occupant vehicles.

The attached Executive Summary report and supporting documentation detail the results of this feasibility study, particularly the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) alignment that has also been recommended as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). It also outlines the Purpose and Need of this project, existing conditions, study methodology and anticipated outcomes.

Milwaukee County respectfully seeks a resolution from the City of Milwaukee to support the LPA of the East-West BRT Feasibility Study which concludes that Milwaukee County is seeking to develop a BRT line operating from Michigan Street and Lincoln Memorial Drive in the City of Milwaukee to the Swan Boulevard Park and Ride in the City of Wauwatosa. Where possible and feasible, the project would maximize the use of exclusive dedicated lanes for the BRT line.

Completing the feasibility study and establishment of the LPA is only the first step towards applying for capital funding through the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Small Starts program. This support will allow for Milwaukee County to enter in the Project Development (PD) phase that would refine this alignment and provide further analysis encompassing environmental assessment and design. Accordingly, this will allow for the City of Milwaukee to be afforded more information regarding potential benefits and impacts for parking, traffic, safety, and reduction of vehicle traffic.

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We appreciate the time and consideration in the review of this material and would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

City of Milwaukee
Office of the City Clerk

FILE NO:

Title:

A RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT A LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR THE EAST-WEST BUS RAPID TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Body:

WHEREAS, the City of Milwaukee received an update on the East-West Bus Rapid Transit Feasibility Study on **June 22, 2016** and Milwaukee County has successfully concluded the East-West Bus Rapid Transit Feasibility Study with a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) recommendation, and;

WHEREAS, Milwaukee County is requesting that the City of Milwaukee approve the LPA of the East-West Bus Rapid Transit Feasibility Study which concludes that Milwaukee County is seeking to develop a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line operating from Michigan Street and Lincoln Memorial Drive in the City of Milwaukee to the Swan Boulevard Park and Ride lot in the City of Wauwatosa, with stops at various locations as depicted in Exhibit 1 as attached, and;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Milwaukee hereby agrees to support the East-West Bus Rapid Transit Feasibility Study LPA;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, it is agreed that Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee will further work through its responsible departments to refine the BRT alignment that maximizes the use of an exclusive lane for BRT and transit operations by using an existing lane within the current right of way for the alignment as depicted in Exhibit 1 to the extent possible, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, it is agreed that Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee will determine, and agree to, areas where the use and development of exclusive lanes is not feasible or possible and therefore agree that the BRT will then operate in mixed traffic.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee will agree to develop this alignment and provide further analysis during design and preliminary engineering phase, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the results of the design and preliminary engineering phase will be brought back to the City of Milwaukee for its review and approval prior to construction.

Whereas, the development of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along the proposed Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) route is projected to provide expanded and more efficient transit service for 47,000 people living nearby the station areas along the proposed initial route as well providing increased access to the 120,000 jobs near station areas; and

Whereas, 26 percent of station area residents live below the poverty line, 23 percent do not have an automobile, and 40 percent are people of color; and

Whereas, the implementation of BRT has the potential to take up to 6,700 vehicles per day off of the road, reducing carbon emissions and mitigating traffic along the corridor; and

Whereas, *Growing Prosperity*, the City of Milwaukee's Action Agenda for Economic Development, identified vigorously advocating for public transportation improvements such as BRT that connect city residents to employment centers throughout the metropolitan area as a key action to furthering economic opportunity for Milwaukee residents; and

Whereas, *ReFresh Milwaukee*, the City of Milwaukee's Sustainability Plan, recommends expanding Milwaukee's mass transit system by offering new and improved mass transit services to reduce air pollution, improve the livability of Milwaukee neighborhoods, and reduce congestion; and

Whereas, the *Citywide Policy Plan*, a portion of the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Milwaukee, calls for developing a bus rapid transit network in order to enhance the quality of life and mobility of the city, reduce the environmental impact of the transportation system, and improve the economic position of many households; and

Whereas, the *Downtown Area Plan* and the *West Side Area Plan*, both part of the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Milwaukee, call for the development of enhanced transit such as BRT along the proposed corridor to better serve both Downtown and to provide connections identified by the plan as crucial to the health and stability of neighborhoods on the West Side; and

Council files:

Growing Prosperity: file #140460

ReFresh Milwaukee: file #131035

Citywide Policy Plan: file #090882

Downtown Plan: file #100235

West Side Plan: file #090849