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**ROBERT J. BAUMAN**

ALDERMAN, 4TH DISTRICT

## Tosa High Speed Rail Stop Idea Has Traction

### Statement of Alderman Robert J. Bauman May 11, 2010

Milwaukee County Clerk Joe Czarnecki has floated the idea of establishing a high speed rail station in western Milwaukee County in the vicinity of the Milwaukee County Research Park. This is an excellent idea that deserves serious consideration by the state Department of Transportation and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

In addition to the research park, this station would serve dense commercial development along Mayfair Road and the Milwaukee County Medical Complex. Employment in this area is second only to downtown Milwaukee. Moreover, this station would serve relatively dense suburban residential communities as well as west side Milwaukee neighborhoods.

A station on the high speed rail line in the vicinity of Watertown Plank Road and Mayfair Road would be easily accessible via major arterial roads and within one mile of I-94 and Highway 45 interchanges and within one mile of busy Mayfair Mall. This station location would also be accessible to existing Milwaukee County Transit routes and could serve as an intermodal terminal for enhanced local transit service.

In short, this station location would generate significantly higher ridership than a stop in Brookfield.

The Amtrak station at Mitchell International Airport provides a good example.

Originally, this station was intended to serve as an airport connection; however, the vast majority of the growing ridership at this location is from southern Milwaukee County and south side Milwaukee neighborhoods. Since the airport station opened in 2005, ridership has grown to approximately 150,000 passengers per year.

Moreover, many Waukesha officials, including the newly elected mayor of Brookfield, have expressed constant opposition to the planned expansion of high speed rail from Milwaukee to Madison. Why put a station in a community that objects to the entire idea of rail passenger service? The answer -- don't. The state DOT and FRA should shift the proposed Brookfield Station to Mayfair Road in Milwaukee County.