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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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October 5, 2011

**Ald. Bob Donovan**  
(414) 708-9417

**Ald. Joe Dudzik**  
(414) 286-3768

## Officials: Downtown Streetcar Money Should be Used for MCTS Buses

*Alderman Donovan, Alderman Dudzik and Supervisor Borkowski urge congressional delegation to push for change to allow funding switch; also exploring spring ballot measure*  
**NEWS CONFERENCE TODAY – 1 p.m.**

Milwaukee **Alderman Bob Donovan, Alderman Joe Dudzik** and Milwaukee County **Supervisor Mark Borkowski** have sent a letter (**attached**) to Milwaukee’s congressional delegation, asking them to seek federal approval to use tens of millions of dollars currently slated to pay for the downtown streetcar to help fund the beleaguered Milwaukee County Transit System.

Alderman Donovan, a staunch critic of the streetcar project, said he does not believe the rosy economic development picture painted by streetcar proponents. He said the money would be better spent on restoring and bolstering bus routes and service in Milwaukee and surrounding municipalities, and he said he and Alderman Dudzik and Supervisor Borkowski are pushing for a spring referendum on the issue “to let the people decide.”

“Our citizens ride the bus to get to and from jobs, and that was hammered home in an editorial (“**Transit needed for jobs**”) which appeared last week (Sept. 27) in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*,” he said. “In my mind, we need to restore some common sense to local government and use the money wisely to help us keep our bus system – a decades-old proven transit option – up and running for the thousands who depend on it to get to jobs each and every day.”

Alderman Donovan added: “To attempt tackling this streetcar project during an unprecedented economic crisis being felt in Milwaukee and across this nation is insanity.”

**The news conference will be at 1 p.m. TODAY at the park and ride lot at S. 6<sup>th</sup> St. and W. Holt Ave.**

-More-

## **Streetcar Referendum//ADD ONE**

Supervisor Borkowski said he also does not believe the streetcar project will be the economic boon that boosters are suggesting. “The 2012 cuts proposed for the county transit system are potentially devastating to many thousands of working people, and I believe it’s important that Milwaukee use that money for buses,” Mr. Borkowski said. “That is why I have joined Alderman Donovan in seeking a referendum vote on the issue next year so residents can weigh in and decide how they want the money to be used.”

Alderman Dudzik said he strongly favors using the transit money to fund MCTS. “We have a bus system that not only serves a wide range of people – including low-income and working class people – but it pretty much serves our entire city and county – not just a 2.1-mile downtown loop like the streetcar,” he said.

Alderman Dudzik also said he also takes issue with “the lack of proper planning” for handling the relocation of utility lines. “If a private company was going to be building a manufacturing plant for \$65 million, don’t you think they would make darn sure the building site wasn’t going to cause tens of millions of dollars in extra costs?” he asked.

The streetcar project moved forward legislatively July 26 when Council members voted 10-5 to approve the project (and route) and authorized the commissioner of the Department of Public Works to move forward on design, construction and financing. The \$64.6 million first phase of the downtown streetcar system would run on a 2.1-mile line connecting the Intermodal facility with stops downtown and on the lower east side.