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**ROBERT G. DONOVAN**

Alderman, 8th District

# Alderman Donovan offers real alternative to mayor's "plan"

**Statement from Alderman Bob Donovan  
April 22, 2014**

Someone once said famously, "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again but expecting a different result."

I can't help thinking about the mayor's "Ceasefire Sabbath" efforts in that same vein. The annual efforts are certainly laudable, but they really haven't had the impact or results one would hope for, as deadly shootings and violence continue in Milwaukee on a weekly basis. Yet here our mayor is, once again, cheerleading marches, rallies and gun buyback efforts.

I have something more concrete to propose, a real plan that I believe will yield real results.

**I will be introducing proposed legislation to begin the process of marketing and selling city parking structures and facilities to raise the funding necessary to hire the hundreds of police officers the city truly needs to calm the violence and disorder, and to strengthen our neighborhoods. According to the city's Legislative Reference Bureau, selling our parking garages could likely raise \$50 million or more.**

For instance, with the proceeds from the sales, we could immediately hire 100 police officers (each officer costs the city \$70,000 per year in salary and benefits) for \$7 million. The remainder – amortized over 10 years – would provide the dedicated, necessary resources to continue to put additional police officers on our streets.

-More-



Years ago, Mayor Norquist looked into the possibility of selling city parking assets, but the idea was shelved because of state subsidies the city received and relied on. Today, those subsidies no longer exist, so in my mind it is now the perfect time to move forward with selling those assets.

To see what a difference the proceeds of the sale of those assets can make, one need only look at New York City.

New York – under Mayor Giuliani and Police Commissioner Bill Bratton – flooded the city with thousands of additional police officers, cracking down on street crimes and strictly enforcing all city ordinances. The move was controversial for many reasons, and it came with a high price tag. But the results were dramatic, as the city was basically cleaned up and had its violent crime rate plummet.

Police Chief Edward Flynn has delivered on many levels in Milwaukee when it comes to data driven policing and reducing crime across the board. But he has been hamstrung in the most significant way in terms of combatting deadly violence and shootings by not having the number of police officers he truly needs.

There are no shortcuts to achieving the level of public safety we need in Milwaukee, and Chief Flynn needs additional officers. Chief Flynn has done his part, and now it is the job of city leadership to give him the manpower resources he needs to get the job done.

It's pretty obvious to me that the mayor – although recognized widely as a nice guy -- just does not get this one. Don't we need someone in the mayor's position who is more than just a nice guy?

I will leave the answer to that question to others, but I am now moving forward on the city parking assets liquidation idea, because I believe it can help us to provide Chief Flynn with the boots on the street he so urgently needs.

Please Mister Mayor, please tell me you are offering the beleaguered citizens of Milwaukee more than just one more week of meetings, marching, holding hands and singing “Kumbaya.”

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