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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Ald. Robert J. Bauman
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Council Loosens 24-Hour Parking Restrictions In Areas of District 4

*Ald. Bauman Says Project Encourages Residents to Use Mass Transit, Alternative
Ways of Commuting; Goes Into Effect March 1st*

Today the Common Council approved a measure that allows residents who live near downtown to keep their vehicles parked up to five days on city streets without fear of tickets or towing. Currently, residents who have only street parking, yet don't drive daily, are still required to move their car every 24 hours to comply with parking rules.

An extension of a pilot project launched last year has been expanded to include blocks bounded by N. Prospect Ave., E. Ogden Ave., E. Wells St. and N. Milwaukee St. goes into effect on March 1 and runs until Dec. 1, 2008. The area is already designated as a "commuter impacted parking area" by the city and residents in this area must still comply with other parking rules including having an overnight parking permit.

Ald. Robert J. Bauman, sponsor of the resolution, said the action provides relief for a large, densely populated residential area where street parking can be a dicey proposition. "In effect, if we didn't approve the extension (of the pilot project area) we're telling those residents without off-street parking that they need to keep driving their cars to work every day, keep adding to exhaust and air pollution, or else they're facing a ticket or a tow," he said.

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Parking Program Extended Near Downtown/ADD ONE

The ordinance primarily benefits people who live near their work but don't use their vehicle daily for commuting. "Now these residents have alternative options and can choose to take the bus, walk or carpool to work or school," said Ald. Bauman. "With people looking to become more 'green' in their daily lives and with gas prices where they are, I think this action is an improvement to the quality of life in the 4th District that I believe people will look favorably upon," Bauman added.

The original pilot project was approved by the Council in 2006 and was in effect between March 1 and November 30, 2007 in the 3rd Aldermanic District area bounded by N. Jefferson St., E. Pleasant St., E. Ogden Ave. and N. Franklin Pl. Today's action keeps that part of the project area in effect between March 1 and December 1, 2008 and extends the parking project area into Bauman's district.

The project's expiration coincides with the city's December 1 to March 1 winter parking regulations, which are governed by rules posted on street signs along every block in the city.

Under the measure approved by the Council today, residents are allowed to keep their vehicles parked in one place for a longer period of time without having to be driven solely for the purpose of complying with the 24-hour requirement. Parked vehicles would have to be in compliance with all city parking rules (i.e. not within 15 feet of a fire hydrant, not blocking a driveway, etc.) and would not qualify if deemed to be an abandoned or nuisance vehicle (flat tires, broken windows, etc.).