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Ald. Tony Zielinski
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Alderman Helps Make Electric Car Possible In Milwaukee

New Ordinance Will Allow Neighborhood Electric Vehicles To Be Legal on Milwaukee Streets

Ald. Tony Zielinski (District 14) has sponsored an ordinance that would allow small, neighborhood electric vehicles (NEVs) to operate on Milwaukee city streets. The makers of the Zenn auto, a car about the size of a Mini Cooper and capable of approximately 25 mph, were recently licensed to manufacture the vehicle in Wisconsin.

“As Milwaukee residents do all they can to think and act “green”, we have to make sure the city has regulations in place that allow for environmental choices like NEVs,” Ald. Zielinski said. Currently, only about 35 Wisconsin municipalities have ordinances on the books that allow for the operation of the electric vehicle on city streets. They comfortably seat two adult passengers and a full load of groceries and can travel up to 35 miles on one charge of their battery. The NEVs—Zenn stands for zero emissions, no noise—are manufactured in multiple plants across the U.S., including one in Reedsburg, WI. The low-speed electric cars are ideal for tight spaces in cities and short trips through congested areas.

“For a Milwaukee resident who utilizes a wide variety of transportation options like buses or walking, the car is ideal—it allows for personal mobility with zero emissions impact on the environment. It’s a smart, safe way to get where you’re going in a busy downtown area,” Ald. Zielinski said. The cars rely on only approximately \$200 in electrical costs per year for charging, so the cars not only save people money, they help reduce a reliance on foreign oil.

The legislation will be heard in the Public Safety committee meeting Thursday, January 24, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. and Ald. Zielinski will host a news conference showcasing the cars on Wednesday, January 23, 2008.