



Robert Bauman

4th District Newsletter

Dear 4th District Residents:

Since the early 1990s, Milwaukee has been studying and restudying expanded and improved public transit. The **Downtown Transit Connector Study**, the current study process, is considering transit improvements in Milwaukee and how best to invest the \$91.5 Million of federal transportation funds that has been set aside for Milwaukee for over 17 years.

A separate study has proposed operating commuter rail service between **Kenosha, Racine and Milwaukee ("KRM")** along existing freight railroad lines. Finally, under the auspices of the **Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Transit Authority**, there is an ongoing effort to identify alternatives to the property tax to fund the local share of new and existing transit service. The "local share" refers to the capital and operating costs left over after deducting operating revenue and state and federal assistance.

Over the next several months elected officials at every level of government will be making decisions that determine the direction of public transit in Milwaukee and the metropolitan area for decades to come. We have an opportunity to join the ranks of dozens of major American cities that have invested in new rail lines and improved bus systems that have generated new riders and fostered economic development. We could also remain mired in disagreement and stalemate causing Milwaukee to fall farther behind our peer cities in providing modern and efficient public transit. While these investments are not free, we also have to consider the cost of inaction and the consequences of stagnation on the economic vitality of our region.

I strongly support investing in improved and expanded public transit and establishing a dedicated funding source for the local share of transit capital and operating costs. I will continue to provide leadership on these issues relying on my background in transportation planning.

This newsletter will discuss these transportation issues and the potential impact on 4th District residents. I will also discuss several exciting developments in the 4th District such the Pabst Brewery project and recent legislative actions that affect 4th District residents. As always, I welcome your questions and comments. It remains a great privilege and honor to represent you as 4th District Alderman.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Bauman, Alderman - 4th District



Parking Meter Bags: Know The Rules

The downtown area and other parts of the 4th Aldermanic District are served by parking meters that occasionally are covered by cloth bags.

There are two types of cloth bags: bags marked "No Parking" and plain bags that have no markings. When a bag marked "No Parking" is covering a meter, parking is not permitted at that location regardless of the parking regulations that may generally apply to that area. When a plain bag is covering the meter, parking is permitted at that location and the meter does not need to be plugged, however, the applicable parking regulations for that location contained on any parking signs (such as two hour limits or "temporary no parking" during certain hours) still apply.

Bags are used in a variety of circumstances where temporary parking regulations are needed such as special events and construction activity.

Local Transit Plans: Activity Picking Up

Downtown Transit Connector Study

On February 16, 2007, Mayor Barrett unveiled his Comprehensive Transportation Plan. The plan has two major components: 1) a **3-mile Downtown Streetcar Circulator**; and 2) **bus rapid transit service** on two routes in Milwaukee that would connect major employment centers. The total cost of the Mayor's plan is \$107.65 million. The plan envisions that both improvements would be part of the Milwaukee County Transit System.

This plan is the latest proposal to invest the \$91.5 million in federal transportation funds that have been set aside for over 17 years. Previously, the Downtown Transit Connector Study had proposed a \$300 million, 13-mile guided bus system. On May 31, 2006 the Common Council convincingly upheld Mayor Barrett's veto of this plan.

A. Downtown Streetcar Circulator

The Downtown Streetcar Circulator, which closely resembles a plan I introduced in October 2006, would operate modern streetcars on a 3-mile loop in downtown Milwaukee. (See **streetcar map at right**). The electrically powered streetcars would operate on rails imbedded in the pavement. Streetcars would operate in mixed traffic with other motor vehicles and would not require a reserved or dedicated right-of-way. Street parking along the route would be largely unaffected. No existing bus service would have to be eliminated.

Modern streetcar systems are operating in over a dozen American cities including Charlotte, Dallas, Little Rock, Memphis, New Orleans, Portland, Kenosha, San Francisco, Seattle, Tacoma, Tampa, and Tucson, Arizona. Certain segments of older rail transit systems also have streetcar service such as Boston, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh.

The Downtown Streetcar Circulator will primarily function as an economic development tool. It will improve the connectivity between downtown destinations such as the Midwest Airline Center, Bradley Center, Shops at Grand Avenue, Lakefront, Maier Festival Grounds, major parking lots, downtown workplaces and dozens of hotels, restaurants and entertainment venues. It would also link downtown destinations and workplaces with **intercity rail (Amtrak)** and **bus service** and the proposed **KRM commuter rail service** that will all use the Amtrak Depot at 4th & St. Paul Ave. (currently being renovated as the **Milwaukee Intermodal Center**). The Downtown Streetcar Circulator can be easily expanded to serve other near downtown neighborhoods such as Walker's Point, Brady Street and Bronzeville.

The Mayor's transportation plan estimates that the Downtown Streetcar Circulator will cost \$52.59 million to build. A portion of the \$91.5 million of federal transportation funds set aside for Milwaukee would be used to finance 80% of construction. No property taxes will be used to build the system. To place this cost in perspective, it is similar to the cost of building a major freeway interchange or the cost of rebuilding and extending Canal Street in the Menomonee Valley (2.6 miles in length).

B. COMET Bus Rapid Transit

The second part of the Mayor's plan is called **COMET** (County Of Milwaukee Express Transit). It envisions operating two bus rapid transit lines using modern rubber tired buses operating on existing streets (see map on page 4). The lines



The **Downtown Streetcar Loop Route** improves connectivity and links downtown destinations and workplaces.



Proposed downtown streetcar depicted in front of the **Milwaukee Public Market** at Water St. and St. Paul Ave.

are designed to link major employment centers including downtown and **Mitchell International Airport**. The routes would provide enhanced bus stop amenities and faster travel times than current bus service. COMET service would connect with the Downtown Streetcar Circulator at various downtown locations thereby providing access to numerous downtown destinations and the Amtrak Depot/Intermodal Center.

The Mayor's transportation plan estimates that the COMET service would cost \$55.06 million to implement. The remaining portion of the \$91.5 million of federal transportation funds would be used to fund 80% of the cost of implementation. No property taxes would be required to implement COMET service.

This plan—the Downtown Streetcar Circulator and COMET—represent a cost effective use of the \$91.5 million of federal transportation funds and, when combined with intercity rail and bus service and the proposed KRM commuter rail service at the Amtrak Depot/Intermodal Center, will create an interconnected web of new and/or improved transit choices for Milwaukee residents, commuters, visitors and tourists to travel within the region, city and downtown. I enthusiastically endorse this conceptual plan and will look forward to further study results that outline the details of these improvements.

KRM Commuter Rail Service

The KRM Commuter Link Study has proposed a 33-mile commuter rail line

connecting Kenosha, Racine and Milwaukee using existing freight railroad tracks. KRM commuter service would employ self-propelled rail diesel cars to operate 14 round trips each weekday and a somewhat reduced weekend service. KRM commuter rail service would connect with Chicago area METRA commuter trains at Kenosha or Waukegan, Ill. KRM service would terminate at the Amtrak Depot/Intermodal Center in Downtown Milwaukee. It is estimated that the KRM commuter rail service will cost \$198 million to build using a combination of federal, state and local funds.

Dedicated Funding Source for Public Transportation

In 2005 the Wisconsin Legislature created the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Transit Authority (RTA) to, among others, identify a dedicated funding source for the local share of capital and operating costs of the proposed KRM commuter rail service and local transit in Milwaukee, Racine and Kenosha. With respect to the Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS), this effort is particularly urgent.

Over the last six years, MCTS has experienced significant fare increases and service reductions. In addition, a recent report (www.sewrpc.org/milwcotdp) from the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) indicates that MCTS is facing additional service reductions of 35%-40% within the next two years unless a dedicated

Why Not Use Rubber Tired Buses?

It is sometimes suggested that rubber tired buses could serve the same purpose as streetcars. There are at least five reasons why streetcar technology would be more effective.

- 1.** The streetcar route is self-identifying because of the tracks and therefore is much more attractive to visitors, tourists and occasional users who may not be familiar with downtown streets.
- 2.** Many people in this country will not ride a bus no matter how attractive the service. However, experience in other cities that have built streetcar/light rail systems has demonstrated that these same people will ride a train. Therefore streetcars will be more attractive to commuters, visitors and downtown workers and residents who would otherwise drive their cars.
- 3.** Based on the experience of those cities that have built streetcars/light rail systems, streetcars are far more likely to foster economic development along the route than rubber tired buses.
- 4.** Streetcars do not pollute and use domestically produced electricity not foreign produced oil.
- 5.** The Downtown Streetcar Circulator will introduce fixed guideway rail transit to Milwaukee at a relatively modest cost so citizens can see first hand how streetcars/light rail function. Most other cities have followed this approach—build a small starter system first and then expand the system after popular support grows.

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Proposed **COMET (County Of Milwaukee Express Transit)** which would consist of two bus rapid transit lines using modern rubber tired buses operating on existing streets (depicted above at Prospect Ave. and Brady St.).

funding source is identified. Presently, the local share of MCTS capital and operating costs are funded by the Milwaukee County property tax levy and property taxes have not been adequate to maintain existing service much less expand or improve service.

In short, in order to maintain existing Milwaukee County transit service, restore recent cuts in service and implement proposed improvements such as the Downtown Streetcar Circulator, COMET or any other proposed plan, a non-property tax funding source must be identified. Similarly, in order to implement KRM commuter rail service, a non-property tax funding source must be identified to cover the local share of KRM capital and operating costs.

Ironically, MCTS is one of the last major transit systems in the country to rely on property taxes. Most other big city transit systems utilize dedicated sales taxes, gasoline taxes, vehicle registration fees or a combination of all three.

The RTA has reviewed several dedicated funding alternatives including a 0.5% sales tax to fund the proposed KRM commuter rail service and local transit service in Milwaukee, Racine and Kenosha Counties. This dedicated sales tax would have replaced current property tax funding for transit. Unfortunately, on January

30, 2007 the RTA board voted to recommend to the governor and Legislature a \$15 rental car transaction fee that would be levied in the three counties to fund the local share of KRM commuter rail service costs but made no recommendation for a dedicated funding source for MCTS.

In response to this action, I introduced a resolution, co-sponsored by 9 of my colleagues, which, among others, expressed the Common Council's opposition to any dedicated funding source that did not also include funding for the local share of capital and operating costs of MCTS. On February 6, 2007, this resolution was approved by an 11 to 4 vote. As a result of this resolution, the governor and Legislature have not acted on the RTA rental car fee proposal. As of this writing, the RTA is stalemated and it is unclear what, if any, dedicated funding source will emerge.

An overwhelming majority of the council supports a dedicated funding source for both KRM commuter rail service and the MCTS. We believe that local transit service is a critical public service to promote economic development, provide transportation choices to Milwaukee residents and serve the mobility needs of thousands of our constituents who, because of low income, disability or age, depend on public transit.



COMET routes connect the County Research Park, UWM, and Midtown with the airport and Amtrak station.

Wi-Fi Technology Close For Many In 4th District

Antennas are sprouting on electric and street light poles throughout much of the western portion of the 4th Aldermanic District, as construction continues for Wi-Fi, the wireless Internet service being built by **Midwest Fiber Networks** of Milwaukee. Completion of the demonstration project has been delayed by the complexity of attaching and powering antennas on multiple public and private facilities and a time-consuming application and review process, but it is expected this summer.

In the near future a limited number of temporary access accounts will be offered to the public through various channels in order to get a cross-section of people to test the network and provide feedback. Paid accounts will be available after construction is completed in the test area and the city gives Midwest Fiber the approval to proceed.

Ald. Bauman was a co-sponsor of the city legislation that led to the contract with Midwest Fiber. "Wi-Fi service is a technological innovation vital to the communication needs of many businesses, particularly in the high tech sector, and

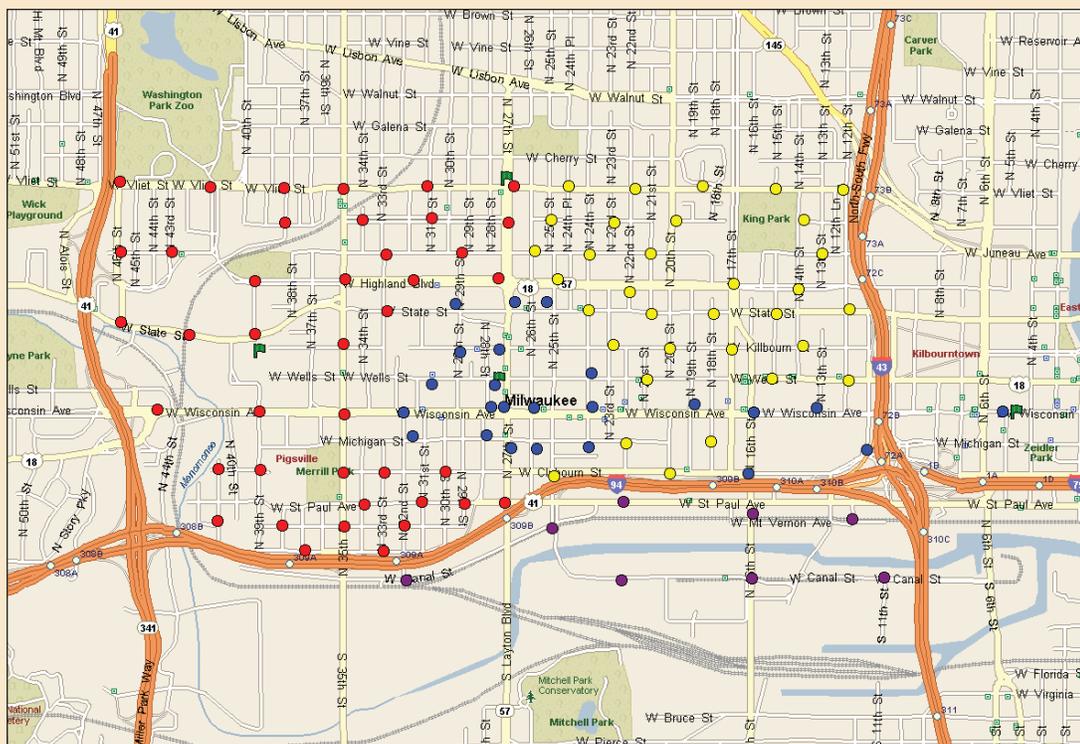
Milwaukee is among the first cities in the nation to deploy this technology," said Ald. Bauman. While users will pay a fee to access most Internet sites, the city web site and other governmental and non-profit organizations will be available at no charge to anyone who can establish a wireless network connection, the alderman said.

The agreement with Midwest Fiber Networks calls for the company to build the wireless network covering the entire City of Milwaukee. The network will be built with private funding, using no city taxpayer dollars. The contract allows Midwest Fiber to use city facilities, such as underground conduit, buildings or streetlights to build the Wi-Fi system.

"This wireless Internet access positions Milwaukee among the leading larger cities in the U.S. when it comes to technology improvements and should attract new businesses and improve the quality of life for city residents," said Ald. Bauman. Progress reports on the build-out will appear regularly on the City of Milwaukee web page at www.city.milwaukee.gov.



Approximately **2,500 antennas** need to be located on light poles, electric poles or other above-ground facilities to allow computers with wireless modems to communicate over the Internet. Each antenna is about the size of a shoebox.



The **City of Milwaukee Wi-Fi test area** (shown at left) includes much of the western portion of the 4th District, including the neighborhoods bounded by N. 10th St. on the east, N. 47th St. on the west, W. Canal St. on the south and W. Vliet St. on the north.

This map shows all of the proposed antenna locations in the demonstration area. The colored dots are the different phases of construction, with the blue dots representing antennas that are already up.

Wireless Internet service is scheduled to begin throughout the city in about a year.

District Developments



Crews slowly and cautiously moved the 154-year-old Gipfel Brewery building along the 300 block of W. Juneau Ave. on March 18. Owned by the Bradley Center for years, the historic building – the oldest known brewery structure in Milwaukee – was moved one block east where it will be restored to become part of a major new development project. Ald. Bauman, a member of the **Historic Preservation Commission** and an advocate of moving residential and commercial buildings instead of demolition, noted that this was the fifth building move in the 4th District since April 2004.

Don't Get Hit With Special Collection Charges

In 2005 the city simplified its “special pickups” collection procedure so that special items – up to four cubic yards of material (roughly about the size of two sofas) – are picked up on the weekly collection day. If a resident went above the amount and didn't remove the material after 72 hours, the city put out bids and hired a contractor at a rate of \$100 to \$200 to remove it.

However, the Common Council recently passed legislation lowering that fee to \$50 for residents who exceed the four cubic yard requirement – that after it was determined that the city could do the work faster, more efficiently and at a lower cost. “The process hasn't changed and I would still recommend that residents follow the four cubic yard rule,” said Ald. Bauman. “However this change will benefit those who inadvertently exceed the requirement.”

Ald Bauman says there are several ways to avoid any cost:

- Spread out the amount for pickup on regular garbage collection days.
- Wait for the spring Project Clean & Green. (see dates at right)
- Reserve a large dumpster for neighborhood weekend cleanups.
- Use the city's Self-Help Centers.

Larger Items, Household Hazardous Waste

Remember the city no longer picks up refrigerators, freezers, washers, dryers, stoves, dryers, air conditioners, water heaters, home computers, construction debris or brush amounts over four cubic yards. These items and other bulky materials can be taken to the Self Help Centers at 3879 W. Lincoln Ave. and 6660 N. Industrial Rd. The city also collects household hazardous wastes each Friday and Saturday between 7 a.m. and

3 p.m. at the city's permanent collection station at the Self-Help Center at 3879 W. Lincoln Ave.

The city's **Project Clean and Green** will be concentrating its efforts in the majority of the 4th Aldermanic District the week of May 29 - June 4, 2007 and in the area south of W. Juneau Ave. and west of N. 27th St. from April 30 - May 4, 2007 as the Department of Public Works dedicates extra workers and equipment for this special collection. Residents should be receiving a mailing from the Sanitation Services Division with a map of the zones and information on the program.

Large roll-off dumpsters can be reserved from the Sanitation Division for weekend neighborhood cleanups. Call Ald. Bauman's office for information on reserving a dumpster for your cleanup date.

Brewery Project Underway With Important City Investment

Restoration, environmental cleanup and other preliminary work is underway at the former Pabst Brewery complex, the \$205 million project now known as The Brewery. Ceremonies on January 16, 2007 kicked off the development that is spearheaded by Joseph Zilber and Towne Realty. Mr. Zilber envisions The Brewery as a vibrant and multifaceted neighborhood that includes residential, offices and commercial uses.

“The Common Council was instrumental in helping the private sector redevelop the Pabst complex that will bring new life to land largely vacant since 1996,” said Ald. Bauman. A \$29 million tax incremental financing plan approved by aldermen last December will help pay for demolition, environmental cleanup and construction of new streets, sewers and other public improvements, and \$1 million was set aside for a job training effort.

“Tax incremental financing is an important tool that has been used for a number of development projects that meet high-priority community needs,” said Ald. Bauman, including construction of housing to replace the former Pfister & Vogel tannery and development of Manpower’s new headquarters. Property taxes paid by a development pay off the city’s debt and interest charges. Once the debt is repaid, the property taxes go into the general fund of the city and other local governments.

So far, Madison-based Gorman & Co. has said it plans to construct 92 to 100 loft-style apartments within the former Pabst keg house. Other possible uses at the former brewery include a corporate training site operated by Johnson Controls Inc. and a brew pub to be built by local investor Jim Haertel, who owns the former Pabst offices and visitors center. The Brewery redevelopment will be done in phases over several years.



Ald. Bauman was honored with the opportunity to speak during the January ceremony kicking off the development of the former Pabst brewery complex. The event marked the start of restoration, environmental cleanup, and other work on the \$205 million project, which is called **The Brewery**. **Joseph Zilber and Towne Realty**, who purchased most of the complex from **Wispark**, are spearheading the project. Mr. Zilber has said he envisions The Brewery as a vibrant and multifaceted neighborhood that includes residential, offices and commercial uses. During the January event, Ald. Bauman spoke inside the ornate **Blue Ribbon Hall**, and later joined Mayor Tom Barrett, Common Council President Willie L. Hines, Jr. and Ald. Michael Murphy for a special construction equipment “parade” outside along W. Juneau Ave.



This rendering reflects possible and anticipated building uses at **The Brewery**.



Check out the city's website at:
www.milwaukee.gov

For Ald. Bauman's webpage and more info. on the 4th District go to:
www.milwaukee.gov/district4



Wondering About Neighborhood Crime?

Have you heard reports of a robbery in the neighborhood? The theft of a car? Ald. Bauman wants 4th District residents to know they can now receive email notification of crime activity in their neighborhoods or in any area they choose, using the **City of Milwaukee's E-Notify system**.

The new Police Verified Offense Notification feature of E-Notify includes eight crime categories: aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, vehicle theft, theft, arson, criminal damage to property and locked vehicle entry. Notices of crime incidents by address or near an address will be sent directly to your computer Monday through Friday.

To subscribe log into E-Notify on the city's web page at www.milwaukee.gov/enotify, locate the Police Verified Offense Notification and put in an address you are interested in or properties within 600 feet, 1,000 feet or a half-mile radius of the address. Each day you will be notified by e-mail if there are new crimes for the address or radius chosen with an email subject heading similar to "New Crime Incident."

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Vacant Buildings Ordinance: Know The Facts

For many years the city code allowed an owner to keep a residential building vacant and boarded as long as it was reasonably well maintained. But boarded houses send negative messages about a neighborhood, can attract negative activity, and can bring down the value of other homes in the area.

Two years ago the city enacted a housing preservation ordinance (275-32-7.5) co-sponsored by Ald. Bauman that requires owners of residential properties left vacant and boarded for six months or more to take steps to repair, raze, sell or obtain a mothballing permit if the structure has a historical designation. The ordinance does not apply to commercial or mixed-use buildings.

After a residential building is boarded for more than six months, the Department of Neighborhood Services can issue an order that requires the owner to take one of the following steps:

- Remove the boards.
- Obtain a rehab permit and submit to DNS a plan to get the building rehabbed within six months.
- Obtain a valid "mothball" permit if the building is designated as a historic structure or in a historic district.
- Obtain a valid demolition permit.
- List the building for sale with a Multiple Listing Service (MLS) broker at a reasonable asking price and make the building available for viewing by potential buyers. The code states that assessed value is to be used by DNS to judge if the sale price is reasonable.



Owners who do not comply can be prosecuted by DNS and may face a municipal court forfeiture ranging from \$150 to \$5,000. Fees can also be assessed to recoup inspection costs, and the city could also seek remedies in circuit court against the owner for maintaining a nuisance property.

For more information please call (414) 286-3441 or go to:
www.milwaukee.gov/dns