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RECORD OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY

DECEMBER 11, 2002-MAY 16, 2003

June 2003

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RECORD OF PUBLIC COMMENTS
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
DECEMBER 11, 2002-MAY 16, 2003

This report presents the public comment received on the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study.

The following is included in a series of appendices:

- Oral comments received at a series of public informational meetings on the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study between April 23, 2003 and May 1, 2003. (Appendix A).
- Written comments received on the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study during the formal public comment period from December 11, 2002, to May 16, 2003 (Appendix B).
- Newspaper articles and editorials concerning the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study (Appendix C).
- Materials announcing the four public informational meetings and hearings including advertisements, news releases, and Commission Newsletter (Appendix D).

The following is a summary of the oral and written comments received concerning the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study.

PUBLIC HEARING ORAL STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE

During the time period of December 11, 2002, through May 16, 2003, a total of 482 persons provided comments on the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study and the preliminary recommended plan either orally at the public hearings or in writing via letter or comment form available on the study web site and at the public informational meetings and hearings. These 482 persons provided their comments during the formal public comment period on the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study, with 29 persons providing multiple comments.

The comments of the 482 persons providing oral and written statements on the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study may be divided into three categories: comments in support of commuter rail service in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor, comments in support of improved public transit service in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor, and comments opposed to commuter rail service in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor.

Comments in Support of Commuter Rail Service in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor

Four hundred fifty seven persons expressed support for commuter rail service in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor. Those persons supporting commuter rail service in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor cited a number of reasons for their support including that commuter rail service in this corridor will provide an attractive alternative to automobile travel, reduce automobile travel, and promote economic growth in southeastern Wisconsin. Additional comments in support of commuter rail service in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor included that commuter rail service provides an attractive means
of transportation for persons with limited mobility, including persons with disabilities and vision impairments; that commuter rail service is more convenient and reliable than commuter bus service; and that commuter rail service would provide a more affordable alternative than the existing Amtrak service. Those expressing support included the President and Chief Executive Officer of S.C. Johnson & Son, Incorporated, as well as a number of business groups including the Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce, the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, the Kenosha Area Business Alliance, the Cudahy Chamber of Commerce, the Racine County Economic Development Corporation, and the Kenosha Area Chamber of Commerce.

Also, the Commission received a total of 832 postcards pre-printed by the Sierra Club stating support for commuter rail service in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor. Of the total 832 postcards, about 95 percent were from residents of southeastern Wisconsin, and about one percent were duplicates, with multiple postcards being returned by the same person. The Commission also received a total of 33 form letters stating support for commuter rail service in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor. These form letters were all sent from the same facsimile number.

**Comments in Support of Improved Public Transit Service in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor**

Five persons expressed support for improving public transit service in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor. Those persons supporting improved public transit service in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor did not specify whether they preferred commuter rail, commuter bus, or a combination of commuter rail and commuter bus service in the corridor.

**Comments Opposed to Commuter Rail Service in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor**

Twenty persons expressed opposition to commuter rail service in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor. Those persons opposing commuter rail service in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor questioned whether the benefits of providing commuter rail service would outweigh its costs, and questioned the projected ridership. They also cited the current fiscal problems of the State of Wisconsin. Additional comments opposing commuter rail service in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor suggested that the funds necessary to implement commuter rail should be redirected to other transportation improvements, including further subsidy and lower fares of the existing Amtrak service between the cities of Milwaukee and Chicago; to the reconstruction, upgrading, and improvement of the southeastern Wisconsin freeway system; and to the existing transit service within the corridor including existing Amtrak, Greyhound Lines, and Wisconsin Coach Lines service, in addition to the local transit service provided by the Kenosha Transit System, the Racine Belle Urban System, and the Milwaukee County Transit System.
Appendix A

RECORD OF PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETINGS AND HEARINGS
ON THE KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY

- Gateway Technical College, City of Kenosha, April 23, 2003
- Downtown Transit Center, City of Milwaukee, April 24, 2003
- Gateway Technical College, City of Racine, April 30, 2003
- Cudahy City Hall, City of Cudahy, May 1, 2003
TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

MR. PATRIE: Good evening. If I could ask everyone to have a seat, and you don't have to sit in the back. This isn't like church where no one wants to sit in the front pew. Well, welcome to the public hearing and public meeting on the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Alternative Study and specifically the preliminary recommended plan for commuter rail.

By name is Fred Patrie, and I'm the Director of Public Works for Kenosha County. And I have had the privilege of serving as the chairman of the Advisory Committee for this study, as well as the Advisory Committee for the feasibility study which preceded this study.

I will briefly review the format for tonight's meeting and hearing. The session has three parts. The first part consisted of the open house which you all had the opportunity of meeting with SEWRPC staff and other people asking questions on the boards, display boards, that were there.

The second part of the presentation tonight is a PowerPoint display that will be presented by Mr. Ken Yunker of the Regional Planning Commission staff, and the third part of the session will be the public hearing with statements from those of you that are present that wish to offer formal comments.

As you entered the room, there was a sign-in sheet and a speaker registration form on which you could indicate your desire to be heard. If anybody needs a speaker registration form at this time, please raise your hand, and a study staff member will come out and make sure you have a form so that we get your name spelled correctly, your address correctly, and that we can reflect your comments correctly.

Your statement will be taken down by study staff and is going to be recorded tonight by Jennifer Schmeling who is sitting to my far right. Also, the speaker system that is tied in to this microphone system is a direct feed to the Kenosha radio station WIVD. I don't believe it's being broadcast locally, but I presume that there will be excerpts that will be taken and used in a public format.

With that aside, we will turn it over now to Mr. Yunker who will give the brief presentation on the study and why we've here tonight. When he's completed with that, I will come back to the podium, and we can start the third part of the session tonight which is the public hearing. So I'll turn it over to Mr. Yunker.

[PowerPoint presentation by Mr. Yunker.]

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Ken. It is now time to receive comments, and we'll go over some of the ground rules very quickly here. This hearing is intended to receive the comments of the citizenry and those of you in attendance tonight concerning the preliminary plan. It must be emphasized that the purpose of the public hearing is to hear your comments, not to be a question and answer period or a debate. There was an opportunity to meet with study staff and to review study materials earlier, and the Regional Planning Commission staff will be available after the hearing to field your questions if there are any.

We ask that you keep your comments to about three minutes. The reason for that is we want everyone to have an opportunity to speak at least once. If you have not had enough time to provide your comments in the three minutes allowed, you may have an opportunity to speak again. If time permits, you will be allowed to speak a second time after all persons who registered to speak have...
had the opportunity to speak. When you provide your comments, we ask that you come to the front where you see the microphone and use that microphone so the court reporter and everyone else in the room can hear your comments. I would also like to point out the comments may be provided by you and anyone else in writing up to and through May 16, 2003. Written comments may be provided to the Commission through a variety of other methods. For contact information such as a mailing address, e-mail address, see this study newsletter that's at the front table when you walked in.

I'm going to remind the people who come and speak tonight that we are on a direct feed with WGTI radio, so your comments may be used tomorrow. I don’t think a live feed is going out over the air, and the two other things that I would ask of you tonight is extend a courtesy to those who are at the microphone to listen to what they have to say. We indicated that there will be a transcription of the public hearing, your comments. That’s Ms. Schmeling's job. You can help her tonight by letting the people speak and speak what they want to talk about without any interference and be polite to them. That would be helpful.

I as the chairman of the public hearing have three jobs. One is to keep it moving. One is to keep it germane, and the other is to provide everybody with an opportunity to speak. You can help me out tonight by following the ground rules and extending the courtesy that you would like to have extended to you when you're speaking. So with those as the ground rules, I think we had the sign-in sheets filled out as people came in.

I would like to introduce a couple of elected people that I thought I saw come into the room, Supervisors Boyer and Sarge from the County Board of Supervisors. I don't know if there are any other elected people that are in the room. If there are, please raise your hand. We can recognize you. Congressman Ryan — Ben Narducy from the Town of Grafton. Congressman Ryan has a representative here, Mr. David Crail. Also, we submitted two written remarks.

One was by the county executive welcoming you to Kenosha County and indicated that the Kenosha County Executive's office is in support of this resolution. There are further comments that he would like to make, but he summarized that the corridor would become one of the nation's most

important economic corridors, and commuter rail is the link that connects our local communities together, so we would submit that for the record.

The record is by the Kenosha Area Chamber of Commerce; Ms. Cory Ann St. Marie-Cains, who had to leave to attend another meeting. Her comments conclude, "The Metra extension would provide an important link for resources and opportunities needed for the continued growth of our Kenosha area business and industry, as well as our economy. My comments should be read to the organization," so that would also be for the record.

With that, I will ask Mr. Korb, who's up at the table to Ken Yunker's right, to keep track of the minutes. We are going to allow everyone three minutes to begin with. I'll try and have Gary give you a heads up when there's about ten seconds left so you can conclude your remarks. And again, if we have time, then we'll come back through. I think we have the sign-in sheets, and we'll take them in the order in which they were signed up. The first one is Mr. Fred London, 1954 First Street, No. 290, I believe, Highland Park, Illinois.

MR. LONDON: Yes. I support the
MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. London, for your comments. I see the second sheet has not been turned in. I have No. 3, and No. 1 was Mr. London, so does somebody have No. 2 and thought they were going to speak? If not, we'll go to Mr. 5. I see the mayor of the city of Kenosha has arrived, Mr. Antaramian. Second speaker then is on card No. 3 would be Lenny Klauer.

MR. KLAVER: Thank you. My name is Lenny Klauer. I'm a Kenosha resident as well as the assistant vice chancellor for university relations and advancement at UW-Parkside. The University of Wisconsin-Parkside formally and strongly endorses the preliminary recommendations of the transit Advisory Committee based on the following perceived benefits. First of all, UW-Parkside has more than 6,000 students, faculty, and staff. The majority reside within the Chicago-Milwaukee corridor. A substantial number commute to the campus on a daily basis Monday through Friday, most by private automobile. Commuter rail offers an alternative to this heavy reliance on automobiles. UW-Parkside has the most diverse student population of all UW-campuses, a diversity that reflects the demographic characteristics of southeastern Wisconsin. In addition, the school actively encourages returning and nontraditional students. Principles of diversity can further be enhanced by commuter rail. Third, UW-Parkside also serves as a gathering place for residents of Kenosha and Racine Counties and beyond for such events as theatrical and musical productions, athletic events, business exhibitions, and community-based social and cultural events. Provision of commuter rail offers the transit alternative to these visitors as well. Fourth, UW-Parkside initiates and participates in a number of business and community collaborations throughout the region. Commuter rail allows easy access to and from the campus on a daily basis for participants in these programs from Milwaukee to Chicago.

Next point, the Corridor Transit Study proposes that a new commuter rail station be developed about one mile east of the campus. Transit shuttle service between the campus and the station can be developed thus making use of commuter rail even more attractive. And finally, day-to-day origin and destination aspects of

MR. PATRIE: Thank you for your comments. The next speaker is David Caddock, 6120 Green Bay Road, Kenosha, Wisconsin. Mr. Caddock.

MR. Caddock: Thank you. I also support commuter rail in southeastern Wisconsin. However, I have a few concerns that to my knowledge have not been addressed. The first is the whole commuter rail concept is predicated on the fact that Metra can and will come north. I have seen no information stating or indicating that this is in fact legal and desirable from their point of view.

I understand that they have been on your advisory board, but I also understand that they don't know for sure if they can in fact do this. It may require some legislation from the State of Illinois, and I think that until this is clarified we are putting the cart before the horse to find out if in fact they can do this.

My second concern is in your presentation you indicated that funding for this project should be state and local with no local share. I think you're living in a pie in the sky. It's totally unreasonable to expect that there will be a sales tax or some other method of local funding required of us in that that's how Metra operates in Illinois. And considering the state of the Wisconsin financial budgets and running a deficit to even think that we won't have to pay, we'll get something for nothing, I believe, is unrealistic, and we should not be promoting this aspect. Thank you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. Caddock. Next speaker is John Beckler, executive director of KABA, Kenosha Area Business Alliance, 606 52nd Street, Kenosha, Wisconsin 53140.

MR. BECKLER: Thank you very much. I'll
make my comments short. One, our organization
which represents about 410 businesses throughout
Kenosha County with a board of directors of 36
people which are all employers totally endorses the
project with the following caveats. One, that in
no way should property tax or income tax be used to
support any of the three components of the project,
i.e., infrastructure, maintenance, or subsidy; two,
that if in fact there was a need for,
quote-unquote, local share that it should be funded
out of gas tax the same way expressways are, road
improvements, et cetera; and that thirdly, to
the -- if in fact this is going to be operated and
administered by a multi-county jurisdiction that to
the extent feasible there be some requirement in
the partnership consortium that would require the
local bus system to make sure that there was an
effective and efficient bus system so that, for
example, in Kenosha County's case we would be able
to utilize the commuter rail to transport people
that work in Lakeview Corporate Park which is
outside of the city boundary. Without that, we
miss a golden opportunity to link that together.
And so those were the three comments that were
made, and thank you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. Bechler.
Next speaker is Harlan Draeger, 775 Sheridan Road,
Racine, Wisconsin.

MR. DRAEGER: I'm a little short for
this. I had no intentions of testifying, but when
I came in and found out that there were only four
people signed up, so this is sort of an impulsive.
I'd like to -- if you hear me, I'd like to ask
a question of the audience here. How many people
here have used commuter rail on a regular basis for
any sustained period?

(Hands raised in audience.)

MR. DRAEGER: Well, more than I thought.

MR. PATRIE: I think the record should
show there was probably a 70 percent response to
that question.

MR. DRAEGER: Well, that's really
interesting, I guess. Anyhow, I scratched out a
few thoughts while I was listening to you folks. I
think I'm the voice of experience because I rode
the commuter rail into Chicago downtown for 25
years straight, and it was great. And I came to
Kenosha in 1951 and found out the local people were
largely unaware of their two greatest assets. One
was Lake Michigan except for some perch fishing
a glimpse of -- a glimpse of the lake. The income
tax came to Illinois in 1972, and it came in at
two-and-a-half percent.

MR. ROES: Ten seconds, please.

MR. DRAEGER: What's that?

MR. ROES: Ten seconds.

THE WITNESS: You got people behind me?

MR. PATRIE: Pardon me, sir?

MR. DRAEGER: You got people behind me?

MR. PATRIE: No, no. He said ten seconds
left.

MR. DRAEGER: Do you have someone
following me?

MR. PATRIE: Yes.

MR. DRAEGER: Okay. Well, I'll simply
say the old rail service that I used was my best
friend for many years. It is the best possible
investment that you could make for the long term
health of this area. With 46 percent of the people
who live and work -- who live in this county who
are employed working outside of Kenosha County,
there's quite a lesson there. We need commuter
rail, and I think the way you're going is on the
money. Thanks.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. Draeger.
Another elected official has popped in. County Board Supervisor Bill Grady is in the back. I’ve tried to keep track as you come in. The next speaker, and I’m trying to pronounce this correctly the first time, Frank Raviislav.

MR. RAVISLAV: Yes.

MR. FRAZIER: Did -- reasonably close?

MR. RAVISLAV: Very close.

MR. FRAZIER: Okay.

MR. RAVISLAV: Okay. Most people have talked about this study in terms of commuter rail. I’m all for all rail but in a different venue. See, I work at the Great Lakes Naval Base, and several developments have taken place over the last few years. First of all, all boot camp now is at Great Lakes, including what was formerly out in Orlando and San Diego, so it’s a bigger facility now.

Number two, since September 11, no Greyhound bus is allowed to pick up or discharge at Great Lakes. In fact, I called Greyhound one time, and they said there’s only one bus. It picks up outside the gate at Fort Sheridan, so there’s really no way going north. You can go south on the train but not north. So there’s a potential in off-peak periods actually on handling additional traffic.

I don’t think having more train service going farther to Milwaukee will need far more equipment because most of the equipment is idle right now. I don’t know why Amtrak didn’t pick up on this. But be as it may, it was a missed opportunity. Amtrak -- And it gives people a better choice. It gives Wisconsin an opportunity to fund rail service. It did go through Janesville, Wisconsin, but you know how bad that was. Hardly anybody rode that thing, so this is much more needed. I don’t think Illinois will be funding the Amtrak service to Milwaukee from Chicago much longer. I think this route here is much, much better, even connecting with Amtrak because it goes to the heart of the cities. It only stops about one or two blocks from Amtrak anyhow. It would also be a service going north to Amtrak through the same station. I can’t -- And one thing that bothers me is why Union Pacific-Metra has funded service to a tiny little place called Harbor, the navel capital of the world which is 63 miles. And there’s only about 5,000 people, yet it has not gone anywhere beyond Kenosha. And Racine is almost like a sister city of Kenosha. One of the problems is I don’t think the train -- I only take the train from Great Lakes to Kenosha. But when the train gets off at Kenosha, everybody just piles off. It’s like a big funnel. I know that people live somewhere else, so they’re all coming in and all coming out. It would be more of a distribution of load if you kept on going. I think the other -- Kenosha, of course, is not handicap accessible, but I think places like the new stations definitely would be. I mean, as far as Amtrak goes, it was a missed opportunity.

But my gosh, I think this is way, way over -- overdue. The arrival of this type of service is definitely needed. I don’t think there’s --

MR. KORS: Ten seconds.

MR. RAVISLAV: Okay. Whether -- You don’t have to supply food service or anything. You just have to buy a little, whatever. You keep on going, and that’s it.

MR. PATRANK: Thank you, Mr. Raviislav.

The next speaker is Mr. Edward Huck, Wisconsin Alliance of Cities working with Smithland, Madison, Wisconsin.

MR. HUCK: Good evening, Wisconsin Alliance of Cities is an organization of 38 cities throughout Wisconsin, relevant cities to the Metra's Cudahy, Kenosha, Milwaukee, Oak Creek, and Racine. In addition, I have personal ties to Racine, born and raised there. I’m a graduate of this institution and UW-Parkside as well. The Alliance of Cities last month in meeting strongly endorses the preliminary engineering for the Metra extension. We do so because it will change development patterns. Right now the I-94 system that runs west of all of these cities is a tremendous pull for development which will bring back towards the cities' much needed development.

We support it because it ties us to Chicago.

One of the goals of the Alliance of Cities is regional economic development. We feel it is absolutely essential that southern Wisconsin tie itself to Chicago and that western and northern Wisconsin tie itself to Minneapolis because they are two of the strongest economic magnets in the United States. We support it because it will increase access to higher-paying jobs for women and men in the area, and we support it because we can avoid loss of land to urban sprawl and dirtier air and water. We think this is an excellent step towards moving Wisconsin into a competitive midwestern -- having competitive midwestern pull.
For jobs, so we believe it’s essential. I have
written testimony, and I’ll leave it.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. Hock. Next
speaker is Mr. Chip Brewer, S.C. Johnson, 1525 Howe
Street, Racine, Wisconsin.

MR. BREWER: My name is Chip Brewer, and
I’m here tonight representing S.C. Johnson which
has its global headquarters in Racine. Along with
other Johnson-affiliated companies, we employ about
4,000 people in southeastern Wisconsin. The
majority of those employees live in Racine. But
hundreds of employees also live in Kenosha,
Milwaukee, and northern Illinois. S.C. Johnson
wants to thank the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional
Planning Commission and its staff for investing the
time and resources to conduct this very
comprehensive study and also the study Advisory
Committee for their very careful deliberations.
S.C. Johnson will be filing written comments on the
study and its recommendations. And also, our chief
executive officer will be making comments at your
public meeting in Racine next week. But since this
is the first town meeting that you were holding, I
just wanted to make a very brief statement, and
that is that we are enthusiastic supporters of the
report and its recommendations. We support
Kenosha, Racine, Milwaukee commuter rail for three
reasons, well, for many reasons, three of which I
will mention.

First, it will help employers like S.C.
Johnson and others in the region attract and retain
employees. Second, it will provide citizens in the
area access to jobs. And this is extremely
important given the unacceptably high unemployment
rates that exist in certain communities in
southeastern Wisconsin. And third, commuter rail
will increase the quality of life and the
attractiveness of the entire corridor and attract
new businesses and economic growth.

Once again, thanks very much for taking
your report and its recommendations on the road and
educating people in the area. And we look forward
to commenting at the -- again at the hearing next
week in Racine. Thank you.

MR. DAVIES: Thank you, Mr. Brewer. I
might point out now that if someone has -- in the
audience has not filled out a form and they wish to
speak, if they raise their hand, someone can --
we’ve got one up here, and they’ll get the slip up
to me. The next scheduled speaker is Lisa Huggins,
Wisconsin Coach Line user, 5923 1/2 Sixth Avenue,
Kenosha, Wisconsin.

MS. HUGGINS: Hi. Thank you.

MR. PATRIE: Was that Higgins or Huggins?

MS. HUGGINS: Huggins. Everyone tries
Higgins, but it never works out that way. I’m also
employed in Milwaukee at Bank One, and I use the
Wisconsin Coach Lines every day. I fully support
the light rail in the future. The powers that were
never should have allowed the Milwaukee and Kenosha
North Shore to end in the first place. I feel that
four, five years in the future is much too long of a wait. In the meantime, we need more extensive
bus service now.

The Wisconsin Coach Lines fails to
provide decent service and continues to cut the
small amount of service it does provide. There’s
currently only eight runs between Kenosha and
Milwaukee and only one run after 9:15, and that
doesn’t — out of Milwaukee, and that doesn’t occur
until 9 p.m. That’s far too long of a gap. I feel
that much of this problem is due to discrimination
not only on the part of Wisconsin Coach Lines but
the State of Wisconsin itself. How else can you
explain that in the most populated and diverse area
of Wisconsin it has provided the worst public
transportation between Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha,
and Chicago? Why is it that a less diverse
community such as Waukesha is provided with over
three times the amount of runs and charged less in
taues? I’m told that Wisconsin Coach Lines gets
more funding for Waukesha. My question is why?

In the many years that I’ve been taking
the coach lines, I’ve seen many good passengers
come and go due to unreliability, unsafe bus
conditions, bad scheduling, and all around bad
management. I fully support the train, but we
desperately need some alternatives now. Perhaps
some thought should be given to allowing other bus
companies to take over the nonservice currently
provided by Wisconsin Coach Lines. Eight runs is
just not enough. Four years is too long. Thank
you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Ms. Huggins. The
next scheduled speaker is Jane Hadebich — hope I
pronounced that correctly — 940 Cooper Road,
Pleasant Prairie.

THE WITNESS: Hello. I support the
commuter rail high level of service alternative.
The commuter bus or combination rail/bus
alternatives are not viable alternative. I also
to ride the Wisconsin Coach Line buses to -- from
Kenosha to Milwaukee on a daily basis. While our
bus driver is always courteous and he tries his
best, the current bus runs get extremely poor and
unsatisfactory service. The buses are uncomfortable
for a 20-minute ride and frequently break down.
The Kenosha-Milwaukee run consistently operates
with the oldest buses which have the most problems.
The temperature is 80 or above outside, we're
guaranteed not to have air-conditioning or even
windows open.

When the Marquette Interchange or other
road projects begin like the Sheridan Road
improvements between Racine and Kenosha, delays
will be even worse. I will not recommend this
bus service to any other potential riders. The
commuter rail high level of service on the other
hand will give a dependable, comfortable ride to
commuters.

My husband has ridden the Metra system to
Chicago for years. When we decided to return to
Wisconsin to be close to our families, we chose to
live in Pleasant Prairie because of its proximity
to the Metra station. The train is always on

Let's do this, but then I've been thanking you for
the opportunity to speak since 1081 because I've
been coming to FHRGFC hearings since then. And
Mayor -- former mayor -- I guess Mayor Meredith
now. Frank Zieleder was in charge of the committee.
Before that Les Kaper during a campaign trip,
coincidentally, ran a demonstration train between
Kenosha and Racine. A few hundred people, over
1,500, showed up at the event at Racine Depot. And
course rides were given back and forth, so that
might have been the attraction. But I wonder if
many people would have showed up if he had gotten a
bus instead, and -- But my point is we've been
talking about this, and there are people who
weren't even born then who are on transportation
committees in other parts of the nation and
operating systems such as in Los Angeles Caltrain,
Metrolink in St. Louis, things like that. And here
we are still talking. Is that kind of an anomaly
of southeastern Wisconsin?

What I was saying is some of these
figures when they come in, while they will cost
$159 million, that's just one figure that was
thrown out, seems the figures change all the time.
I would like to see some reasoning for those

schedule, and there are few, if any, technical
problems. It's a safe, pleasant ride with a
convenient schedule. The commuter rail medium
level of service does not provide enough trains to
be beneficial for most commuters. The Commission
should also note the additional benefits of such
transportation services. Over the years, we have
seen the economic impact of the Metra stations at
various stops along the way. Shopping districts
and other businesses flourish in its path. My
husband has spotted businesses along the way that
would interest us. As a result, we have made
purchases at those same businesses. We also
witnessed the technical corridor spring up in
Mayerville, Illinois. Part of the credit of this
is due to easy access to and from Chicago via the
Metra system. I urge the Study Advisory Committee
and the communities involved to support
wholeheartedly the commuter rail high level of
service. Thank you.

MR. PATRA: Thank you, Mr. Naubrich.
Next scheduled speaker is Louis Rugani, 4526 29th
Avenue, Kenosha, Wisconsin.

MR. RUGANI: Thanks for this opportunity
to speak. I think I broke the microphone again.
such time as the rails are running. Then you can use it as a connector.

Now, the fact that the Marquette Interchange is going to be taking some property tax dollars or state funding, let's put it that way, over and above the gasoline taxes, I think the gloves are off, and I think now we can go and see some of the fuel taxes for what we want. I know the old myth among the paving lobby is that, well, road taxes are paid for by road users. That's not true, and you know it. They're going over and above, so we can do the same thing for transit.

There's other things, too. There's creative funding we can come up with. You know those better than I. Metra has a wonderful system. The sales taxes are good because everybody pays, but that's another thing. Some of the sensation —

Mr. KORN: Ten seconds.

Mr. KUZMA: Do I have a few more seconds?

Mr. PATRICE: Yeah.

Mr. KUZMA: Some of the stations are a bit extravagant. Somers is a little scared over the station. I think a weather shelter and a gravel parking lot is okay to start with, and I think used equipment is fine. I don't think we need to go champagne for a new start. And there's more, but I'll see you, I guess, in the next few days. And, Mr. Patrice, thank you for all you've done. I'm glad you're on the committee and heading it. Thank you again.

Mr. PATRICE: Thank you, Mr. Kuzma. The next speaker is Mr. Len Brandrup, Director of Transportation, City of Kenosha.

Mr. BRANDRUP: Thank you for the nice presentation this evening. I wanted to just share with the group that as the relatively new Director of Transportation in the City of Kenosha, proud to stand here this evening and support this project in the strongest terms that I know how. In over 20 years of professional work in the public transportation area, one thing I can suggest to the group is that in my experience, development has followed the fixed guideway systems. It does not follow the bus improvements that we have made extraordinarily well in this country for our tired vehicles, and that's a sad thing to say. But it's a fact of life, and we need to acknowledge that.

Having said that, in Kenosha we're making considerable improvements. We're recently signed an agreement with Metra to upgrade the track area and make it ADA accessible. We're proud of that project moving forward. We have grants pending to develop further the parking facilities. The county has a project to develop an additional parking facility. We have excess parking demand here now in Kenosha as an example to the region of what happens with a station. We're a lucky community here in the state of Wisconsin in that we have Metra here in Kenosha, but we need Metra going both directions. It serves a south corridor need. It can serve a north corridor need very cost-effectively and should be pursued.

Having said that, we support the current station in Kenosha also with a direct link for our streetcar development project which links with Nutter Park, a significant, almost $200 million build-out project for the City of Kenosha.

Redevelopment of the downtown is occurring before our very eyes and will continue and, I think, is a model for the rest of the region to say, "Look at their systems."

Lastly, our bus system transfer facility is within one block of the Metra station. We will provide the services needed to support distribution in the Kenosha area with Kenosha Transit Services and look forward to this project moving forward. I echo the comments that have been made in the room that faster is better in terms of improving the corridor transportation needs or serving the transportation needs in the region. And again, I just want to summarize by saying we support within the Transportation Department this program of service improvement and know factually that it will make a significant upgrade in the economic development opportunities in the region. Thank you this evening.

Mr. PATRICE: Thank you, Mr. Brandrup.

The next scheduled speaker is Rick Karmish, Midwest High-Speed Rail Coalition, P.O. Box 802876, Chicago.

Mr. KARMISH: My name is Rick Karmish. I represent the Midwest High-Speed Rail Coalition. We are a nonprofit, grassroots organization supporting the development of high-quality intercity passenger railway service connecting nine states of the Midwest. We've got about a thousand members, and roughly 200 of those are in Wisconsin. We fully support the development of the extension of the Metra line up to Milwaukee because it would
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Milwaukee and Racine and would hope that the State
would take the proper actions to see it happen.

MR. PATTIE: Thank you, your Honor. The
next scheduled speaker, and I hope I pronounce this
correctly, is Juliana Muskat, Save the KAT
Railroad, 916 Washington Street, Kenosha,
Illinois.

MR. MUSKAT: Hello, everybody.

MR. PATTIE: First of all, did I get it
correctly?

MR. MUSKAT: No. You got it wrong. It's
Juliana Muskat.

MR. PATTIE: What's the first name?

MR. MUSKAT: Juliana.

MR. PATTIE: Juliana?

MR. MUSKAT: Right. I'm not here to
raise any criticisms. I'm here actually as a
cheerleader. We came out from Illinois to be with
you today. What I want you to know is that right
now in Illinois there's a meeting just like this
for CARIS, Chicago Area Transportation Study. And
they're working on similar problems, and it's nice
to know that these ideas are alive and well north
of the state line. In the short time that I have,
I want to teach everybody a beautiful new word.

You'll find it when you do a Google search on it.
The word is communization where you take an old
railroad line that is underutilized and you make
railroad cars, locomotives, and you put them on
railroad lines to help take people to work and
where they want to go.

We're trying to save the EJR Railroad in
Illinois so that people in Waukegan, Illinois, can
put their kids on a train and send them down to the
University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana. It
would be nice to be able to get on a train in
Waukegan and take it up to Milwaukee to watch a
baseball game at Miller Park. We call the EJR
circumferential railroad the railroad, the baseball
railroad. We're trying to bring minor league
baseball to Waukegan so we can compete with your
new minor league team here in Kenosha. We want to
have a minor league baseball park near the railroad
station in downtown Waukegan. The people would be
able to get off the train in Waukegan, watch
baseball in Waukegan, take it north to go to
Kenosha, get on a train in Kenosha, and go with
that train to Joliet, Illinois, to watch the Kane
County Cougars near Elgin, to do all kinds of
wonderful things. So what you're doing here today

serve as an excellent complement by providing the
local services needed and complement the existing
Milwaukee services that have been successful and
soon will be serving Mitchell Field directly.

Thank you.

MR. PATTIE: Thank you, Mr. Harries, for
your comments. The next scheduled speaker is the
honorable mayor of the city of Kenosha, John
Antaramian. Is he right there? I'll take this
opportunity to remind everybody in the audience if
you have not filled out a slip to speak, raise your
hand. Someone from the SEMUC staff will give you a
slip so you can be put on the list. The honorable
mayor of the City of Kenosha.

MAYOR ANTARAMIAN: I apologize for
holding off. But as usual, I was talking to
somebody in the hallway, so I do apologize for the
holdup. I just wanted to stop by to lend my
support to the concept of the Metra station, a
transformational project from Chicago to
Milwaukee going through the city of Kenosha, city
of Racine. I think it is so important. This is a
metro area when it comes to economies. And because
of that, other uses of transportation are needed
other than interstate highways and the systems that
we have in place. So I would strongly support and
recommend the support of the community to see that
this occurs, though for many of us in Kenosha we
already have a leg up. We have the Metra to
Chicago, but the ability to be able to go to
Milwaukee, to the airport, to those other
activities in our sister city of Milwaukee, I
think, become important to us, along with the
possibilities of express trains from Milwaukee,
Racine, Kenosha, Waukegan, North Chicago, Waukegan,
Chicago enabling more transportation activities
through this area.

This morning as I was giving a little
tour to someone, actually from a TV station, we
were chatting, and I drove by the train station to
show them what's going on. The train station
parking lot was packed, totally filled. There was
no room. I probably could have gotten the police
down there to do some illegal ticketing for cars
parked illegally along the side trying to make --
have room for people to be able to go to Chicago,
more likely where they went. But it's that kind of
growth that is continuing to happen, so I would
again say for the city of Kenosha we'd lend our
support to seeing this Metra service expand into
is really encouraging for us in Illinois because it's nice to know that we're not the only ones that are thinking these wonderful ideas that I heard here today and what I heard on WAWF when I listened to Rosemary Potter. And when you do the Google search on computerization, you'll find the first speaker, Mr. London. He's credited with the word, you know, computerization, but that's basically what we're talking about.

You have computerization in Los Angeles, California. The people who came to the World Series to watch the Giants play, the Angels, a lot of 'em came on the Metro Link to the ballpark in Anaheim. You have the Metro Link concept down in St. Louis, and this is an idea that people are rallying to support around the country, and I'm glad that it's coming about here in Kenosha County and Racine County and Milwaukee County. It's a wonderful thing, and I really enjoyed what I heard here today, so just stay with it. Don't give up. Don't listen to Tommy Thomases. This is a wonderful thing. And if we stay with it, we'll be able to enjoy it, and we'll be able to find ways for people in this country to find work, and we'll start looking more railroad cars up in Milwaukee at that company that Rosemary Potter was talking about on the radio this morning. I wish we had a place like that down in Waukegan, but I think this is a wonderful idea and just stay with it and do the good work. Thank you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. Musket. The next speaker is Patricia Tobin-Chapman, 910 19th Street, apartment 313, Beach Point Senior Center, Kenosha.

MS. TOBIN-CHAPMAN: After all of that, I don't know if I even need this. I had no intention of speaking as you know. At the time there hadn't been a single woman up here, nor had there been anyone talking for the seniors or anybody saying much about the environment, so I just couldn't keep my mouth shut. After that the two women came up, and a lot of my thunder has been taken care of. But I am a former commuter on the North Shore. I used to go back and forth from Kenosha to south Kenosha where I was a St. Joseph woman to go to school during the Depression. I had a relative -- That's over 70 years ago, and I had an uncle who committed to Chicago at that time. It was a wonderful thing. And my grandfather was the gatekeeper. When I was out there, I'd bring his lunch, and he'd say -- It was manually operated, you know. He'd say about all these cars, "All those cars, Patricia, they're just a passing fancy." And that's what I thought when they came out with computers, that it was a passing fancy. And now I'm so far behind I don't know what I'm doing, but I think this is wonderful. I'm glad that I can still drive, though I don't go out on the interstate much anymore. I do go to Chicago, and I'm glad that we have a way to go there. I'd like to be able to go to Milwaukee, and I know a lot of seniors would.

When you get to Milwaukee, a lot of your relatives there can pick you up, or you can get other ways of traveling, going from one place to another so that I think and I hope that you do go ahead with this. And I know there's something -- I didn't take any notes, and I knew there was something else I was going to say. But that's the main part is let's get it going so that when I can't drive I can get on the train.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Ms. Tobin-Chapman. And if you have additional comments --

MS. TOBIN-CHAPMAN: Oh, I know what it was. I wasn't speaking officially. I was supposed to say something about the environment. I wanted to say as a member of the Bradford Unitarian Earthless Green Committee we are trying to encourage environmental. And of course, using trains is much more environmentally sound than driving automobiles, but that's not official. We didn't -- They didn't vote on it. They just told me it.

MR. PATRIE: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Tobin-Chapman. This is the last card I have for speaker registration. So once again, if you want to speak for the first time, raise your hand, and someone from the SEMARC staff will get you one of those. As I indicated earlier, you can submit your written comments through March 16, 2003, or they can be sent through the fax machine, or they can be e-mailed to the Regional Planning Commission at all those addresses and phone numbers. The last speaker that is registered is Roy Ernst, 5016 Six and a Half Mile Road, Calendar, Mr. Ernst.

MR. ERNST: How do you do, gentlemen? I'm here at 7 o'clock, so I didn't get to see your presentation here. I don't know who arranged this thing to start at six. It's awful early. All
right. I'm here because I'm interested in efficiency. Most of what I've seen for commuter railroads lacks efficiency. It's full of nostalgia, everything else. I had a pleasant time of commuting to Chicago on the Hiawatha for approximately three years. Wisconsin subsidized a vast amount of the Hiawatha service down to Chicago. The big point that the Hiawatha service has is it's fast. It's efficient. However, it only carries the population that's necessary on one route. One route fills that train and sometimes to excess.

The Metra is darn slow. From Kenosha it takes you two hours to get down there. I could walk almost faster than that. If you wanna make this efficient and make it a service that people can use and be efficient at, then let's have some fast trains that go down there. If we're subsidizing the State of Wisconsin, these states, we don't need the Hiawatha. We can have one Metra thing that makes a stop in Milwaukee, makes a stop in Racine, makes a stop in Kenosha, Kenosha goes straight down to Chicago. And if Chicago and Illinois want to subsidize part of it, so be it. That's my words. Let's keep it efficient. Let's not waste the taxpayers' dollars on this thing, but we need it. We're subsidizing airplanes. We're subsidizing freeways. I am not against subsidizing to a certain extent the railroads, and let's keep it efficient.

MR. PATRZ: Thank you, Mr. Ernt, for your comments. Mr. Domnick indicated that I may have made an error when I said written comments can be accepted. He thinks I said March 16 instead of May 16. If I did say March, it stands corrected. It's May 16. Thanks, Octo. There's one last one that's been submitted now. I have a difficulty reading the first name, but I believe the last name is Piatak, X-I-A-T-A-U. MYR. PISTAU: Yes.

MR. PATRZ: Is that correct, sir?

MR. PISTAU: Yes.

MR. PATRZ: What's the first name?

MR. PISTAU: Eddie. Eddie Piatak.

MR. PATRZ: Eddie. If you want to step up to the microphone, and you'll have three minutes to --

MR. PISTAU: Well, I missed part of this presentation. I didn't know about it till it was too late. I'm laid off right now, so I've got time to actually do something like this. Now, I'm a big believer in the Metra system actually going up to Milwaukee. Actually, I take it a lot going to Chicago. It's just a hassle being in Chicago in the first place driving. Parking is expensive. Geez, if I want to go to any event, pretty much I got two feet. Chicago's got an El train, too, so I've taken that quite a bit. To get to Milwaukee, you know, you gotta drive down. The parking's horrendous down there. And the way Milwaukee talks about, you know, they want to build -- they want to widen the freeway going down there. For what? I mean, there's only like a couple times out of the day that, you know, the roads are actually really busy. When you drive any part of the day, I mean, it's pretty easy to get around. But if you give somebody an alternative to get to Milwaukee, you can open up a lot of doors down there. That's what I believe. You got Summit fast down there. I mean, you got a lot of people from Illinois going to Summit fast, going to work. I know a few people that actually had to give up work, you know, like some of the friends of mine, their parents, because, you know, they had no train to go down there, and to drive down there is expensive. I mean, parking is just bad down there and in these other cities. I mean, it would just help out the economy. That's what I believe, so that's what I've got to say.

MR. PATRZ: Thank you, Mr. Piatak, for your comments. I have no more slips in front of me, so that means that those that have wanted to speak for the first time have gone through unless there's someone who would like to speak for the first time, raise your hand, and you'll get a slip. Otherwise, if there's somebody that wants a follow-up comment who had spoken before, you can come to the microphone, identify your name again for the record so that we have that, and we will give you another three minutes.

MR. BAVLIS: Okay. I'm Frank Bavlis. I spoke before, and I mentioned that first I have a facsimile of a 1928 timetable of the Chicago and North Shore Milwaukee and how slow that was. That was before they even built the high-speed line along 41. This thing actually went on the El and then used -- went all the way through where the bike path is, and now it's from -- I think that was from -- almost a little over two hours. Now, in that two hours it actually
used a street of Milwaukee for three miles, two or three miles. It literally would go down and turn to the right and turn to the left, so you can see the potential if something like that can do it in two hours. The Chicago 400s went from Chicago to Northwest. It’s steam-powered, not steam-line. It took 75 minutes with the old heavy weight coaches with the rivets in 1935, 1937. And then you had — than you had a 1937 no, 1937 showed 440 steam locomotive. They just put a bunch of metal on it and all the equipment, and that went from Chicago to Milwaukee in either 70 or 75 minutes in 1935. So you can see back how -- what kind of progress have we really made? But the potential was there. I think the more trains you have, the less will be local, okay. It’s like -- it’s almost using a bus. One bus on a route is going to make all the stops. We have more express routes. That part becomes quicker, and that’s the same way with train service. It could have -- To a train, I remember even from Waukegan to Milwaukee was about 45 minutes. Even when the train -- the 400 would stop at what was 32nd Street, you know, it wasn’t all that fast. But, you know, compared to what you have now, you want to take a bus, sometimes on Sundays they have a gimbay (phonetic) service. You know what gimbay service is, was like a private bus service down at the Turn of the Century. And that’s what they have sometimes. They used this to get out to Milwaukee because like I said, the Greyhound, I called my -- I called this voice mail system. They call it gracing. It’s Antrak’s Julie, and all I could get out of her was there’s one bus a day from here to Milwaukee. And you had to get on at the base because what happened on 9/11, there was no Greyhound bus service. This is for the sailors who would go out on the base there. Nothing can go on the base except for like a taxi service, but -- And they also have remodeled and built a brand new station in Great Lakes. You seem it being built by the contractor Bow or something, so it’s the last big station that’s being built. And that would be really nice if you could get that station going to Milwaukee, and that’s about what I have to say. Thank you very much.

MR. PATRIS: Thank you, Mr. Drzewiecki, for your comments. Anyone else? There’s a trade-off here in having to come back to the microphone again. The trade-off is of course that the staff will be here to answer your questions as little longer if we don’t. Yes, Mr. Draeger.

MR. DRAEGER: Second bite at the apple. We’ve lived in --

MR. PATRIS: Could you give your name again?

MR. DRAEGER: Bascom Draeger, 375 Sheridan Road, Racine, although that’s Kenosha County, Town of Somers. We’ve lived in Kenosha County for 52 years, and my observation is that the two most visible changes in the whole community in our time are, first, the loss of one after another major industries, mostly heavy duty. And we’re a rust belt town. There’s no question about it. Fortunately, some other things came along to cushion the blow. But the second development is the change in the traffic on the highways. I think that if -- As I said, we live out in Somers. These sleepy country roads now, I just drove through one during what is now rush hour. It’s one car after another. These aren’t sleepy country roads anymore. It’s becoming just like Lake County. And I think if we’ve got our heads on straight, we know that Highway 50 and 76th Street is the wave of the future for the whole county. And how does rail affect that? Well, Mayor Antaramian noted all the cars parked in the parking lot at the Metra station. I called down there today, and the last ridership figures, an average daily ridership out of Kenosha is 341. It was less than 100 when I was commuting, and it’s just grown, grown like crazy. The potential for growth is certainly there.

I wanted to mention cost. You can ride from Kenosha to downtown Chicago for $4.90. There was a story in the paper recently that the cost of owning and operating an automobile is now up over 50 cents. Well, if you multiply that by 50 or 60 miles, you’re talking about $5.80 versus 25 to 30 bucks a trip. That’s a cost factor. Weather factor, I worked in Chicago during the two big storms that got a lot of attention, 1967 and 1979. I was one of the few people who got to my office on time because I had the Northwestern on my side. I think in every sense of the word the approach you’re taking emphasizing commuter rail is absolutely correct, and it’s important to the economy. It can’t be overstated. Just within the last week or so the three major bond rating agencies re-rated the FTA. They got double A ratings, and they’ve thrown in little comments. Bond rating agencies aren’t prone to using a lot of
fancy rhetoric, but I'm going to give you a quote from Moody's and Fitch. Moody's rates strategic importance -- talks about Metra's strategic importance to the service area economy. Fitch, Metra remains critical to the region's economic vitality. All of that holds true for our region as well. I hope -- I hope you can find the money, and I urge local communities not to be too timid about throwing in a few nickels.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. Braeger. Is there anyone else that would like to speak? Mr. Ristau.

MR. RISTAU: I agree with both these guys, you know. This whole thing is -- This is the wave of the future. One of the most -- I don't know what else can happen. Maybe the Metra train might be a little bit slow. But I tell you what, it's an alternative. It gets you there, all right. If there's a snowstorm, if you got a group of people, if you're out with a bunch of people in a big city like Chicago, for instance, pack 'em all in a train, you know. I mean, it's great. Also, that thing would pay for itself as the years go on. I mean, you have to get something to start. That's how all these other rail lines got started. You know, the bus system, you know, that's all right.

But my experience with buses is that they get caught up in traffic snarls, all right. And I don't really ride a public bus because either they don't usually come on time or I never really get where I want to, figuring out those schedules and routes, too. But I mean, it's an okay alternative, but you're dealing with traffic. I mean, I don't know if anybody likes traffic. No one does. I rode Wisconsin Coach Lines to Milwaukee. Felt like that took forever, so that's all I got to say.

MR. PATRIE: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Ristau, for your comments. Is there anybody else that would like to speak this evening? Is there anybody else that would like to speak? Seeing nobody rushing to the microphone, I'd like to thank Ms. Jennifer Schenling for taking the dictation or the stenography for the meeting tonight, and I'd like to thank all of you for helping her do her job and me doing my job by extending a courtesy for letting the people speak tonight. And I guess the hearing is closed. The third part of the meeting is closed. Thank you all for coming.

(Presentation concludes at 7:20 p.m.)
Appendix A-2

TRANSCRIPT AND ATTENDANCE RECORD,
PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING AND HEARING,
DOWNTOWN TRANSIT CENTER, CITY OF MILWAUKEE, APRIL 24, 2003

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

MR. PATRIE: We're going to get started. It's a little after 6:00. Welcome this evening, and thank to Milwaukee County for providing this wonderful facility for us to meet here today. Welcome to the public meeting and the hearing on the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Alternative Analysis Study and operation to review the preliminary recommended plan for commuter rail.

My name is Fred Patrie. I'm the Director of Public Works for Kenosha County, and I have the privilege of serving as the chairman of the Advisory Committee for the feasibility study, which was completed in 1998, and also this study that you're going to be seeing this evening.

I will briefly review the format for today's meeting and hearing. This session, and all sessions like it, are run with three parts. The first part consisted of the open house which ran from 4:00 tonight until 6:00. It was where you, the public or interested parties, had the opportunity to meet with staff or committees members and ask questions on the study itself.

The second part of the presentation tonight will be Mr. Ken Tunker from the Regional Planning Commission who will give you an overview, a very brief overview, of what the study was and looked at and what the recommendations is. Then the last part of the meeting tonight is you have an opportunity to offer your comments, your suggestions, criticism. And we have a stenographer here, Mr. Judi Tyley, who will be recording those comments and will be made part of the permanent record.

As all of you entered the room tonight, you noticed that there was a table, and I think that most of you did sign in so that we have a registration form of knowing who was here. If you want to speak tonight, there's a small, little bigger than an index size card that you have to fill out and turn back in to Mr. Hartwick, who's holding it up over there, and we would encourage you to do that relatively quickly here.

After the forms are collected, the people will speak in the order in which they turned in the forms. There is a little number in the upper right-hand corner of the form, so as those are turned in, then we will put them in the order in which they were distributed, and then that will be the order of the speakers tonight.

After the presentation is made, we would ask that you step up to the microphone. If I've completely misspelled your name or didn't get your address correct, please feel free to correct me so that Judi can have a record of your name and your address and what your comments are on. The statements will be documented in the study's record of public comments and will be presented to the Advisory Committee that is guiding the conduct of the study. It's the second part of tonight's meeting which is to have Mr. Tunker from the Regional Planning Commission give you an overview of the study and end of the recommendation plan.

[Presentation by Mr. Tunker was given.]

MR. PATRIE: As I stated earlier this evening, it's our time to go to the third part of the purpose of the meeting tonight, and that's to receive your comments. It should be noted that the hearing is intended to receive your comments concerning the issue at hand tonight, and that's the commuter rail. It should be emphasized that the purpose of the hearing is to hear your comments, not toapse it up for a
question-and-answer period or a debate. There was
an opportunity to meet with the staff and
review materials earlier, and the staff will
be available after the hearing if you develop
questions during the course of the presentation
or the questions and answers. I also stated
earlier that the meeting is being - - we have an
estonographer who is going to be taking the
minutes. Her job this evening is a very difficult
job. It's to make sure your comments are recorded
accurately, so if you would, you could help her do
her job tonight by remembering that only one
person can talk at a time and that if she can't
hear it, she'll have to ask to have it repeated,
so it's very important that the record is correct.
My job as a chairman of a public hearing
is three-fold. That is to keep it moving along,
keep the issue relevant, the discussion relevant,
and give everyone a chance to talk. Given the
fact that we have a stack of people who want to
speak, we're going to start with the restriction
of about three minutes per speaker to begin with.
We want to have everyone an opportunity to
speak and provide their comments. If you do not
feel you've been given enough time in your three
minutes to state what you need to be said, if
there's time at the end, which there was last
night at the hearing in Kenosha, we will let
people come up again and then finish their train
of thought or add additional comments if they
would like. But in order to give everybody a fair
shot, we would like to limit it to about three
minutes. And Mr. Knut, who's sitting to the right
of Mr. Yunker, will give you a heads-up if you've
spoken that you have about two seconds left of
your original three minutes.

Again, in order for the stenographer to
get the record, we need you to come to the
microphone, restate your name and address if I
haven't stated it correctly and then go to your
point. It's also important to note that if you
don't feel comfortable speaking in public, and not
everybody does, there are a variety of ways that
you can get your opinions on the record or your
neighbor's opinions on the record or somebody who
couldn't be here tonight on the record, and that
is that through May 16, 2003, they can be provided
through the e-mail address that's on the
newsletter or by mailing the Regional Planning
Commission, so there's a variety of vehicles that
you can use if you're not comfortable in a public
format in getting those to the committee.
So if there's no further action, I'll
start. And again, we have these in the order in
which they were turned in. The first speaker	onight is Adrian Vesperman, address, 2135 South
Fifth Street, Milwaukee.

MR. VESPERMAN: That's correct.

MR. PATRICK: I said it correctly?

MR. VESPERMAN: You did.

MR. PATRICK: The first one. Then we're
going to have a good meeting tonight.

MR. VESPERMAN: We are. I feel that
everything that you brought out was very well done
and has shown pretty much what I wanted to say,
but what I really feel is that it's about time
that Milwaukee finally caught up with everybody
else and started a regional transit system in
which we can go ahead and go from Milwaukee to
Chicago and have it reasonably cost effective for
those people who are disabled as well as regular
people, so that, you know, if people want to go
ahead and take a day trip, they can go ahead and
maybe go and do it reasonably well and not have to
pay huge amounts of dollars like they do with the

Amtrak system as it's set up right now.

I feel there for so long that too many
politicians have been keeping us in southeastern
Wisconsin from realizing rail, light rail between
Milwaukee and Chicago, and I feel that we have a
good chance of doing this, and I hope that you go
ahead and work this out. Thank you.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you, Mr. Vesperman.
The next speaker is Lincoln R. Rice, P.O. Box
05206, Milwaukee.

MR. RICE: Hello. My name is Lincoln
Rice. I'm with Casar Maris, which is over by 21st
and Highland, and our main work is for housing
homeless women and families, and we feel that this
would be, the commuter rail alternative would be
the best alternative. It would be a cheap and
more pleasant way than taking the Greyhound and
also the current Amtrak system and by an easier
way for people to keep in contact with family,

easier way for people to get to jobs without
having to do - - either do bus routes that take a
long time and where the space is more cramped and
that we hope that in the future, in Milwaukee's
future, this will be seen as the first step in
implementing more rail in Milwaukee after people
see how wonderful an alternative this is. Thank you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. Rice. Next speaker is Nicholas Labiose, L-A-J-O-I-N-E.

MR. LAJOIE: Yeah. It's French. You can pronounce it any way you want.

MR. PATRIE: So is Paris, and nine gets pronounced every way too, so is in French?

MR. LAJOIE: LaJoie is the French pronunciation. Whatever you like.

MR. PATRIE: Yeah, Mr. LaJoie.

MR. LAJOIE: Yeah, I just wanted to comment and say that I'm all for the rail option. I actually don't think the bus, I'm glad you left it in your study, but I don't think they are a reasonable option of commuter service between Milwaukee and Chicago. It's too slow a form of transportation. It's a disadvantage to driving because it navigates traffic and stops it at intermediate places between point A, point B, and, you know, just adds to pollution and everything else, that are a negative quality too in regional transportation. And I think that cost is also something that's almost negligible compared to -- The freeways.

freeway cost estimates, for instance, of freeway systems, upward of $6 billion to redo the Milwaukee area freeway system, whereas a couple hundred million dollars doesn't seem like much in comparison.

And I'm also concerned that we create a regional transportation authority, and I think that's probably the best way to succeed at this project and projects in the future, because if individual municipalities and communities are working separately from each other, you're not going to have as much centralized thinking and planning as you would if a regional authority and body were planning this out to provide planning for transit within all the communities in Southeastern Wisconsin, and to work together with Amtrak and the Milwaukee connector study and the bus systems, as well and hopefully create some sort of a downtown transit center that we can catch all of those from, as you thank you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. LaJoie. Next speaker is Michael Kramer, Northwestern Mutual, 611 North Oakland, Sheboygan.

MR. KRAMER: That's correct. I just want to say what a marvelous occasion this is. I mean sure, blah, blah, the whole expansion of Metra. More importantly, this is something that both Scott Walker and John Norquist both support, and I don't know how often that will happen during their tenure, so I think that's just amazing. But I also want to state for the record that I do support the rail alternative with the medium service as Mr. Labiose said before me. The fact that the rail alternative is going to be 4 to 12 percent reduces the congestion on our freeways by 4 to 12 percent, the economic and land use developments that this will occur. Just compare the rail versus the bus. Look at all the wonderful condos and shops and restaurants around the Milwaukee Downtown Transit Center versus all the condo, restaurants and shops around the Metra station in downtown Arlington Heights, Illinois, and that right there would show that from an economic standpoint, the rail is the best alternative.

Some things I would like to see in addition to the medium level service, right now it states in the report that there's a nighttime service, and I think we need to maybe focus on some more nighttime service, especially for festivals, the Ravinia Festival, you know, like the St. Patrick's Day parade in Chicago, State Fair, things like that.

Also, I think this would be a great platform if we can expand this eventually, after people in Milwaukee see how great this is, expand it north to Mequon, Sheboygan, expand it to Brookfield, Pewaukee, to make this a whole regional entity.

One of the other things I want to talk about, couple other things, is the marketing of this. I think we really need to push it once it comes along. You just don't all of a sudden open up the station and let people hop on. Maybe have like free rides over Memorial Day weekend, and then when festivals start coming along, people will automatically know this is there and be willing to pay for it.

Also I want to talk about the regional impact. There are a lot of projects going on right now, the downtown connector, the Marquette interchange, and a lot of these things are just happening independently, not really communicating it means like, and also involved is like the Third Ward public market. This is something that,
dollars in commercial and residential real estate development. For example, in Kenosha, the property where the Metra stop is currently located was assessed at zero dollars. It now has a $14.5 million valuation and provides $67,000 in property tax revenue to the city.

Looking at the regional level, the Metra extension would assist economic development in Racine. The city of Racine recently hammered out agreements with its surrounding neighbors to provide sewer service to the adjoining communities in exchange for future fiscal concessions. The Metra extension in Racine County would certainly help foster development opportunities in that greater Racine area.

And the Metra extension will also provide easy access to Mitchell, we've talked about that, including getting some of those frequent flier rich commuters from northern Illinois up to Mitchell. I'd rather fly out of Mitchell than O'Hare any day.

Somebody was talking about the festivals in Ravinia. I'm talking and thinking about the festivals here. There are a lot of people who would really appreciate and get more here, you know, get here more for them, and our parades.

The employment, not only in Milwaukee downtown area, but I saw around the room somewhere here that this would provide access to maybe 147,500 jobs that are currently within a half a mile of the stations that are proposed. Anything that helps downtown parking or the freeways I think has got to be good. It appears to be part of an overall transportation plan which I think is essential.

Then there was something that was kind of interesting. In spring of 2002 when the realtors were thinking about the county executive race, they did a poll of county residents, and while they were asking some other county executive type questions, they also asked should the county encourage the Metra commuter train line from Chicago to Kenosha to continue all the way to Milwaukee? Now, this was not one of those polls that you'd just send to your supporters and you know what the answers are going to be. It was a professionally done poll, and 71 percent of the county residents agreed that it should go as an extension.

This was a time when they were really
up in area about financial -- I mean about the
cost of anything and any tax dollar.

MR. KOBE: Two seconds, please.

MR. HALVORAN: So I would just thank
you, and I appreciate it. The numbers I heard
tonight, I was most impressed with that 30 to
36 million rider miles. Take three passenger
miles off the freeways. Thanks for the chance to
speak.

MR. PATRICE: Thanks, Mr. Halvoran. I
appreciate your comments. Next speaker is Kevin
Barros, 197 Overlook Court, DeWauke, Wisconsin.

MR. BARROS: That's correct. I'm here
tonight to express my support for the proposal to
expand and extend the Metra service up to
Milwaukee, and I'm offering that support from a
unique perspective, that's the prospective of
somebody who periodically is now doing the commute
from Milwaukee to Chicago for work. I work for a
company called Kentec (phonetic), and at the
present time I split my time between our Milwaukee
office and our Chicago Loop office. What that
means right now is that typically I'm driving for
about 45, 50 minutes in the morning down to
Kenosha, parking my car and getting on the Metra
there. Now, people who aren't familiar with this
commute will ask me usually one of two questions.
My first, why aren't you taking the Amtrak, and the
second, answer to that is cost. I believe that the
round trip cost from Milwaukee to Chicago and back
right now at the Amtrak is somewhere in the range
of $40. With the Metra I bought a ten-ride pass, and
it works out to just under $10 a day, I believe,
for the Metra ride. And of course that's Kenosha
to Chicago, so it's a slightly shorter trip, but
for sure I can get the idea that there's a significant cost
difference.

The other question people will typically
ask me is why don't you drive to Chicago, and the
answer to that is, well, anybody that has ever
driven down to Chicago during rush hour, you know
why I don't drive down to Chicago.

The other thing that I think is kind of
interesting with regards to the Metra, in addition
to all the economic benefits that were referenced
as part of the study, one thing that didn't come
cut is the Metra's flexibility in what I consider
to be unique situations, and that I'm
personally familiar with are the Loop flood, which
happened. I guess it was, about five or six years
ago, and a fairly significant snowstorm which hit
Chicago in December of 2000. In both of those
cases, you had large numbers of people that were
trying to get out of downtown Chicago all at once.
What Metra started doing in both of those
cases was essentially running trains out, as
soon as they filled a train, they ran then out of
the station and hit all of the stations from
downtown Chicago all the way out to Kenosha.
People were able to very easily get to where they
needed to go despite the fact it was a really
unique situation. And in the case of the
snowstorm, I know an awful lot of people who had
driven down and ended up having to try and find a
hotel room or something in the loop, where as I
got back to Kenosha, they actually had about eight
inches less snow than they had in downtown
Chicago, and I was able to get in my car and drive
home.

And so in closing, I think that this a
great move. I agree with some of the other
speakers who've stated that this is long overdue,
and I hope this goes through and we have the Metra
to look forward to.

MR. PATRICE: Thank you very much.

MR. BARROS: for your comments. Part of that is
that the Department of Public Works in Kenosha
County is much more efficient. Did they tell you
that that's my real day job? The next speaker is
Bill Moore from the Sierra Club. We do not have
fore number eight turned back in, so if somebody
wants to turn it in, they can give it to the table
or to Otto. Otto, you can raise your hand. If
you took it out and you don't want to speak,
that's fine too. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you. Even though I
did put Sierra Club down, my position here is my
own, although it's very similar to the Sierra
Club's. To me the meaning thing is that we need
to be here at all. Citizens of Europe, of Japan,
of scores of lesser developed countries between
and a dozen other U.S. cities would say, what took
you so long, or why did you eliminate a well
working public transit system in the first place.
Using a quarter of the energy of Americans, these
wise governments and planners have always known
the value of a system that efficiently moves all
the citizens, not just those who can afford an
automobile, a system that saves time and money,
provides for cleaner air and decreases sprawl.
A-20

There's just no down side.

Now, just as an exercise, I ask you to
imagine for a moment a country without interstate
highways. Beginning in the 1950s, we would have
developed a rail system of high speed commuter and
intracity rail or something even more advanced by
now. People would live closer to stations. Inner
cities would be vibrant, and pollution would be a
negligible problem. Air visibility would be
virtually limitless. Global warming would not be
a concern, and the loss of farms and farmland
would be almost nonexistent.

We're behind, but we can catch up. The
Metra extension is a good step. It should not
only be extended to Milwaukee but should be part
of a larger plan to include high speed rail, more
commuter rail and rapid intracity transit to move
people once they have reached the city. Let's
plan for ahead. Let's catch up to the world.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. Moore for
your comments. Next speaker is Louise Petering,
Fox Point resident intracity, 7229 North Santa
Monica, Fox Point.

MR. PETERING: Thank you for the
opportunity to hear the plan and to be heard
today. The Wise Ride plan presented here today is
certainly the best of the three alternatives
considered. It is a step forward in addressing
auto commuting and increased traffic on I-94 in
the Kenosha, Racine and Milwaukee corridor.

However, in the long run, it alone will not
address traffic, land use and development issues
in the areas around urban centers served by the
plan. My reservations about Wise Ride center not
on the plan itself but on the absence of a
mandatory planning tool for all of southeast
Wisconsin. Such a tool is necessary to guide
development and redevelopment fostered by Wise
Ride and experienced outside the narrow rail,
Kenosha-Milwaukee-Milwaukee corridor.

I have two specific concerns about Wise
Ride. The first one deals with conserving open
spaces and its benefits, and the second with
mitigating low-density urban sprawl around cities
served by commuter rail, especially Milwaukee.

Wise Ride itself does not assure preservation of
open spaces critical to the long term viability of
southeastern Wisconsin. Given the attractiveness
of open areas in Wisconsin, Wise Ride will likely
draw a population north, and this poses a threat
to these open spaces, specifically environmental
corridors, prime agricultural lands and rural
lands outside the planned urban service area.

We've seen what's happened along I-94
since the early '70s, and hopefully this plan will
mitigate further unsound development outside of
corridors for a time, but it does not
guarantee preservation of the open areas that
recharge our water table, cleanse our air and
provide natural and recreational respite from the
urban environment. As a North Shore resident and
trustee in the village of Fox Point, I'm concerned
that Wise Ride along the ERHO's proposal for
widening I-43 will contribute to problems
associated with low-density urban sprawl to the
north of Milwaukee. The current proposal to widen
I-43 through the North Shore to four lanes in each
direction already threatens to remove community
infrastructure and erode the tax base of several
municipalities. By itself, the current I-43
proposal means increased traffic loads north out
of Milwaukee and a doubling of noise, light, air
and water pollution in areas along I-43. Add to
that easier commutes to Milwaukee. Metra
facilities could foster additional development.

north beyond Milwaukee. The past two decades have
seen land development in southeast Wisconsin
increase about 35 percent while the population has
increased only about
3 percent. Wise Ride does not really address the
problems associated with outrifying low-density
urban sprawl.

In summary, while Wise Ride commuter
rail itself is definitely a step in the right
planning direction, alone it could be
counterproductive for the region. To assure the
plan delivers on its promises, southeast Wisconsin
needs mandated, smart growth, to conserve open
space to address problems associated with
low-density urban sprawl and to assure development of
the region in a wholesome manner. Together
Wise Ride and smart growth would foster wisely in
use of our infrastructure. Together they would
secure a viable future for all of southeast
Wisconsin. Thank you again.

MR. VESPERMAN: You just don't want
black people up in Fox Point.

MR. PETERING: No. That's not the
issue.

MR. PETERS: Sir. Thank you for your
MS. PATRICK: The next speaker is Ms. Mike Mooney, 8744 Nicholson Road, Caledonia.

MS. MOONEY: That's correct, sir. First I want to commend the regional planning commission for a very thorough study and what I also feel is a very excellent presentation of study. I strongly endorse the recommendation that you've documented which is medium level commuter rail Metra extension. I think the corridor in question here is a perfect opportunity for rail development. I'm glad that it's coming about. I believe that Metra is a very good operator, and I point out that my judgment is that Metra also understands the marketing of services and the branding of services as I've observed in Chicago, and that is extremely valuable in making forecasts work and making ridership work.

I believe that the ridership forecast, the revenue forecast is very conservative base and that implementation will see a larger ridership and a larger revenue base. I believe that the potential economic impact from this is, if anything, understated and very significant, and

finally I urge very prompt implementation of the recommendation that you've made. Thank you.

MS. PATRICK: Thank you, Mr. Mooney, for your comments. No. 12 slugs was not heard in.

Someone has taken it out. If they wish to speak, get it to Otto or Mr. Mattina, he anybody has now thought of something, they want to speak, they should raise their hand, and we'll get you a name. State Representative John Richards apparently just came in. There he is back there. Welcome. If we missed any other elected officials, you should check with Iris also. We didn't catch the trustee from Fox Point. The next scheduled speaker is Richard Hanes, H-A-A-R-E, if I've pronounced it correctly, 2302 South 28th Street, Milwaukee.

MR. HANES: Close enough.

MR. PATRICK: Is it Hanes?

MR. HANES: It's Hanes. First of all, let's see if I can actually get this pointed towards me. All right. That sounds like it's going to work. All right. Thank you for having this hearing, and fortunately for your schedule, a number of people have already mentioned a few of the things I wanted to mention, so I may be able to keep it within the three minutes. All right.

Things that I have not heard addressed so far is -- First of all, I am in favor of the rail option, primarily because buses for any kind of long-distance commuting just don't seem to work.

Some people may be aware that there is a Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha bus service right now provided by Wisconsin Coach Lines. And I believe according to the numbers in your charts, it carries something like 700 riders a day. For all the traffic, if buses were -- And congestion we're talking about. If buses were that desirable a commuter solution, I think there would be a lot more people using the buses. There would be a lot more buses running. Consequently the highways and streets downtown and everywhere would be a lot more clutter. The commuter rail is desired by people in the cities where it runs. This can be seen by the fact that in many cases it actually exceeds the initial projections, so buses just are not going to work, and it's entirely proper not to give them any more consideration for long range planning.

The second issue again, as was discussed by one other person, is accessibility to the disabled and to the same extent poor people.

Currently even though there is bus service right now to Racine and Kenosha, it is almost completely useless to those such as myself who are in a wheelchair or on a scooter. The service runs something like three or six trips a day. The service -- I believe Wisconsin Coach lines has one bus that is handicapped accessible, which if you let them know early enough, they will try and put on the run you want to take. You have no flexibility. You have to plan a trip several days in advance. With commuter rail which is handicapped accessible, I've seen the service in Chicago and it is. Just like anyone else, I can decide, hey, I want to go to Kenosha for dinner. Hey, I'm going to take a job in Racine. Whatever the case is, I will be able to board whatever service I want to as will many other people.

Same situation would apply to low-income people. While there is a limited number of bus service to Racine and Kenosha, there is nothing compared. -- It again does not even the flexibility for people who need to take jobs or to travel for any other purpose to that area. Commuter rail will solve that problem or will lead -- go a substantial way in solving that problem.
developed has an academic core area of about 85 acres in the central part of campus. It's primarily wooded and open space, but that's the main academic and administrative buildings.

Outside this inner core are all the support services, the student housing, the Parkside union, the physical plant facilities and some administrative facilities and so forth. And as part of that outer core is a series of five very large parking lots that accommodate the 6,000 or so people that come on a daily or weekly basis to the campus. The campus itself operates a shuttle bus that continuously moves a loop around the campus getting people from their parking lots to the main academic buildings.

In addition to that, because of its focus on the region, Parkside also offers a series of public events. It considers itself a gathering place for the area, whether it's film series, lecture series, hosting cargo or training sessions for business and other community groups. Business groups have events there. Trade shows are handled there. The largest event is the annual Kansas, Racine business expo, which over a two or three-day period attracts thousands of people from

the adjoining counties. The student body of Parkside extends from the north side of Chicago to the south side of Milwaukee. About 75 percent of the faculty and students reside in that area, and even discounting the 700 or so students that live on campus who for the most part, have vehicles themselves, because Parkside is kind of in the country. The amount of people both going to Parkside and coming from Parkside on a daily or weekly basis is pretty substantial, and I would submit to the committee that Parkside, in addition to Mitchell Field and downtown Milwaukee is one of the larger trip generators in the region. One of the proposed commuter rail stations is about a mile away from Parkside's campus in the town of Homestead. That location also happens to be about a half mile away from Carthage College, one of our sister folks in the area, and about two miles away from the main campus of Gateway Technical College.

MR. TORRE: Ten seconds.

MR. OLDENBURG: Okay. I would suggest that the group consider a shuttle to connect those three institutions to the commuter rail station and Homestead as well. Again, to connect.

UN-Parkside is in favor of the proposal. We would
MR. PATRICK: Thank you, Mr. Oldenburg, for your comments this evening. I have scheduled speaker is Rosemary Wimmer, hope I pronounced it correctly. 7922 Jackson Park, Milwaukee.

MR. WIMMER: Thank you very much.

MR. PATRICK: Did I pronounce it correctly?

MR. WIMMER: Yes. That is correct. The John Muir chapter of the Sierra Club supports the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter rail service. It will provide a fast, modern, comfortable and affordable travel option using existing right-of-way. Rail gives people a fast and easy alternative to congested highway travel. Rail is less subject to weather and construction delays. It will be an accessible and practical alternative for commuting with 362,000 jobs and 640,000 residences projected within three miles of proposed stations. Three out of Wisconsin’s five largest cities are on the KRM route. It will cut down on traffic growth by offering more transportation options. Studies have shown that providing more lanes of traffic does not solve the congestion problem. It will cut air pollution. Most train ridership will be diverted from auto which cause 71 percent of the hazardous air pollution in Wisconsin. It will be accessible to people with walkers and bicyclists as well as those with disabilities or those that don’t own a car. It will reduce sprawl by directing future development to existing communities around transit stops. And by the way, the Sierra Club also supports stronger smart growth law to help control development. It will be a more economical infrastructure investment than creating wider highways. Public investment and rail infrastructure provides support to roadways, airports and ports. The advantages of commuter trains over bus service includes preservation of the rail corridor for the future, operating transit-oriented development by using underutilized rail corridor that increases access points, providing transportation choice that are off road which is a safer alternative and low weather sensitive and maximizing the use of federal programs.

In addition, we support consideration of providing more than the seven daily trips so users have more flexible schedules to choose from. We also would suggest provision of electrical ports for computer use, should be included, accommodating bicyclists. Handicap accessibility should be well designed, provide sufficient connecting shuttle bus service from stations to workplaces that are not within walking distance, and finally include the KRM commuter rail project as part of a multi-modal transportation plan for southeast Wisconsin to maximize the potential for implementation. So we support the KRM commuter rail project to reduce traffic, pollution and sprawl and to provide a healthier environment and more choices for our families. Thank you.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you, Ms. Wimmer, for your comment this evening. The next speaker is going to be moved up. Apparently he has a train to catch. Since that’s the whole purpose of this public hearing, Mr. Alan Schmitt, 5217 West Berell Avenue (phoning) Chicago, Illinois.

MR. SCHMITT: Still my routes are in Wisconsin. I just wanted to say real quickly, and thank you for moving so ahead, it makes so much sense to better connect all these cities on the corridor here, and it just seems that rail has a much better ability to attract a lot of riders than even really good bus service does. When I look at the kind of development that’s been developing in the Chicago area, it is just phenomenal how that has been developing in recent years. It’s just really excellent. And I know the gentleman from the Sierra Club mentioned the issue of sprawl. I think anything we can do that can help reduce the way so many of our open lands are just being used up in such insufficient ways makes so much sense. And I think that all fits with the smart growth that one of the women was speaking of earlier. And also, when I’ve looked at some of these rail developments in other areas, it always seems that the actual ridership turns out to be a good deal more than what these studies show, so I think we can be confident that the response will be very strong to this service. I’m really glad to see this may be moving ahead, and I think I can speak for a lot of people in the Chicago area, that we too would like to see this connect all of us together. Thank you very much.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you for your comments, Mr. Schmitt. Next speaker, No. 16.
I'm going to say about that.

And as a tourist, having been a tourist in Europe, dwelling in Poland for two months, I got all over the country using the trains, and it took me to all kinds of great cities, and it was just fabulous to be able to be on the train and meet people and not have to worry about sitting on the hot, sweaty bus, and you can move around more freely, which is very nice, so that's basically it. Thank you very much for your time.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Ms. Delaysa. I appreciate your time. The next scheduled speaker is Sandy Polstor, Vilas Street Business Association, 5050 West Vilas Street, Milwaukee.

MS. POLSTOR: Thank you. Our business association consists of 47 different businesses. We wholeheartedly support the expansion of this proposed Metra Link. We feel it's a wonderful example of the type of transportation that SBMDC needs to expediently implement and further develop. What is there not to like about this? And I guess I could just say ditto and sit down, because everyone has pretty much covered all the positive, but some of the things in a nutshell, it would be fiscally responsible. It's environmentally friendly. It serves businesses and labor force alike, and it stimulates commerce between the cities.

One of the suggestions that I and the Business Association feel strongly about is marketing this. So many things kind of get lost in the shuffle because they're not properly marketed. The trolley might be a good example of that. But we really need to take this system, make sure the information gets out to the public, that there is media support for this, to make this accessible and this information readily available for people, because without the information, they're not going to use it. We hope that this proposal moves along fast and proves to be as widely successful that there will be additional talk and open forums like this one to talk about additional opus that could be implemented, whether they're north or specifically through the Menomonee River Valley. That's it. Thank you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Ms. Polstor. The next scheduled speaker is Timothy Huakowski, 5758 South Griffin Avenue, Milwaukee.

MR. HUAKOWSKI: I'll be real brief. The only thing I want to add to all of the excellent
things the folks have already said in favor of the rail alternative, which I'm also in favor of, one thing I want to add is that this is also a public health issue. Every time we expand the width of freeways, we are expanding and increasing in a very strong way the number of folks who are admitted in emergency rooms and who have to make urgent care visits because of asthma exacerbations. In that sense, you can think of asthma and the cost that we all pay in terms of the lack of adequate health care in this country actually. I can think of the asthma costs that we're all paying actually as transportation costs. Evidently call those externalized transportation costs. And for that reason, if for no other reason, I think it would be very wise for this proposal to move forward and move forward quickly.

Thanks.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you, Mr. Walsowski. I appreciate your comments tonight. The next scheduled speaker is Mr. Sandy Miles, M-1-L-E-S, 13114 North Forest Drive, New Berlin.

MR. MILES: Hello. Thanks for holding the hearing. This is a great idea. It's really exciting, and I can't wait for it to start, and

I'll be riding it. Even though I'm lucky and I only have a two-mile commute, I'll be taking more trips to Chicago to the art museum, and it won't cost me $40 like Amtrak. That will be really nice. Anyway, trains are really a great way to travel, and the gentleman before me mentioned this public health issue. I had something to say on that beyond the obvious like air pollution and land use, and that is this morning when I was thinking about coming here, the Journal on-line just happened to have something about how traffic fatalities have gone up. And, you know, a lot of people are terrified of flying because a couple hundred people get killed in a plane crash, one plane crash, and yes, that's a tragedy. However, Wisconsin alone, in 2002, 805 people were killed in traffic crashes. That's up 5 percent from the year before. And yet everybody drives, and people don't seem to be afraid of driving, but they're afraid to get on a plane, so let's also think about less highway traffic. Hopefully we'll also save lives there. Thanks a lot.

MR. MILES: Thank you, Mr. Miles, for your comments tonight. The next scheduled speaker is Jim Carpenter, Green Party, 1633 North

Prospect, No. 9c, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

MR. CARPENTER: On behalf of the Green Party, I would like to thank the Regional Planning Commission and the Advisory Committee for recommending commuter rail. I know it's going to take State legislation to implement commuter rail, and I would love to be elected this Tuesday on the special election on being your next State senator and to help implement the commuter rail.

I'd also like to thank the Advisory Committee for noting the positive impacts of commuter rail on land use, economic development, and the quality of life, and thank you for recommending that no local share he required to build and operate a commuter rail. Commuter rail acts like an interstate, and it should be funded like an interstate with no local share. And I believe the federal government should contribute the major cost of building commuter rail. If we can find billions of dollars to build and rebuild other countries, I think we can find money to build commuter rail. And if we become less dependent on automobiles and oil imports, maybe we'll have one less reason for starting war.

Finally, I'd like to reinforce your observation that commuter rail attracts auto drivers. I used to ride a commuter rail when I lived in the Chicago area, and believe me, the people were on the commuter rail not because they didn't have a car but because they preferred to take commuter rail over driving the car, and I knew that one of the greatest attractions of the commuter rail is to attract new people to transit.
MR. PATRIZI: He had the opportunity. We didn't get number 23 and 24 back if somebody has them. If anybody else would like to speak, raise your hand, and we can get you a card, otherwise, we're down to our last scheduled speaker. And that is Ryan VanDenBier, I hope I said that right. 261 West Belleview Place, Milwaukee.

MR. VANDEMBIER: Very good on the Dutch name. Thank you. I think everybody here has had the benefit of commuter rail, and I also am for it, but I'm skeptical of the funding sources. My concern is that we're saying there's not going to be a local share and we're relying heavily on grants that haven't been secured yet and funding from the state, who we all know the budget isn't exactly in good condition right now, so I guess my only concern is that we're already overspent in the city of Milwaukee, and I'm sure that residents of Racine and Kenosha feel the same way, that if we're going to do this, we talk about all the benefits it's going to bring to the community, but there has to be some kind of way to capture some of those economic benefits and turn it back into the system so that we're not looking to the local communities, we're not constantly relying on grants from the federal government or funding from the state that may or may not be there in the future. We're looking at an average estimate of $190 million operating expenses per year. Compared to highway expansion, that might not be high, but highways are still going to be expanded, and they still need to be expanded, so we're not going to draw significant amounts of money away from that.

So I guess my only concern about this would be finding appropriate funding sources. Securing those sources, and convincing the communities, including myself, that we're not going to be hit harder on our taxes in order to achieve this. Thank you.

MR. PATRIZI: Thank you for your comments this evening. We have no more cards that have been filled out, so the first opportunity to come to the microphone and speak would be for anybody who hasn't spoken or had the opportunity to voice their comments tonight. and we'll give it a second or two here for someone to stand or raise their hand if they want to speak. If not, if someone feels in their first three minutes that they didn't get to all the points they want covered, if they could raise their hand? Seeing no one doing that, I want to thank the consultant staff for their work here tonight and the SMMEP staff. There have been a number of members of the Advisory Committee that were here. Mr. Peter Beitzel was here. I think he left. If I missed anybody on the Advisory Committee, I apologize in advance. And I guess with that, the public hearing is closed, and thanks, Jodi Tysy, for being the stenographer here tonight. Thanks everybody for coming.

(Proceedings concluded at 7:18 p.m.)
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# Commission Staff

Kenneth R Yunker .................. Deputy Director
Otto P. Dobnick .................. Principal Planner
Gary K. Korb .................. Regional Planning Educator

## SIGN-IN ROSTER

Public Informatinal Meeting and Hearing
Kewauna-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Traffic Study
April 21, 2004
Downtown Transit Center
1900 W. Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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**Note:**
- The majority of the text on the page is in a table format, listing names, addresses, and communities.
- The page also includes contact information for the Commission Staff.
TRANSCRIPT AND ATTENDANCE RECORD,
PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING AND HEARING,
GATEWAY TECHNICAL COLLEGE, CITY OF RACINE, APRIL 30, 2003

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS.

MR. PATTEI: Mayor of the City of Racine.

Mr. Gary Becker, the Honorable Gary Becker.

(Applause.)

MAYOR BRICE: Thank you. Thank you all
for coming tonight. Most of the people I would
guess that are in this room are excited about this
project and what it means for not just our
immediate community of Racine but for the region as
a whole and the type of energy and momentum it
can bring to the area. So basically, I just want to
tell everyone here tonight, Thank you for
your interest and your support, and certainly thank
all the staff from SDOT and from Transit now for
all the work they’ve done for years on this
project. And it seems like we’re getting closer,
but we certainly aren’t there, so let’s move for
 anyone to relax and think this is a done deal, and
that’s why it’s no time to get all the
commen and to get everybody you’re here tonight. So
again, thank you all for coming, and stay with it.

(Applause.)

MR. PATTEI: Thank you, Mayor Brice.

For those of you who don’t know who I am, I’m Fred
Pattee. I’m the Director of Public Works for

Kennosha County, your neighbor to the south. And
I’ve had the privilege of serving as the chairman
of the Advisory Committee for the Feasibility Study
and for this Alternatives Analysis Study that
you’re going to see presented tonight. Another
person that has asked to speak here tonight, and
I’m delighted to do this because he happens to
be my boss, is Alan East who’s the county executive
of Kenosha County. Mr. County Executive.

MR. EAST: Thank you, Fred. I’m
delighted to be here, and I’ve never been able to
distinguish the difference between Racine and
Kenosha. I think we’ve been that close. We share
the same concerns, the same issues, the same
concerns. And one of those, I feel, is as we move the
tri-county area further into economic development,
we already have it. But I understand the importance
of that and the connection to Chicago and our young
people, our professionals, who are -- and small
businesses who are saying, ‘We absolutely need
consideration.’ We understand it. We support it.
I’m asking for your support this evening and the
wealth that it will bring to our communities as a
result. Ask for objectivity as it relates to where
we take this. And we as government officials once

you determine where this needs to be, we’ll try to
move that agenda forward if it’s in a positive
way. And I trust your judgment, and I tell you
this sincerely that if economic development and
where our communities will continue to grow, we owe
this as an important element. And thanks very much
for the opportunity to make those comments. And go
Racine.

(Applause.)

MR. PATTEI: Thank you, Mr. Executive.

On behalf of the recently-elected County Executive
MacRayno. Mr. County Executive MacRayno could not be here. Mr. County Executive
MacRayno could not be here. We had a previous
commitment. Also, Mr. Sam Borden, who is the
president of Gateway Technical College, for
offering their facilities tonight, we greatly
appreciate that.

As I indicated, my name is Fred Pattee, and
my job tonight is to conduct the public hearing
on the commuter rail for the
Kennosha-Racine-Wisconsin area. Before we start
with the presentation, I’d like to take a few
minutes of your time to lay out the ground rules
we’ve used for the other public hearings. This is
the third in a series of four public hearings that are being held on this issue. The format tonight is that of an overview of an open house which we’ve had the opportunity to look at display boards, ask questions of the technical staff, and they will remain after the public hearing section in case you have additional questions that are raised by other people’s comments or by the presentation.

As you entered the room here tonight, you had the opportunity to fill out a speaker registration form, and it indicated you had a desire to be heard. If anybody needs a form at this time, please raise your hand, and someone from the SNRRC staff will make sure you get a form so you can fill it out and you can speak this evening. Some people do not like speaking in public and would prefer to either send their remarks in written format or e-mail format, and those are available, and those are in your Wise Ride pamphlet. If you don’t have one of those, you can get one of those as you leave. Your comments will be received until May 16, so you do have time after this evening to submit written comments.

The statements will be documented and are going to be recorded and will be presented to the...

Advisory Committee that is guiding the conduct of this study. I see a few people on the Advisory Committee that are in the audience. If you are on the Advisory Committee, can you raise your hand so I can recognize you? Mr. Greenfield, Mr. Langert. Anyone else? And those people, like myself, serve without any additional pay or compensation.

Sometimes the meetings have been very interesting, right, Advisory Committee?

It is now time for -- to go to the second phase of tonight. The first part was the open house. The second is a presentation, and that will be conducted by Mr. Ken Yunker of the Regional Planning Commission staff. After that presentation will follow the public hearing, and we will have a few things to say about that when that time arises. So I’ll turn it over to Mr. Yunker.

(PowerPoint presentation by Mr. Yunker.)

MR. PATRICK: It is now time to receive your comments, the public comments. As Mr. Yunker indicated, the purpose of the public hearing is not to be a question-and-answer session and not necessarily a debate but to hear and record your comments. We have Jennifer Schnolling who is the transcriptionist who will be taking down your comments. That’s her job this evening. You can help her out this evening by having just one person speak at a time and extend the courtesy that you would like extended to you when you speak, and that is have others just listen. You will be given an opportunity to speak. My job as chairing a public hearing is threefold: to keep it moving, to keep it relevant, and to give everyone the opportunity to be heard. You can help us by doing that tonight by also listening to the comments that everyone else has.

We ask that you keep your comments to about three minutes. We want everyone to have an opportunity to speak. If you have not had adequate time in your opinion in three minutes or so, a time permitting we’ll come back and let everyone who wants to speak speak again. In order to come to the microphone and speak, I’ll call your name and your address when you come to the microphone. If you would, please, correct me if I’ve mispronounced your name or haven’t given the right address. That will be taken down for the record. You also have until May 16 to provide your comments in writing. And again, I’ll point out that the e-mail address is in the Wise Ride newsletter as is the mailing address for the Regional Planning Commission.

Mr. Korb, who will be sitting at the head table, will keep a time clock. So we’ll try and keep it as close to three minutes as we can. Those of you who have come in during the presentation or have come in late, if you wish to speak tonight, please raise your hand if you have not filled out one of the speaker forms. And we’ve got Chris or Patrick or Otto. Someone from the SNRRC staff will get you a form so you can be added to the list. Yes, if you would like to come to the front, there are seats here that could be used.

The first form for a speaker tonight is William Perez, president and CEO of S.C. Johnson, 1526 Howe Street, Racine, Wisconsin. As Mr. Perez comes down, the next -- second speaker is John Kelley Husovec, 224 Washington Avenue -- 2214 Washington Avenue, apartment 14, as if Mr. Perez wants to begin moving towards the microphone. Mr. Perez, the microphone and the podium are yours, sir.

MR. PEREZ: Thank you to the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and Study Advisory Committee Chairman Fred Patrie for holding this hearing. We think it’s very important. I
People visiting Racine will help our restaurants, our shops, our hotels, and maybe even the local real estate market. KRM already has the support of a wide variety of regional state business, government, and community leaders. In fact, more than 100 organizations are publicly endorsing the concept of KRM, and we have to keep this momentum going.

In closing I not only fully support this proposal, I encourage the Commission to look at a higher level of service than currently recommended. Just imagine if residents from Milwaukee to Chicago can move by train after spending the evening working, attending a sporting event, or finishing a night class. Providing transportation options is what we need. It's my hope that as a community and as a region we keep KRM on track to ensure that our region reaps the economic, social, and environmental benefits for generations to come.

Thank you.

Mr. Barnes: Thank you for your comments, Mr. Perez. The next speaker is John Kelley Magee followed by Mr. Owen Davies.

Mr. Magee: Thank you, very much. I'm concerned about this Metra service because I need a train to get to Milwaukee, and I need a train to get to Chicago and Great Lakes, Illinois. Right now they have no commuter service between Milwaukee and Kenosha since 1931. About 32 years ago the last train has been operating. So right now you either drive a car, ride the bus, and I've been driving a car back and forth from here to Milwaukee at least four times a day and about four times a week. Park the car every other day and walk over there in downtown Milwaukee and Racine area, and right now I need a commuter service to get to Milwaukee, not to be ruined by parking care and a parking lot fee and everything. We're not exactly here in the future. I need a train service to get to Milwaukee and Kenosha, Milwaukee, Great Lakes, and Chicago so I can go to any activity, Summerfest, take a Park and Ride and Waterfront, all other activities going on. Thank you very much.

Mr. Barnes: Thank you, Mr. Magee, for your comments this evening. The next speaker is Mr. Owen Davies followed by Mr. Gordy Kahal.

Mr. Davies lives at 1620 Devon Boulevard, Racine, Wisconsin.

Mr. Davies: Thanks very much for the
opportunity to say a few words tonight. I want to talk about this evening thank you to the many people who have worked many hours and many weeks, many months, and many years to come to the point we are tonight. You saw the caliber of people tonight. You see them present the program. That's the kind of people that have been working on this program for all these years. I can remember when I first became interested in city government, Lee Anderson was the commissioner. He was working then in the '70s and the '80s trying to get commuter service, so it hasn't been a short trip. But he never gave up, and he kept working. And I became mayor in '94 when we were working with the DOT trying to get service going in '95. We had the first committee and performed the feasibility studies to the cities and counties. Both Racine, Kenosha, and Milwaukee paid the 20 percent, and the state paid the other 40 percent. I had to conduct the study. We knew as citizens we travel between Racine, we go up to Oconomowoc, St. Francis, South Milwaukee, Oak Creek, Caledonia, and Kenosha. When we first started doing this in the mid-90s, sometimes we'd say, 'Oh, that's fine. We'll let you come in and talk for a few minutes.' But there wasn't too much community support for it, only after more people like the president of Johnson Wax came on board and many other industries and many other people working hard in this community began to make it happen. It became a very positive move the last few meetings we've attended. It's been overwhelming. I remember early on sometimes there wasn't too many people there were people in the audience, so I think we've come a long way. I just want to say to everyone, keep working hard. We're on second base now. If we hit, it could get us all the way home. So it's up to all of us to keep working hard. Thanks a lot.

MR. PATTERSON: Thank you, former Mayor Davies. Next speaker is Gordy Kachel, Racine
County Economic Development Corporation, 4701
Washington Avenue, Racine, Wisconsin, followed by
John Marry Street.

MR. KACHEL: Mr. Patris, members of the
Committee, members of the Southeast Wisconsin
Regional Planning Commission, Racine County
Economic Development Corporation has supported the Committee recommendation with regard to this important transportation alternative. The March
2003 unemployment rate with Racine County was 6.7 percent compared to 6.6 percent for the state. The city of Racine unemployment rate for the same period is 3.9 percent. Since 1999, the recently-completed Racine County Economic Development Plan estimates that Racine County has lost over 3,000 jobs. In 2002, the Racine County Board of Directors and the Racine County Board adopted the Economic Development Plan. The RCD includes seven challenges that we must face in order to realize a more sound economic future, including Racine County being the catalyst for the realization of the Milwaukee-Chicago corridor. A strategy is support of this challenge is the implementation of the commuter rail extension as being proposed here. Commuter rail is crucial to the economic vitality of southeastern Wisconsin. The concept of corridor development as important to cities across the U.S. requires the transportation infrastructure. While I-94 connects Chicago and Milwaukee, it bypasses both the city of Racine and the communities and suburbs to the east. Racine County Economic Development Plan has endorsed the importance of corridor development. The dynamics of the regional workforce with large numbers of people living and working in different cities

emphasized a direct benefit of a fully-realized corridor to business and individuals throughout Racine County. Recreational and cultural opportunities that provide linkages to Chicago and Milwaukee are also of tremendous importance. A commuter rail line can transform the community between Chicago and Milwaukee and become the catalyst for an economic and cultural renaissance. The RCD commissioned the study of the potential development impact of commuter rail which we've previously provided to you. While this study focuses on development potential surrounding one station here in Racine, it is mindful of the larger opportunity associated with the stations between South Milwaukee and the Metro connection south in Kenosha, including the proposed second station in Racine County, the Caledonia station. Economic benefit can occur in ways that can be measured quantitatively such as tax revenue and indirect ways that speak for the vitality of our city and our region. The quantitative economic benefits reported in this report make a compelling argument that costs associated with the operating line can be at least partially offset by increased development. I'd like to echo Mayor Becker's...
comment on the floor for the youth. I ask you to have a vision for the future. Do we expect to see youth coming here because they look at it as a place where they are respected and that they have an opportunity to do something beyond the workplace? The baby boomers went to work right after going to school. The youth of our new generation look at where do we want to live first? Where are there things to do first? And then they come and work. It’s a different attitude.

I ask you to support this proposition because it gives us an opportunity to have the young minds with a bright education and the brighter and better jobs. The government looks for economic opportunity, and that comes with a strong workforce that is highly educated. The youth of the future are going to look at a place where there is entertainment, where there are amenities, where there’s a culture, where there’s a variety of things to do beyond the workplace. I ask you to disregard the old notion that the German Autobahn system is the wave of the future, although our American highway system was adopted through that system. There were other parabolas such as the Holland Train System in which there were opportunities for those without cars to get around and also be respected. Thank you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. Kacala. The next speaker is John Bert Stutt, 4820 Ayclyn Drive, Racine, Wisconsin, followed by the Honorable Diane Lange, Racine County Board.

MR. STITT: This proposal makes Racine a youth-friendly community place because of the train system. Trains afford the ability to get around for young workers who can’t afford a car. The current population of the youth are facing a huge debt when they come out of college. Often they go to big cities because that’s an opportunity for them to get a job and also find a place for entertainment.

I rise in support of this proposition as a former transportation attorney, as a real estate attorney, past Jaycee’s president, past Rotary president, and current president elect of the Racine Arts Council. You know, actually, the heart and our county when you go from the north to the south actually moves away from Racine. This gives our community an opportunity again to be

opportunity, for those without cars to get around and also be respected. Thank you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you for your comments, Mr. Stutt. Next speaker is the Honorable Diane Lange, Racine County Board, 2900 Hunt Avenue, Racine followed by Mr. Mike Moonkey.

MR. LANGE: Well, thank you all of you for being here and for the helpful information that was out in the hallway, as well as the presentation that Mr. Yonesh did. My comments are going to be in support of the need for the Metra rail expansion project, and I believe that it is going to definitely be better linking our community to the Milwaukee-Chicago corridor. Racine County has been

Country Economic Development Corporation in which Racine County government is a strong partner, we are working creatively to get out of just thinking of ourselves as a Racine County box. We are trying to see the need to expand and to think about things on a more regional way in order to grow our economy. We want to strengthen our connections to other educational, cultural, business, work-type things going on in the area.

Last summer in June, our county board received a briefing on the southeastern Wisconsin regional freeway system reconstruction study, and it was a preliminary recommended plan that was developed and presented to us that night. This is like a 270-mile freeway system that is nearing its end of its service life, and it’s going to be requiring some kind of major reconstruction. Part of that regional plan that was summarized by the SEMWPC called for us to figure out ways to curtail sprawl and significantly expand public transit. Even if we go forward with this light rail or commuter rail, they’re still predicting increased congestion and freeway traffic volume. The estimated cost for this freeway reconstruction was $2.25 billion over a 30-year period, and that’s
If we expand to two additional lanes in order to avoid some of the congestion that's already showing. If we just reconstruct and meet the modern design standards with no additional lanes on that project, that total cost will only be reduced by around 12 percent. Rear-end crashes are 5 to 15 times higher on congested freeway systems, so I believe that this Metra extension would be a part of mixing our transportation plan to be able to reduce some of that congestion.

Meanwhile, the American Lung Association has given our county an F for air quality. Increased auto congestion is one of the important contributors to this. And as a public health nurse, as well as being a county board supervisor, I'm concerned about the health as well as the financial impact of this. This poor air quality is six counties in southeastern Wisconsin and our severe ozone nonattainment area, this is already limiting some of the local businesses from expanding or getting new businesses to relocate to our area. Expanding public transit is a key task that we must engage in if this is going to be turned around.

Our neighbor, the state of Illinois, received about $150 million last year from the U.S. government for rail support. Our state of Wisconsin needs to be more aggressive and go after this money, and we need to deal with a rail plan that is comprehensive. I think that if that happens, our federal legislative officials will then be successful in getting Wisconsin a more fair slice of that federal tax money, and it will help us to meet the transportation needs in our region.

Getting the Metra rail expansion will help us provide part of the infrastructure that we need to retain and attract business to grow our economy and to improve our environment. We have not failed to plan, and we don't plan to fail. Thank you for your time.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you, Supervisor Lange, for your comment. Next speaker is Mike Mooney, 8744 Nicholson Road, Caledonia, followed by Mary Beth Aldrich, Racine Housing and Neighborhood Partnership. Mr. Mooney.

MR. MOONEY: Thank you. I first want to commend the Regional Planning Commission staff for an excellent study and also an excellent presentation of the study. The boards tell a very good story. I also want to thank the Advisory Committee for what I sense is a lot of time that they've put in on this and for their wisdom on this. I strongly endorse the recommendation that's been put forth by the Regional Planning Commission. I hope it moves ahead promptly. The corridor, Milwaukee-Racine-Kenosha-Chicago, is perfect for this extension of the Metra and has enormous potential. I believe the revenue forecasted that has been put forth is conservative and will be exceeded very early in the implementation. I believe that the economic impact potential that's been alluded to is enormous, very significant around the stations. And finally, I urge very prompt implementation of the recommendation I hope you make to move ahead with this. Thank you.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you for your comments, Mr. Mooney. Next speaker in Mr. Mary Beth Aldrich, Racine Housing and Neighborhood Partnership, 710 North Memorial, Racine, Wisconsin, followed by Roberto Garcia.

MR. ALDRICH: Good evening. On behalf of the investors I work with, I am here today to urge you to extend the light rail from Kenosha to Racine and Milwaukee. I work for the Racine Housing and Neighborhood Partnership. Our agency does central city housing revitalization. Our mission is to grow into a targeted geographical area and use public and private partnership dollars to revitalize the housing in that area. My investors are the home buyers and the homeowner associations in the neighborhoods adjacent to the existing train station. For the last four years, we have worked southeast of the station in a neighborhood known as the Main Street area. And in January of this year, we moved directly north to the neighborhood that the train station is located in. The average property value in this neighborhood is less than $25,000. We need every economic development tool we can get to make our work happen here. Our residents are committed to doing it, and we're going to ask you to support us. Our board of directors unanimously endorsed this proposal last fall. Our public and private partners, including the City of Racine, community-based organizations, and financial institutions are strongly supporting this as well. We urge you to extend this. Its impact from a neighborhood level to a regional level cannot be understated.
MS. PATRICK: Thank you, Mr. Aldrich, for your time. Next speaker is Mr. Roberto Garza,
Hispanic Business & Professional Association, 335 Lombard Avenue, Racine, Wisconsin, followed by Ms. Mercedes DeLaCleta. I think I pronounced it -- tried to pronounce it right. Mr. Garza.

MS. GARRA: Thank you. I thank the members of the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and Advisory Committee for this opportunity to present the following statement. Statement is prepared. I am a board member of the Hispanic Business & Professional Association, Incorporated of Racine.

Good evening. Thank you for coming here and allowing us to contribute our inquiry on the importance of the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter rail. Governor Doyle was here last Friday and had a great cross-representation of Racine County. We used the analogy of the state's economy to the injured eagle that was nursed and released back into the wild. I would like to use that same analogy to describe the economic status of our minority community. However, the difference between an eagle representing the minority community here and the one representing the state is that while the one representing the state was nurtured back to complete health, our eagle is only nurtured with a Band-Aid, a Band-Aid which will last for a brief moment and then fall off without the injury that has been there all along.

The Racine minority community has one of the highest unemployment rates in the state. The Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter rail will provide the transportation opportunities that seriously hinder our community when seeking employment someplace other than Racine. When people have jobs, everybody wins. We view this as more than a Band-Aid. It is a means to an end, an end that will provide hope for persons who will use it to go to jobs, visit relatives, live in between the Milwaukee-Chicago corridor. Please let us do whatever needs to be done to see that this project comes in to being, respectively, Wally Vondrus, president, the Hispanic Business & Professional Association.

MS. PATRICK: Thank you for your comments, Mr. Garza. Next speaker as I indicated is Ms. Mercedes DeLaCleta.

MS. DELENDELE: Hello, I would like to address some of the concerns and comments of earlier speakers. You asked me to speak on the transportation options and services that are needed.

I am from the Federal Transit Administration, and I want to assure you that transportation and transit systems are the major focus of our agency. We are committed to providing options and services that meet the needs of all communities, not just those that are currently served.

One of the main challenges we face is the need to reduce congestion and improve traffic flow. This is crucial to the economic development of our region. By improving transportation options, we can attract businesses and create more job opportunities. We are working to enhance transit services to provide more reliable and convenient options for commuters.

In addition to improving existing transportation systems, we are also working to expand access to transit services. Our goal is to ensure that everyone has an affordable and efficient way to get to work, school, and other destinations.

As technology continues to advance, we are exploring new ways to improve transit options. For example, we are looking into the potential of autonomous vehicles and other advancements that could revolutionize the way we travel. By investing in these new technologies, we can continue to provide high-quality transit services that meet the needs of our communities.

Finally, I would like to address the issue of safety. We are committed to ensuring that all transit options are safe and reliable. We work closely with local and state agencies to address any concerns and ensure that our services meet the highest standards of safety.

In conclusion, the Federal Transit Administration is committed to providing options and services that meet the needs of all communities. We are working to improve transportation options, expand access to transit services, and ensure the safety of all commuters. By working together, we can create a more efficient and sustainable transportation system that benefits everyone in our region.
many cannot afford a vehicle, maintenance of a vehicle, possible tolls, parking, insurance, and whatever else is involved in owning and using a private passenger vehicle. Who is dragging their feet, delaying the start of this commuter rail rail extension? We need to rebuild and extend commuter rail to all areas of the state, not just to this area, but this is a start. Like once it was, we need to be able to go anywhere by train.

A high level of service is what I recommend, not a median level. It will be jumped to very quickly as some of our earlier speakers mentioned to go to Chicago or Milwaukee, relaxing in fun. No longer do we have to worry about parking everywhere else. How about using bus -- buses to begin with while we're waiting for the other system to begin and be developed? It would be another way of starting the commuter system.

Forty years since we had commuter rail here. It's too long to wait. I certainly don't . . . hope we don't have to wait another 40 years. It's good for the community as a whole, not just for business, the quality of life, expand.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. Delmedelea, for your comments this evening. Next speaker is

surrounding area which includes the critical central cities. Thirdly, it will improve the quality of life in the area which is key to attracting professional talent to the region which in turn attracts good companies to the area. In short, we want to make Racine a destination point for professional talent and companies that value that talent. Fourthly, it provides attraction and retention benefits for key employers in the area, both large and small. I'd like to conclude by commenting that some decisions are only for the brave. This is one of them. Thank you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you for your comments.

Mr. Waller. The next speaker is Ms. Susan Spring, Racine Chapter, 1,000 Friends of Wisconsin, Illinois.

Mr. Neuman, Racine, followed by Mr. Quentin Bench.

MR. SPRING: Thank you for the opportunity to speak. Our local chapter of 1,000 Friends took on the issue of transportation when commuter rail came into the forefront. We decided it was time for us to take a look at commuter rail and the impact it would have on our community.

What became more and more clear to all of us as we looked was commuter rail is not just about getting people to work or getting people to events.

Computer rail has quality of life benefits. By linking the communities from Milwaukee to Chicago, it creates access and opportunity for numbers of people. And it's not just transportation. It provides the infrastructure that will truly help revitalize our cities and our towns along the lakeshore.

Another important issue is that it will help make our current cities better. It will perfect the places we live and help curtail some of the expansive sprawl that is around, arising in our county. We need to encourage sustainable development. Computer rail is critical to ensuring the future and success of our communities, as well as helping to provide opportunity for our family and friends so they, too, will be able to stay in the area. Thank you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Ms. Spring, for your comments tonight. The next speaker is

Mr. Quentin Bench, Racine Industries. 1405 16th Street, Racine, Wisconsin, followed by Mr. or Ms. Wall or Bench.

MR. BENCH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the interest of time, I think the previous speakers have covered all strategic issues, so I'd like to
thank my previous speakers for doing such a good job. So rather than waste the time and reiterate some of these points, I'd just like to thank you for your good work and add our qualified support to the project. And as I said, they covered strategic issues. Thank you very much.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you, Mr. Barrett, for your comments tonight. Next speaker is Mr. Hell Barrett.

MR. BARRETT: -- Followed by Mark Eichhorst. Mr. Barrett's address is L424 Sheridan Road, Evanston. Mr. Barrett.

MR. BARRETT: Good evening. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak here. A tremendous amount of work on your part. As a professional educator for 28 years, I know the work that goes on behind the scenes. Hidden costs, the buses look very cheap to begin with, but I'm aware of the Department of Transportation. A bus license, a commuter bus like the Coach USA, pays $10 for a five-year license. That's -- You can get the Department of Transportation. We're subsidizing the bus, and it's a cost that doesn't show up as part of the amount that you have right there. It's really a hidden cost. These start-up costs for the trains are really a lot, and people would be upset over that amount except right now some of the Milwaukee Road engines that are still running for Metra are going to be replaced. They were built in 1971. Can you imagine a 40-year bus still running right now? Can you imagine the rebuilt Burlington Metra cars that were built in the '50s that are still running and have been retrofitted? Can you imagine a bus that's 55 years old almost running down the road? So that's really a hidden cost that you really don't think about in that these cars have been rebuilt several times. And so, yes, the original start-up costs is expensive. But remember, you have seen 55-year-old buses running around as our Metra cars?

Another thought is Madison. -- And this is an alternative idea. Madison has tried out the new concept of the railroad car, the single self-propelled car. And I see on the website for Trains Magazine that Amtrak is considering this light rail vehicle, too, for Chicago-Milwaukee Hiramatta service, and it might be a possibility. I don't know how it fits in with Metra's schedule, but it might be a way of keeping the costs down.

But certainly, that's something to consider.

The other thought I have here is some of the county officials I have been reading in the papers are kind of balking. Not just county but other officials are balking at this start-up here, and they really need to kind of study the numbers. I think that you'll find that the railroad does promote further growth. We took Amtrak and Metra this past weekend, and I'll tell you, people are doing their laptop work on there. They're reading their e-mails they've downloaded. It's an incredibly new world out there if you haven't been on the train lately. Really, you have to spend money to make money.

I talked to a CTA official a few months ago. He said, "Well, the reason we're moving so slow unlike California, there's only seven or eight of us working on this project. California has got over a hundred people." So every week you read where Amtrak is adding more and more trains and commuter trains, capital trains out there in California. I think that's part of the delay. Maybe we need to hire a couple more people to help you out or raise your pay or something. I'm not quite sure on that.

So it's been studied and studied, and I guess in conclusion I'd like to think that the airlines whined and complained that they didn't have enough money and so the government gave them $10 billion. That would have run Amtrak for 70 years. I know you're in charge of Amtrak, too, and that's just kind of a thought. The money given to the airlines kept of helped them out, would run Amtrak for 70 years. In conclusion, I just have two words, all aboard. Thank you.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you, Mr. Barrett, for your time. The next speaker is Mr. Mark Eichhorst, and I hope I spelled -- pronounced it correctly.

MR. EICHORST: You're correct.

MR. PATRICK: 1101 Kinzie Avenue, Beach Your Mark Promotions, Racine, Wisconsin, followed by Mr. Seymour Menghaus. Mr. Eichhorst.

MR. EICHORST: I came here -- Actually, I came here tonight not thinking about speaking but then decided I had to. And I speak as a former politician, a taxayer, and a small business man. As I said, the name of my company is Beach Your Mark Promotions. One of the things I've been able to do is develop a local radio show on WUWM-FM called "It's All About Racine." It's on Saturday.
morning for two hours, and we talk about -- 90
percent of the time we talk about the positive
things that are happening in Racine.

As Jean Jacobson, retiring county
executive, said a couple of weeks ago, 'Man, the
thing I like about your show is you listen to this
show, and for two hours you feel good about living
in Racine and Racine County.' And that's what this
show is all about. Helen Keller was once asked,
'What could be worse than being able to see?'
And she responded by saying, 'Being able to see
without any vision.' And I think that's one thing
we have to take a look at when we talk about the
Metra rail service here. I see, as many of the
people that spoke before me, having the Metra rail
system brings us employees, businesses, tourists,
and I also see the Metra rail system taking out
people to jobs and lowering our unemployment, and I
think that's important.

I know as a taxpayer in a city that's
probably one of the highest tax cities in one of
the highest tax states you may ask, 'Can we afford
Metra rail system?' I say we cannot afford not to
have a Metra rail system. It's like owning a house
that you live in, you know. We all live or -- many
of us live in this Racine County community. And if
you don't maintain and make improvements, sooner or
later you're not going to want to live there
anymore. And I think that's vital to think about
as we talk about this subject.

It is change, and some people fear
change. Some people don't like change. People
like to do today what they did yesterday so they
can do it again tomorrow because the rut feels
comfortable. But the only difference between a rut
and a grave is the length, the depth, and how long
you're in it. And I think that we have the
political leaders on our side, the business leaders
on our side, and the community leaders on our side
that if you look at the list of people here that
support the Metra rail system are willing to have
that vision to make sure that we get out of that
rut and go forward. Thank you.

MR. PATRI: Thank you, Mr. Nickorent.

Ms. Fayrie: Thank you, Mr. Nickorent.

For your comments tonight. The next speaker is
Mr. Seymore Mengesha. Did I pronounce it
correctly?

Ms. Mengesha: Seymore Mengesha.

Ms. Fayrie: Seymore. Seymore Mengesha.

Ms. Mengesha: Thank you.
expansion, and directly north is the Reinvestment Neighborhood for Housing Improvement that Racine Neighborhood/Housing Partnership has spoken of already.

When planners talk about maximizing the benefits from transit and achieving smart growth goals, they talk about exactly this type of situation where there is mixed residential and commercial development and coordinated transit service. This has the potential to be a case study for achieving those goals, one that will be an envy of other communities. I want to echo the comment that's been made about this. There's also a service that can address our mismatch between workplace and employment. We have 33 percent unemployment right now. This service will allow people to access jobs and yet maintain their community ties in Racine where they have family and other affiliations.

The last point I wanted to make is to endorse the committee's recommendation that WISDOT, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, undertake the next steps toward implementation. This will be an interstate service no less than I-44, and it deserves to be at the top of WISDOT's priority list for staff effort and financial support. Thank you.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you, Mr. O'Connell, for your comments. Next -- The next speaker is the honorable Lawrence Burazi, mayor of the City of St. Francis, 3437 South Allen Street, St. Francis, Wisconsin, followed by David Guran. Your honor.

MAYOR BURAZI: Good evening. I'm here tonight because I cannot attend the session that's being held in Oshkosh tomorrow evening. There's a conflict with a meeting that I have with the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, but tonight I feel like I'm in a position of being more on the range. We're never short of discouraging work. I do have to say that I have a couple of concerns that I think that the committee should take into account on behalf of my city and by my constituents.

One of those concerns is the funding in terms of how the money will be allocated with the railroad that owns the right-of-way, the rail bed. It's been my experience. I've been trying for three years to get cooperation from the railroad to install rail barrier gates on our city streets. We have five grade crossings, two of which handle a large volume of traffic, and they are gated. They are safe today as the present technology, but there is an advanced technology that could be put in place. And I've been working with the railroad commissioner and through him with the railroad and not gotten a whole lot of cooperation, so that would be an area where I will expect that this proposal might run into problems.

The proposal itself is laudable. I like it. It's moving some -- putting forward some advantages for my own city which I appreciate. The other concern that I have is that no matter where the funding for this comes from, whether it's federal or state, all funding for transportation is limited, and local communities do rely on some of those funds for local transportation initiatives. And we have some of those in place in our new Smart Growth Plan, and so I would not want to see this proposal go beyond its present funding estimate because I believe that that night but not only my community but other communities that have transportation plans in place. So with that, I thank you very much for hearing my comments, and I appreciate being here in Racine. My son marched with the Kiwanis for many years, and he enjoyed it very much. Thank you.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you, your honor. Next speaker is David Guran. I hope I pronounced that right, 3133 Haven Avenue, Racine, followed by John Shannon. Mr. Guran or -- Guran.

MR. GURAN: Correct. Guran.

MR. PATRICK: Guran.

MR. GURAN: Yes, I'd like to thank you first for this opportunity to speak tonight. I clearly support the concept of the extension of the Metro rail system. However, there are some critical details that are vital for a successful commuter rail system. I'm optimistic that the extension of the rail system will advance from this preliminary study to a final plan. Therefore, my three observations I hope contribute to a successful implementation of the commuter rail system.

First, in terms of design elements such as track crossings and track infrastructure as the last speaker spoke of, to prevent collisions with cars, trucks, and buses, the Metro rail system on this particular line actually ran into a school bus just a few years ago, also, the possibility of collisions with pedestrians trying to make crossings. But also, children, adults, other animals that may stray onto the tracks. We may
need to consider reviving the infrastructure, maybe elevating tracks or putting bridges over crossings. With these design elements within the study, they have not been defined at all. Presently the City of Racine is about to rebuild its train station. However, I would suggest that maybe this is a little premature. We have not taken into account the different design elements for this final plan, and maybe a change with this particular station might be a little premature. Also, we have to envision the future, the use of newer technologies. Right now the present Metra system uses fairly old technology. Recently I've read about green locomotives that use 25 percent less fuel, also looking at options that are used throughout the world. Have we learned lessons from the Japanese, from the Germans, and the Europeans, from Portland, Oregon, and also the problems that they're seeing in some implementation in Minneapolis?

Secondly, we need to develop attractiveness to riders, and I believe this has an optimizing plan. Presently the one-way trip from Kenosha to Chicago takes approximately one hour and 45 minutes, and I may be incorrect on that, but it's somewhere around there with approximately it stops which this is just from my memory, so don't quote me on this. But anyway -- And therefore, its present preliminary plan will add seven more stops, and so I believe maybe it'll add another hour to the trip, you know. Are riders going from Milwaukee to Chicago wanting to spend two-and-a-half hours, three hours on a train going through all these stops? What hasn't been considered in this proposal are any express trains. None of those kinds of ideas have been presented yet.

And thirdly, I'd like to require contractors that have bids on these projects to develop the system to employ citizens that live in areas of high unemployment, in Racine and Kenosha Counties, and that need to be definitely added to the plan. And again, thank you for the opportunity to speak.

MR. PATHE: Thank you, Mr. Urban, for your comments tonight. The next speaker is John Shannon, Quick Cable Corporation, 2700 Quick Drive, Franksville, Wisconsin, followed by Bill Streeter.

MR. SHANNON: Good evening. I'm coming to you representing two roles, first officially as the president and CEO of Quick Cable Corporation and, secondly, unofficially as the immediate past president of the Racine Art Museum. I'm speaking in favor of the recommendation. Quick Cable is a manufacturing company in Franksville. We have a total employment of about 120 people, 85 in Racine County. We can very definitely use a rail extension into Milwaukee and the Chicago area for trade purposes, educational opportunities which are very important to us trying to stay contrary and modern and informed of the world. Secondly, we do have employees living in Milwaukee and also some in northern Illinois, and reliable rail transportation to Racine would be used and be very attractive.

I'd like to, though, spend the bulk of the time, remaining time, speaking as from the point of view of Racine as a cultural destination, and this is a relatively new role for Racine. Next weekend the Racine Art Museum will open in downtown Racine. The Racine Art Museum is a $10 million project. The Racine Art Museum used to be known as the Charles A. Mackin Museum of Fine Arts, and it was renamed about a year ago. We've built a new art museum in downtown Racine. We have in Racine the third largest contemporary craft collection in the United States. The largest craft collection, contemporary craft collection, is the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. The second largest collection is the American Craft Museum in New York City. Racine has the third largest contemporary craft collection in the United States.

When the museum opens next weekend, we will have a world-class exhibition of American and international artists here in Racine. On the street level galleries, we will have an exhibition of glass work by Dale Chihuly who is an internationally known glass artist. This -- When this museum opens next weekend, it will be a destination for people in this region certainly and throughout the United States. When we did the demographic study for the development of this new museum, we looked at the typical museum attendee. And they are educated, and they are affluent. And there are well over 10 million people living 75 miles of Racine, principally in the Chicago and Milwaukee areas. Convenient, reliable rail will get those people to Racine where they will see Racine, enjoy Racine, and take the story of Racine back in to their communities changing the perception of Racine in their eyes and in the
community.

The Racine Art Museum opens next weekend, however, and will be a significant economic anchor in downtown Racine. However, recently the Racine Heritage Museum also announced a new museum in the downtown area. It will be approximately a $14 million project. It's located two blocks from the Racine Art Museum. It'll, too, become in the next five years a major destination for people in the region. And again, we need rail transportation to bring people from Milwaukee and Chicago into Racine. This is an ideal site for day trip people, families principally on the weekend but certainly during the week as well. In conclusion, implement the recommendations. Build it. We'll use it.

Thank you.

MR. PATNER: Thank you, Mr. Shannon, for your comments this evening. We've gone through 20 speakers so far. We have 9 left registered speakers, so it'll pretty much conclude right at 8 o'clock if we stick to the three minutes. If there is anybody else that wants to speak, please raise your hand. And Mr. Dombick over here will get you a form and you can fill it out. If not, a reminder that you can submit your comments through May 16, either mail through the Regional Planning Commission or e-mail which the address is on the Wise Ride. Mr. Streeter.

MR. STREETER: Yes.

MR. PATNER: W.K.-T.E.R.-R.U.M.

Kooms, Wisconsin, followed by Ms. Joan Bohan.

MR. PATNER: Thank you. I'm a vice chancellor of the UW-Parkside, and I know you've heard Chancellor Jack Reatting express his support for the rail service. And at the Kooms session last week, Lenie Kleeuwer at the university also gave his support. So what I'd like to do is speak as a parent, a parent and a resident of Caledonia. I live at 4815 Ruby Avenue, and I am a parent of an adult son with a disability, a developmental disability.

He is currently in Evanston, Illinois, learning how to live independently from his parents. And his only mode of transportation his whole life will be public transportation. He'll never learn -- we'll probably never be able to learn to drive a car, so this idea really excites us because he'll be able to come home to visit if he's able to get a job in Evanston, live a fairly normal life, and have friends as much of us do.

This would be a blessing for him. And as his mother and I get ever there for a chance to go down to visit him, we don't want to take -- tackle the highways because they're too crowded, or drivers are a little crazy. This would be a wonderful way for us to go down and visit him at Evanston, Illinois. And I'm sure our case is just not unique. There are people who need public transportation to get to and from visiting relatives. Thank you.

MR. PATNER: Thank you, Mr. Streeter, for your comments. The next speaker is Ms. Bohan followed by Ms. Celeste Manteo.

MS. PATNER: Thank you. I am not Joan (Jo-An) Bohan. My -- I am Donna Patner, and I am speaking for Joan. Joan is physically challenged, and she's at the back of the room. And the stairway down was too much of a challenge.

MR. PATNER: Ms. Patner,

P.K.T.R.E.R.U.M.

MS. PATNER: O.H.

MR. PATNER: S.O.N.

MS. PATNER: P.O.S.

MS. PATNER: 810 System. Thank you.

Sorry to interrupt you.

MS. PATNER: We would like to urge you to open the station on State Street in Racine. That station will be by far more handicap-friendly than the station in Kenosha which has a charging stairway up to the track. Joan and I took the train down to Chicago, and we had to get on the Winthrop Harbor because of the stairway in Kenosha. There would be no stairway here in Racine at the State Street station which would make it far more accessible. The train itself is very accessible. It has a platform that comes out, picks up the wheelchair, and brings it into the train. It's very nice. It would just be nice to have the train come up to Racine, and I don't know how other handicapped people in Racine and Kenosha handle the problem. It's easier for Joan and I to go to California than to go down to Chicago on the train the way it is now. It would be much easier to have a station here in Racine. Thank you.

MR. PATNER: Thank you, Mr. Patner, for your comments. Next speaker is Ms. Celeste Manteo Manteo, and I hope I pronounced that right. Please correct me.

MS. MANTEO: Manteo (math-ee-uh).

MR. PATNER: Pardon me?

MS. MANTEO: Manteo (math-ee-uh).
MR. MATHEWS: I came here tonight. I found out about this at the last minute, but I came here today as a representation of the typical commuter. I have been commuting on the Metro for over ten years. My typical day starts at 4:15 in the morning, and I get home at quarter to 8 at night. I know everything that goes on in that train, you know. I work on the train. I visit on the train. I see, you know, people working on their computers on the train. And it's a grueling, grueling lifestyle. I did it because I couldn't find work here in Racine. This is where I grew up. This is where I was born. I love Racine. I want to stay here. I urge you emphatically to please let people stay in Racine, the ones who have been able to remain after all these years. I know for a fact that people in Chicago would gladly come to Racine to live if they could get on the train and get home within an hour. It can be done, but the fact is that the people south to us have priority. Their reason in Kenosha... Correct me if I'm wrong. The reason Kenosha has
do the commute. It's very, very difficult. So I guess I'm just here as a representation of one of the typical commuters on there. I encourage you, please, please go through with this. I've been hearing about it for ten years, and I'd really like to be able to come home and spend more time here in my own community. Thank you for listening.

MR. MATHEWS: Thank you, Mr. Mathews, and I apologize for mispronouncing your name. The next speaker is Colin McKenna. I hope I'm pronouncing that correctly, 1920 Lathrop in Racine followed by Jim Warner of the Sierra Club. Mr. McKenna.

MR. McKENNA: I'm Colin McKenna, 1920 Lathrop Avenue, and I am urging you to support this, and I am urging you, and I support this, I'm supporting it because people who live in Racine, some of them, they work in Milwaukee, and they need transportation to their jobs in Milwaukee. And some of the people that work in Milwaukee, some of the people that live in Milwaukee also work in Racine in industries such as your hospitals. And also, I think it would be great for the family to take the train to Milwaukee for like the weekend if they want to go on a weekend pass because Chicago, you can go up there for the weekend pass. And you

trains there is because they don't have enough

train space in Kenosha to house the trains at

night, so they house them on 'em in Kenosha.

That's why we have it. That's what saved us

because now I can have my condo in Racine. I can

spend my money in Racine, but you know what?

Truthfully, I can't really enjoy Racine because I

can't get home early enough to really enjoy it

except on the weekends. It's an hour and 25

minutes, 27 minutes, one way. If you bring the

trains to Racine, you will find that more people

will move back into the community, bringing more money

back into the community, develop things here. More

importantly, you will find that you'll have the

ability to bring more trains more often which means

it'll cut down on my commute and many of the other

people's commutes. It's -- it's the way of life

for a lot of people in Racine. If you want to live

here in Racine, you must must work elsewhere. And

that's -- You know, it's really disheartening

because I would like to spend more time here, but I

can't. So I've seen people on the train, you know,

leave. If you can get through the first three,

two months, you'll make it, you know. But if you

can't, most people move out because they just can't

can stop at the small towns and cities. Go shopping

or go to summer events. And it would bring people

to Racine to some of their summer events and to the

small cities is between, between Milwaukee.

And also, I'm in favor of this. And also, Racine

is also getting a ferry this year, this summer. It

would be great for people that -- to come to

Racine, they could take the ferry over to Michigan,

if they wanted to take a trip over to Michigan, or

they could take the ferry to Chicago if they wanted

to take a ferry trip. So we would have a lot of

entertainment in Racine for people to come. So I

urge your support on this and urge you to get the

ball rolling on this. Thank you.

MR. PATRIZ: Thank you, Mr. McKenna, for

your comments tonight. The next speaker is Jay

Warner, Sierra Club, 4444 North Green Bay Road,

Racine, followed by the honorable Julie McKenna.

MR. WARNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I

want to point out under the heading of air

pollution and other pollution that every time we

commute to work by automobile, every time you drive

73 miles, you have generated as much air pollution

as working at the job you drove to. Seventy-three

miles of one car is equal to one job per day in
southeast Wisconsin. The DNR has the numbers on
the pollution generated. SHWPC has the numbers on
the number of auto miles traveled, and you can do
the math, too. By putting in a train, the amount
of miles goes way up. The amount of air pollution
generated by riding on a train is far less than the
air pollution generated by one automobile, experitally when the average ridership in
automobiles is 1.6 passengers per car. That's
counting the driver. We are presently in southeast
Wisconsin and the Chicago air districts over the
pollution limit given by the EPA. We are breathing
air much of the time. It's not sure if we're
the second worst in the country or the third, and
it doesn't much matter because we are over the
limits. Our development in this area is
restrictive. We're talking about ten percent
unemployment in Racine. None of those people work
at the Wall Street Journal Printing Plant that does
not exist. None of those people in Racine work at
the Quad/Graphics plant in Racine county which does
not exist, and those plants were not built here
because we are over the limit. They cannot
generate additional mass in the air. I'm sorry.
That's part of our ten percent unemployment.

There's a health issue involved in air
pollution which a lot of us have heard about lately
in other respects. If you take a map of Racine
area and you plot on it all the points of the
residences of people who have been taken to the
hospital emergency entrance for asthma attacks,
you will see that there's a cluster in mostly the
downtown area which is true for most cities. You
will also see an outline of Douglas Avenue, and
that outline is there because Douglas Avenue has a
lot of residences which are close to the
road. I don't mean feet. I mean within a quarter
mile or thereabouts. And because of those
residences, we have a higher density of asthma
attacks in that area due to automotive pollution.
We did it, gang. There's some people who are
commuting that the cost to the local areas is a
bit on the high side. I should point out that for
local towns and local cities, there are federal
pollution abatement funds which are designed
expressly to help those areas reduce the air
pollution. Building a train station certainly
qualifies, and we would urge you as SHWPC to
continue your efforts to find funds, and I would
urge the elected officials to make sure that there
are -- they have turned over all the possible
avenues. It doesn't have to be local money
entirely. There are a lot of people worried about
the cost of this whole thing. And when they talk
about it, they always talk about it in terms of the
cost of the train. Well, it's not a question of
cost of the train. It's a question of cost of the
trains versus the alternative. The alternative is
to expand I-94 in our case. The cost of expanding
I-94 which one lane on each side between the state
line and Highway 10 will be in excess of $315
million. That does not include the cost of
acquiring already-developed properties at the
interchanges. That is simply purchasing farmland
and putting in concrete.

Finally, my automobile, which gets well
over the average mileage, costs me approximately $3
every time I drive to Milwaukee. I live on the
north side of Racine. It's not quite as far as it is
for many people. How much is it gonna cost me
when gasoline costs $3 a gallon? How much is it
gonna cost everyone at $3 a gallon? All I can say
at this point is, yes, we've been working on this
for many, many years. Dean Davies knows people who
worked on it before him. I think it's time to
build the train now.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. Wexner, for
your comments. Next speaker is Mr. Julio McKenna
followed by Roger Caven. Mr. McKenna,

MR. MCKENNA: Yes, I'm here as a Racine
Unified School Board member elected official. I'd
like to have my name added to the elected officials
that are in support of the Metra extension from
Kenosha-Racine to Milwaukee. Southeast -- Also,
I'm a respiratory therapist/technician. So I work
in the health -- health care building as well. I
am in support for the Metra extension.

Southeastern Wisconsin would benefit from the Metra
extension. A lot of employees that I work with
commute from Milwaukee. I know a lot of friends
that live in Racine also commute to Milwaukee and
Chicago for jobs. This would give another option
for transportation for us here. Also, this would
help the air quality as mentioned by other speakers
that definitely needs help, especially in Racine
County. I think we have one of the worst air
quality reports in the state of Wisconsin. There
is a number of -- high number of citizens in our
county that have respiratory problems. We
definitely need another form of transportation to
help -- to help our air quality. This is a healthy
choice. The quality of life that this choice
provides is well worth any cost and investment
that's put into it. Thank you.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you, Mr. Dozenia.
Thank you for your support, and your name will be
added to the elected officials list. Next speaker
is Roger Carson from the Racine Area Manufacturers,
330 Fifth Street, followed by Randall Van Duseen,
retired Navy, Mr. Carson.

MR. CARSON: You and I are about the same
priority tonight. But rest assured, everybody that
my -- as a member of the committee and Southeastern
Wisconsin Regional Planning and president of KOMAC
did not move us up any speakers. I feel very --
Fred, you're very honest that way. Thank you. As
president of Racine Area Manufacturers and
Commerce, it's a Racine-based nonprofit association
representing over 500 businesses and 40,000
employees in the Racine area. We certainly support
commuter rail, KRM, from Chicago to Milwaukee. I'm
gonna throw this out. I'll give it to you as my
remarks because, fortunately, I had the opportunity
to review prepared in the Journal Times a couple
of days ago. Some of you might have read the

Journal Times. But as a result of that, several of
our political leaders responded to some of the
comments that we've had. Two of those were
remarkable, and I'd just like to briefly talk about
those. One concern I heard was if it involves any
local tax dollars, we aren't gonna have it. Some
of you probably heard that. And it's amazing
because it shows how we would work so hard on
consolidating government services in Racine County
as they do objecting to something that would truly
benefit senior citizens, young professionals,
businesses, and the leadership of Racine County,
we'd have plenty of money to pay for our source of
money for commuter rail. Give you an example. The
dispatch centers in Racine County and 6 dispatch
centers of the I covering 150,000 people. And
we're worried about paying money for commuter rail
that would be such an economic benefit to Racine.
Second thing that I heard was we don't have a dense
population or dense enough to support that in this
corridor. Can you think of any other more dense
corridor from Chicago to Milwaukee in the Midwest?
I can't. Give you an idea, couple of thoughts.
Illinois gets an average of $850 million a year to
support their commuter rail from the Federal New

Starts Dollar. You know how much Wisconsin gets
because we don't have commuter rail and because we
don't have a state rail plan? So, in Wisconsin
alone, over 300,000 jobs are within three miles of
these planned stations and over 60,000 people.
With that, thank you for my comments, and I'd like
to give you my actually-prepared comments for the
record.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you, Mr. Carson. The
record should also reflect that Mr. Carson did serve
on the Advisory Committee in a very active role.
And thank you for that, Roger. The next speaker in
Randall Van Duseen, and I apologize if I'm
mispronouncing it. It's a little hard to read it
followed by Martha Rietz, 4096 Nembach Drive,
Racine. Sir, how should I pronounce that?

MR. VAN DUSEEN: The name is Randall Van
Duseen. I do thank you. Most people have that
problem. Mr. Chairman and fellow attendees, I see
potential opportunities, and I'd like to mention
what some of them are. First of all, if we put a
station at Three Mile Road instead of Four Mile,
you could combine Batten Field with the railroad to
help provide services to Chicago. Remember, Bick (phonetic) Field just got
carved up by the mayor down here. We could bring
the passenger ferry up the Rock River to Sixth
Street. There's an abandoned marina there. That's
two blocks away from the station in Racine. We
could make a covered causeway. You tie passenger
ferries service to passenger rail. It's an old station
personnel, I was surprised. I'm retired Navy, I
also work at Home Depot, by the way. I know many
people living down in the Waukegan, North Chicago
area that would rather live up here. And right now
our land values are the lowest north of North
Chicago, but our opportunities for living are much
better here. Come south of Milwaukee, our land
values again are pretty much the lowest land
values. This is an opportunity for living here. I
do have a couple questions. I would, rather,
recommend a high-level service. Why not go down to
Chicago? I have to go down to Lake Bluff. That's
where I can catch a train early enough to get into
Chicago early enough for conventions. People going
to, for example, the festivals, at times, they
come in at night. They want to be able to get back
at hours that are late, to a high level of service
will support this and hours in between.

The last thing I'd like to say is why are
we stopping at Milwaukee? Why don’t we swing west to Waukesha? You’re gonna have the Marquette Interchange torn up. It’s gonna be disoriented quite bad down in Milwaukee. Why don’t we go up to Milwaukee and west of Waukesha, tie it all together at the same time? Now, I don’t want another study, however. I’d like to see it happen. I do like to thank you for your time. It is better to sign up early I noticed.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you for your comments, Mr. Van Dusen, and observations. Next speaker is No. 33, and I have two after that that have signed up. So the next speaker is Ms. Martha Hutsick...

MR. PATRIE: Right.

MR. PATRIE: -- and followed by Marilyn Neer.

Ms. HUTSICK: I’m Martha Hutsick, 4620 Harvest Lane, Racine. It’s actually Caledonia.

I’ve been a member of several boards and stuff, but I’m really speaking as an individual tonight. I’m just going to limit my comments in favor of it, some personal comments. I travel to Chicago quite a bit, and the last time I was there was last week right after Easter. And in order to get a train back with some frequency, I have to go to Waukegan to catch the train. If you go to Kenosha, you’re kind of limited as to when the train goes and when the train returns. So I did go to Waukegan, and I had to park in the lot which is above, you know, in Waukegan. And you walk down the hill and come back late at night and walk back up the hill, so I hope when we do build the stations we have enough parking so that kind of situation doesn’t occur.

Also, with all the positive comments tonight, I can’t see why this won’t become a reality. And if it becomes a reality, I would like to see Racine or Caledonia, where I live, be one of the express stops, not to skip Racine or Caledonia because then I’ll be in the same boat as I am now trying to go to Waukegan or someplace else. I think probably there are express stops right now.

I mean, that’s why I go to Waukegan, ’cause there’s more trains coming to Waukegan, and there’s other ones that only come to Kenosha. So if we do promote it from Kenosha to Milwaukee, I hope that the express stops will be, you know, studied but not for too long and enable the people who do live in Racine to have access to more frequent trains also.

I did grow up in Racine, and I left to go to San Francisco and Phoenix for a while. But as a child, I remember my mother and I taking the North Shore train any time to go shopping in Milwaukee when I was a young girl. And also, the North Shore when I was in high school, we used to go out there to watch the sailors come by and just wave at them through the window which is probably as close as I got to boys at that time. But it shows the frequency and all that attracts a lot of ridership, and at that time we could take the train to -- the North Shore train to Milwaukee on the hour. It was going every hour. And also, we had the Chicago Northwestern at the State Street station because I lived at State and oh /FMWD when I grew up. And we used to go to that train station which still stands just for the fun of it. And my uncle used to come from Green Bay to Racine and then on to Chicago to visit other relatives. So I’m sure if the trains are more frequent there will be the ridership. And of course, anything needs promotion. And I’d be glad to help with that when it does come to pass. Thank you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Ms. Hutsick.

Mr. Van Dusen, the woman that was waving you from the train when you were in the Navy was
the only thing I personally feel is why is it taking us so long? This should have happened yesterday.

Thank you.

MR. PATRIKIE: Thank you, Mr. Henneg, for your comment. Mr. Yunker from SERNVC is not going to believe this because the scheduled allotment for the public hearing was from 4:30 to 8, and I have the final speaker. How do you like that, Ken?

MR. YUNKER: Very good.

MR. PATRIKIE: Mr. Garza spoke earlier this evening on behalf of his employer, and he would like the opportunity to speak on behalf of himself. It's Roberto Garza, 3618 Meachen Road, No. 3, Racine.

MR. GARZA: This will be short. I support the commuter rail and bus alternative concept. It is something that is needed at this time. We should embrace the concept as it will lead to further economic development and growth in the region. I've heard many other comments tonight, and so have you all, as far as businesses that could possibly open up from where the stations will be developed as such. We must embrace this as a part of a larger vision, a vision that will connect people with employment in the respective cities. People would have access to the amenities available along the route, not only people from Racine County to other counties but then those people coming to Racine County as their destination. There's an access to opportunity. I thank you for this opportunity.

MR. PATRIKIE: Thank you, Mr. Garza. Is there anybody who has not had an opportunity to speak that would like to speak? Is there anybody that has not spoken? Okay. As I said earlier this evening, written comments can be sent small mail to SERNVC at their address, and that's available to you. Or you can e-mail them, and that's available also in the Wise Ride newsletter, and I think staff is going to stick around if you have individual questions or comments that you would like to insert in the record. Otherwise, thank you very much for coming this evening. Thank you.

(Presentation concluded at 8:02 p.m.)

STATE OF WISCONSIN

| SS: |

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE

I, JENNIFER SIMMONS, a Certified Realtime Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of Wisconsin, do hereby certify that the above Transcript of Proceedings was recorded by me on the 30th day of April, 2003, and reduced to writing under my personal direction.

I further certify that I am not a relative or employee or attorney or counsel of any of the parties, or a relative or employee of such attorney or counsel, or financially interested directly or indirectly in this action.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal of office at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, this 13th day of May, 2003.

[Signature]

Notary Public

In and for the State of Wisconsin

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

MR. PATRICK: I'll put on the record that last night at the hearing that was held, the mayor of St. Francis spoke. He was unable to be here tonight. Those of you who are from St. Francis area, he could not be here tonight, but he did speak in favor of the community rail last night.

It is now time to receive the comments.

The hearing portion of this meeting is to receive your comments concerning the preliminary plan. It should be emphasized this is not a question and answer hearing. You had that opportunity earlier this afternoon and tonight, and you have that opportunity after the meeting. If you have questions that arise from people's comments or something that you saw in the presentation, Ken and the other SEWRPC staff will remain to answer your questions.

We ask that you keep your comments to about three minutes for the first pass-through. We want everyone to have an opportunity to say what's on their mind. If you do not have enough time in the three minutes you were allotted, if there's time at the end, we'll let you come back up and have another three minutes, if you want to speak you can. The purpose here is to allow everyone to have an opportunity to speak.

As I mentioned, the meeting is going to be transcribed. Donna Rank will do that. You can assist Miss Rank in making sure that your comments are all accurately recorded by having only one person speak at a time, and that person speaking comes up to the microphone. I'll read your name and address off the cards that you should have submitted. And again, if you're going to speak if you raise your hand and you haven't submitted one of these, someone will get you once and you can fill it out and bring it in.

My job of chairing the public hearing is three-fold. One, I'm charged to keeping it moving along two, keeping it germane, and three, making sure that everyone that wants to speak has an opportunity to speak. And you can help me do that tonight by honoring when people are up here speaking, give them the courtesy of listening to what they have to say just as if you were up here speaking, you'd like to have that courtesy yourself. It may actually give you questions or issues you didn't think of.

I want to also point out that not
everyone is always comfortable coming up to the microphone speaking. If you have your Wise Ride handout, it gives a Gmail address. It also gives a fax, and it also gives an e-mail address. So if you’re not comfortable speaking at a microphone, you can get your comments, and those are also recorded as part of the record, so I encourage you to do that.

With that, I guess we can begin. I should make one more note, and that is if you want a written comment submitted, those are accepted up through May 16th which would be the deadline. I also want to take just a few minutes because this is the fourth meeting of four to let you know who has been working on this diligently for the past two and a half years for this study and two and a half years for the feasibility study. As Mayor Growacki said, it’s been a long time to get to this point.

Janan Olson from Olson & Company is here, and Kris Martinez from Martinez & Associates. From the Parsons Group we have Mark Miller and Melissa Rees (phonetic). In the back from Transit NOW, Kerri Thomas and Rosemary Potter, and from the regional planning commission you heard from Riese Young. But also here is Otto Dobnick and Gary Korb.

So with that, we will begin the public hearing process. Again, I ask you to please keep your initial comments to three minutes. Mr. Korb will kind of give you a heads up when there’s about ten seconds left, and if there’s more comment we’ll keep going until the hearing ends at 8:00 or thereabouts. The first speaker tonight is Rosemary Potter, Transit NOW, P.O. Box 565, Sussex, Wisconsin.

ROSEMARY POTTER: Good evening. Hello, everyone. I wanted to let you know that I’ve submitted for the record a copy of my testimony, a list of all the endorsers of the concept of commuter rail, and a copy of the positive editorials that we’ve received from the Milwaukee Journal, the Business Journal, the Kenosha newspaper as well as the Racine Times.

Thank you for this opportunity to express our opinion about a project we believe is vital to the future of Southeast Wisconsin. Transit NOW is a regional 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that works to link people to jobs, improve economic development, increase accessibility, reduce air pollution and stabilize land use in Southeast Wisconsin by providing community education and outreach and a platform for the development of positive local and regional transportation solutions.

Two years ago, our board of directors made a decision to prioritize our work in developing commuter rail. They could see the huge opportunity that commuter rail has to positively impact the things that are core to our organization and essential to the future of Southeast Wisconsin.

Over the past two years, Transit NOW has provided research, met with hundreds of stakeholders and citizens, delivered dozens of presentations and created literature on web site pages. But more importantly, we have developed many collaborative relationships and facilitated dialogs between numerous combinations of stakeholders, government officials and community leaders, so it is from this unique vantage point that we come before you this evening to share the lessons that we’ve learned.

We have been privileged to be part of what feels like a great awakening. Once people learn about commuter rail, they like it almost universally, and that’s been clear in all the hearings that we’ve been to. In Kenosha there were over 100 people. In Milwaukee there were 170 people. Last night in Racine there were about 180 people, and you see that this room is crowded tonight. We love that. It’s great for the spirit.

We’ve enjoyed working with many people who are not usually interested in transit issues, people from all walks of life, the full spectrum of political parties. How often do you see the Sierra Club working side by side with developers on the same issue?

We’ve seen this project bring cities, counties and towns together in a new spirit of regional cooperation. This is a project that we can agree on. It’s bringing people together now, and it will continue to grow when it is implemented.

And we have learned many lessons. The first lesson we’ve learned is that we begin to think and act like a regional community if we expect our economy to thrive. It’s simply a reality of the global economy. We’ve seen cities and counties, organizations of all kinds, universities and businesses all along the corridor making the development of a regional economy a key priority.
because it is essential for our future success. It
is clear that commuter rail can be a catalyst for
developing a regional economy. And out of the top
30 cities in the United States, we are in the
company of just a few who do not provide rail
service for commuters.

The second lesson, we learned all about
the brain drain, how important it is to have young
talent to attract businesses and jobs, especially
as baby boomers retire in the next five to ten
years. By the year 2008, there will only be one
worker to replace every two that retire.

Unfortunately, Wisconsin doesn’t seem to be a place
that young college grads want to live, yet.

Amenities like commuter rail are critical in
creating the communities that younger generations
are attracted to work and live. Three, we --

UNIDENTIFIED: How many minutes --

MR. DURIE: Gary, are you timing?

MR. DURIE: Yes.

MR. PATRIE: The time will be kept up
here. We don’t keep it exactly as three minutes.

ROSEMARY POTTER: I’ll speak faster.

Number three, we learned from low income
communities how very essential regional

transportation is in lifting people out of poverty.

By providing convenient, reliable, affordable
transportation to a sizeable regional job market
and educational opportunities, doors will be opened
to a better life for thousands of families and
children.

Number four, we learned that we could
hardly ask for a better situation for a commuter
rail route. We have the existing right-of-way with
infrquent freight use. The route serves central
neighborhoods of cities --

MR. KORM: Ten seconds.

ROSEMARY POTTER: -- in a densely
populated corridor with a major city at each end of
the route. The last lesson, and perhaps the most
important, is that the Metra extension is much more
than a train. It is an intelligent investment in
growth -- an investment in positioning ourselves as
winning cities in a winning region. The KRM
Commuter Rail will add value and quality of life to
our communities. It should be implemented as
quickly as possible so that we can begin reaping
its benefits. Thank you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Miss Potter, for
your comments. The next speaker is Mr. Jerry

Motarok, 3276 East Morris Avenue, Cedarh, followed
by State Representative Chris Sinicki.

JERRY KOTARAK: Hello. On behalf of the
business community, I would just like to let
everybody know that from the constituents I've
talked to in the business community, that we are
very excited about this project. Due to the fact
that I've lived here all my life in Cedarh, and
Cedarh has always been -- doesn't have the greatest
reputation to say the least, and I've always
thought the more I traveled around in my life in
different areas, anywhere that's close to an
airport and a lake, and Cedarh is sandwiched
between an airport and a lake, and then if we also
put the commuter rail in also, I think it's going to
be a very good stimulus to our area.

And from a business perspective, I know
that this important thing that's going in, something
that many people were very doubtful about -- they
thought why in Cedarh. Thank God our mayor said
why not in Cedarh. Now it's going to happen. The
Ice Sport people did a lot of checking around the
whole country before they did something like this.
They could not find -- and they challenged us and
said if you can find somewhere else in this great

United States of ours that has 35 acres of
developable land between a lake and an airport, a
possible rail area and a freeway spur, you show us,
'cause we'll be more interested in that parcel of
land. Well, there's not any in this United States
that we can find, so I think it's a very exciting
thing. From the business community, I think it's
going to be a great thing. I think it'll be a
greater stimulus for our Cedarh area, and I would
just like that to be said. Thank you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. Motarok. Did
I pronounce your name correctly?

JERRY KOTARAK: Motarok, yes, very good.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you. The next speaker
is the honorable Representative Chris Sinicki
followed by Mr. Andrew Stiffler.

REPRESENTATIVE CHRIS SINICKI: You don't
need to time me because I'm going to be very brief.

I wasn't even planning on speaking tonight.

However, I did want to come down and officially put
my name on the list of endorsers of the plan, and
just say, you know, this is an issue that I think
is going to be very important to the City of
Cedarh. When you look and see what's been going on
in the City, this will be a big part of their
downtown redevelopment plan, and it's also very important to the whole entire southeast Milwaukee County. When you look and see all the jobs we've lost, all the businesses we've lost, I think this will help stimulate some of that and bring some of that back to our area.

MR. PAUL: Thank you, State Representative. The next speaker is Andrew Stiffler, 18550 Emerald Drive, Brookfield, Wisconsin. Sir.

ANDREW STIFFLER: Thank you. I'd like to say I'm also in favor of this idea, but I think it should be implemented correctly. I don't like the idea of starting with a medium level of service only running weekday rush-hour round trips. I am one of the recent college graduates that do live here in the Milwaukee area, and a lot of us don't work 9 to 5 jobs. I think both evening and weekend service needs to be run.

I know there are a lot of people, friends of mine in Chicago that like to come to the bars and to the entertainment options here in Milwaukee, and I know a lot of them don't like driving, but if trains aren't going to be running after 9 or 6 at night, that's really going to put a damper on their

opinions of wanting to come up here. And the same with those wanting to go down to Chicago in the evenings, we don't have that option if the trains don't run.

I think the trains need to be run in the evenings and on weekends, not just for commuters, but also for the tourists. There are a lot of tourist options and destinations here in Milwaukee that people from Chicago don't get a chance to visit because they don't have an easy way to get to them. And a lot of people -- you don't want to spend a full day in your car with two or three kids screaming and crying in the car. I know a lot of other cities run evening and weekend trips to specifically the tourist destinations so that the kids can get to them. I know out in LA they run beach trains out to ocean side that kids ride because they don't want to drive and their parents don't want to drive, but I think that's one of the biggest things that we need to do on this whole thing. Thank you.

MR. PAUL: Thank you, Mr. Stiffler, for your comments tonight. The next speaker is Mr. Karl Kukor, 3925 Hamond, Cudahy, followed by Mr. Kevin Walker. Mr. Kukor.

MR. KUKOR: Good evening, everybody. As many of you know, I moved back to this city about a year and a half ago. I've lived in other cities around the country. I've lived for a while in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Kansas City and St. Louis, and I think that they've done an excellent job at literally putting the writing on the wall here for the future of transportation. You know, everyone says there's two seasons in Wisconsin, winter and construction season. And if you've ever gone around and driven the highways right now, you'll see an army of orange barrels out there, and if I dare you to try to travel to Chicago during the day and get from here to downtown there in less than three hours, it can't be done.

While living in St. Louis, I very much enjoyed the commuter rail system. It gets you from the airport to the downtown area, out to the casinos with many stops in between and a lot of recreational areas. This is definitely something this area can benefit from.

Now, I can't talk too much about the statistics they have up here, but I can share a few things with you regarding the light rail system in St. Louis because it is one of the most successful in the country. They say that five out of six car trips taken in St. Louis are single-passenger trips, and I'm guessing that the statistics there are true for here too. 80 percent of the workforce drives to work alone in St. Louis. Again, I'm guessing that's true here.

Now, I'm just one person that used to live in St. Louis that can vouch for commuter trains. I wish I could get the other ones here. But this chamber would not hold 16.1 million people because, ladies and gentlemen, that's the number of passengers that rode the MetroLink System last year in St. Louis. I do want to add that for every two MetroLink lines, lanes we have of commuter rail traffic, that can handle the same capacity as 14 lanes of highway. So, ladies and gentlemen, this is a smart way to go.

Another interesting statistic I want to share is that on new riders on the rail system, 21 percent of these riders come off buses. The other 79 percent are people that have never ridden public transportation before. And what I'm saying is that people take a bus because they have to take a bus. People will take this commuter train because they want to and they'll leave their cars at home. It's
good for the environment, good for the economy,
good for the State of Wisconsin, and good for the
City of Oshkosh, and I can't tell you strongly
enough to back this system. Thank you.

MR. PATIKE: Thank you, Mr. Walker, for
your comments tonight. The next speaker is Mr.
Kevin Walker, Working Group on Transportation, P.O.
1324, Milwaukee, followed by Mr. Robert McLeod.
Mr. Walker.

KEVIN WALKER: This is kind of turned the
wrong way. I know this is not a question and
answer thing, but I think I went to address the
people here. My name is Kevin J. Walker, and I'd
like to -- when I talk about mass transit, I always
like to present my credentials. I don't know how
many people here rode mass transit to get here.

This is my Milwaukee County pass. Too often times
we have people talk about mass transit, but
they don't use it. I found this out when I was in
St. Louis also. I also rode Metra, but with the
economy there was that you had people that praise
the system that work for the system but they didn't
ride it. That's also why in California a
proposition was put forth didn't go through,
but the proposition would require all people that
work in the transit field to ride public
transportation. I think that's a good idea.

But tonight I'm wearing two hats. One is
vice-president after Jeffrey Marker of the group
ALERT which stands for against light and electric
rail and rubber tire transit, although lately
there's been a strange life form that's transmuted
from light rail but that's another -- change the
name to against light and electric rail rubber
transit, but we always plan to be on alert to
ensure that public money is well spent, whatever
mode of transportation it is.

But the other hat I wear is as a
spokesperson for the Working Group on
Transportation. It's a group of city people,
suburbs, bus riders and bus drivers who have
contributed to a plan for its own county-wide
phased-in plan for a system of commuter rail lines
using full-size cars on full-size tracks for a
system of commuter rail lines that work in
conjunction with the Milwaukee County Transit
System that would reach out to every neighborhood
with the Milwaukee County bus system acting as
feeders. This is what the system looks like now
with all the freeway fliers and some of the bus
routes and things like that. Under the Working
Group on Transportation's plan it would use the
32nd Street industrial rail corridor and use that
as the spine. If you think of it, it would be like
a human with its arms stretched out with the belt
sticking out. The belt would be the old Mennonite
industrial corridor and use this, connect with the
existing infrastructure of rail lines, and as
anybody else who has lost a muffler around here
knows, we have a whole lot of them crisscrossing
every part of the county. Now, the Metra extension
has already -- has also -- has been factored in our
plan because it figures in as one of the spokes
from the southeast corner of the County which is
phase 3 of the Working Group on Transportation's
plan. The Working Group welcomes the similar use
of the existing infrastructure on full-size tracks
using full-size cars keeping in mind that public
money is not bottomless which is something that
the light railers haven't quite -- haven't quite
figured out yet.

And also a little bit of history. The
genesis of all this talk about a rail corridor
between Milwaukee, Wisconsin happened back when
they were our plans which were later dropped, for
the World Fair. They announced it somewhere around
the early '60s and wanted to, you know, for use in
the year 2006, but they dropped it, but that's what
kind of sparked the idea of linking Milwaukee and
Chicago via rail, but there's also some -- but
there's also a news item which I saw in today's
paper, they're proposing to eliminate all long
distance travel on Amtrak.

MR. KOPS: We're at ten seconds.

KEVIN WALKER: But you can do that, but
this only puts more effort on local areas because
Chicago is going to be made the spine of a long --
of a high-speed rail corridor, which is something
that Metra's group and the Working Group on
Transportation plan also works into.

MR. PATIKE: Thank you, Mr. Walker. If
you have a business card or handout that people
would like to get information to you or get some of
your information to them, maybe you could stick
around after the meeting for a few minutes.

KEVIN WALKER: Actually we've got a 20-
page overview of our plan. We haven't got a lot of
fancy stuff, but we have maps and charts and things
like that showing basically how the 32nd Street
industrial rail corridor which still exists and is
still in use in the spine of the system and how it would be integrated into it.

Mr. PARRY: Okay. But you will be available afterwards? I noticed some people were nodding their heads in agreement when you were talking and I think they may want some additional information. The next speaker is Mr. Robert McLeod, Wisconsin Ave/McCUTC 638 North 66th Street, Milwaukee. Mr. McLeod tonight will be followed by Joe Rapport I think it is.

ROBERT McLEOD: Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak here. I'll make it real short, but let me just say this. I think this proposal makes absolutely excellent sense from the standpoint of improving our transit infrastructure in this area of Wisconsin and for so many, many reasons. It will connect our so-called developing megalopolis between Chicago and Milwaukee. It makes a lot of sense from the standpoint that people will have a really good alternative to the personal transportation. I noticed -- excuse me. I noticed that there are -- the previous speakers have come up with several very interesting points so I'm not going to duplicate that. I just want to say that I think that I hope the commission, who

have incidently done an excellent job of developing this proposal, and hopefully it will go forward -- I believe that the commission has elucidated excellent points as presented in the initial presentation here.

Years ago we had a Chicago north shore and Milwaukee railroad, the old north shore line that ran from downtown Milwaukee to downtown Chicago, city center to city center. We lost that in 1963 because of dwindling ridership. What has been happening in the last four decades is that our metropolitan areas have increased substantially in population, and hence what we have to do is think about spending substantial sums of money. Make no mistake about it, spending money that will in the long run be very beneficial from the transit standpoint.

Years ago we also had a line -- I noticed people are referencing it as the KRM line, Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee. Well, we used to have a line called the KRM line which was run by the Milwaukee Electric Railway Line. It was a type of commuter line that ran from downtown Milwaukee to downtown Kenosha. We don't have that anymore, of course. It's been gone many years ago.

But the reason for all of this is that we are developing. Economic development is taking place everywhere in the area, and one of the things that this system will do is, has been indicated, promote good community and economic development, two very essential things. There are so many reasons that I think this proposal should go forward, and I am standing here mainly to say and to recommend that the commission and anybody that is responsible for hopefully pointing us in the right direction and carrying it forward will do so. Thank you very much.

MR. PARRY: Thank you, Mr. McLeod, for your comments this evening. The next speaker is Joe --

JOE RAPPORT: Rapport.

MR. PARRY: Pardon me, sir?

JOE RAPPORT: Rapport.

MR. PARRY: Rapport, Joe Rapport, 3717 --

JOE RAPPORT: 47.

MR. PARRY: 47, okay.

JOE RAPPORT: 3717.

MR. PARRY: 3717 East Morris.

JOE RAPPORT: Correct.

MR. PARRY: Cudahy, followed by Richard Schreiner.

JOE RAPPORT: My comments are going to go in the opposite direction. Amtrak. I don't have the article at all, that goes across the country of the United States has been subsidized by the federal government for many years. And I believe this will be the last year unless it does change, that Amtrak has to stand on its own two feet. In order for it to run, it has to pay for itself. It can't come out of federal dollars.

The bottom line here is Scott Walker for Milwaukee County -- for the bus company, ridership fell more than 5 percent last year from 51.3 million in 2001 to 48.5 million. That slide has continued. This year with January and February combined, ridership is down 3 percent from the first two months of 2002. Scott Walker's administration has recommended eliminating the trolley service after federal funds run out September 30th. The County board has delayed action on that idea while Milwaukee downtown which has been contributing $30,000 a year to bring -- to help run the trolley tries to raise money from businesses.

The bottom line here is I always
understand they always talk about commuter time for
economic development, growth for businesses and so
on so forth. Well, we have a bigger problem.
These companies are in this problem, Badger Meter,
the Bradley Corporation, Briggs & Stratton
Corporation, DaimlerChrysler, Harley-Davidson,
Journal Communications, Kenosha Area Business
Alliance, Manpower, Incorporated, Marshall &
 Ilsley Corporation, Oaukwe Employers and Rockwell
Automated Systems, formerly Aller-Bradley. And the
problem is, is health care cost. The cost of
health care is rising so drastically that it's
running businesses right out of the State of
Wisconsin.

Again, is the state going to come in and
help fund this transit program? They have a big
problem already trying to establish -- to pay the
fees now. So I grant you, this proposal for the
rail should be looked at maybe another 20 years
down the road. It might be viable, but in order
for it to be viable, it has to fund itself. It
can't come from federal money or state money. So
the thing here is I'm willing -- I'm willing to put my tax dollars toward this. Again, if Chicago
wants to add the rail for Southeastern Wisconsin,

fine, so be it. Leave them pay for it. Because
I'll tell you one thing, Southeastern Wisconsin
can't afford it. Thank you very much.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. Report, for
your comments this evening. The next speaker is
Mr. Richard Schreiner, 912 East Pleasant Street,
Milwaukee, and he'll be followed by Mr. Jeff
Marker.

RICHARD SCHREINER: Good evening and
thank you for holding this hearing. I'd like to
say I support the committee's recommendation, and I
particularly want to support the committee's choice
of the rail option over the bus option. Anybody
who says that a bus is a substitute for a train for
these kinds of distances obviously hasn't spent much
time on a commuter bus.

I can tell you from personal experience
having used the Metra and Kenosha commuter bus
service, I also used Metra, and I can tell you that
a bus is not a substitute for a train. Anybody who
says that, clearly hasn't spent much time on a bus.

Earlier this evening the presentation
included a lot of very interesting and I think
valid conclusions as to why this should be pursued,
so I won't amplify those in any way or add to

those, but I think a personal story sometimes can
be helpful when we're inundated with a lot of
statistics. I've been a Metra user for the past 20
years as circumstances have permitted me to, and
just going back a little bit in time, about 25
years ago I lived in a community on the northwest
line in the Metra territory. And in those days
commuter rail was very much just commute in the
morning, commute out in the evening, five-day-a-
week operation. It was just minimal service
evenings and weekends for the few people who needed
it. Now, fast forward 25, 30 years, the amount of
non-traditional commuter rail traffic that one
observes in Metra is absolutely astounding. When I
went back to Chicago now on occasion to use Metra, I
find cities, villages and towns that previously had
a downtown and a downtown depot that was all but
forgotten and abandoned, now is a thriving
commercial district.

I can give you a personal example from
just a few weeks ago. My wife and I had a weekend
in Deerefield, Illinois. We took Amtrak to
Glencoe, after having dinner in Glencoe, we took
Metra back to the station called Lake Cook Road.
Now, Lake Cook Road for people who are not familiar

with it, that station didn't even exist five years
ago or ten years ago. This is a community which
agitated to have a station added to the line.

Since that station has gone in, the development
around it included a Marriott Hotel, three or four
restaurants by my accounting and numerous office
complexes all with pedestrian access to the
station. The change in the nature of commuter rail
in the last 25 years has been absolutely
astounding, and I hope that this plan moves forward
in our community joining the cities across North
America who have discovered the same thing. Thank
you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. Schreiner,
for your comments this evening. The next scheduled
speaker is Mr. Jeff Marker, president ALERT,
A-1-E-6-M-T, 6551 North Lake Drive, WFB, Wisconsin,
Mr. Marker.

JEFF MARKER: Thank you. First of all,
before I even get started I have to say that you
can't compare Chicago with nearly 9 million people
to Milwaukee which has 1.2 million when you stretch
it. There's an entirely great difference. The
Metra is financed by a half percent sales tax, the
six collar counties, and it's also financed by a
recovery rate of 57 percent on ticket fares which
is the highest in the nation.

What you showed tonight shows that 20
years -- 17 years from now according to the charts
there will be 4,100 riders on this system, and the
recovery rate will be just between 15 and 20
percent. This would make it perhaps the second
worst transit experiment in the 21st century in the
United States, the first being the red, cute little
rubber-tired trolleys that make their way around
downtown Milwaukee. The recovery rate for that
system is currently approximately 8 to 10 percent.
Any investment that recovers so low total should
not even be considered.

We're looking at an initial start-up cost
here of 235 million dollars according to your own
to figures. This represents far more than the total
value of all mass transit in Southeastern
Wisconsin. Even the Milwaukee County Transit
System which carries 96,000 round trip riders a day
including school children and just 45,000 when
school is out has a total value of approximately
132 million dollars. To say that you're going to
carry 2,100 round trip riders 27 years from now at
a cost in excess of 235, 302 million dollars is
preposterous and a total waste of taxpayer money.

To go further, if you compare the high
cost of rail transit, the 2011 statistics for
Amtrak's Hiawatha service shows that only 712 round
trip riders use the six daily trains in each
direction. This costs taxpayers $42 million dollars
in subsidies, and that's just for six round trips
between Chicago and Milwaukee. We're talking about
90 miles in 90 minutes. The Metra extension
service would provide service to Chicago in three
to three and a half hours which makes it totally
non-feasible to be a commuter or a user.

The gentleman who stood here and said he
took Amtrak down to Lake Cook Road, I'm from that
area. That cost him $80 round trip for he and his
wife, plus the Metra fare. Lake Cook Road was
well-established with all its restaurants, the
shopping center at Deer Plaza at Waubegon Road, it
was all there before the train station. The train
station just developed because of the request of
the City of Deerfield and Northbrook.

You can't compare the two. We look in
Milwaukee here, you see the 15 going to downtown,
that's the third busiest Milwaukee County transit
route. It cuts right through this area, and you
see the buses aren't full. You see the South Shore
Flyer running empty. Even when the bridge was down
and fares were down to 50 cents, they couldn't even
fill the buses up. There is no demand for this
service. There is no future for taxpayer money to
go into a bottomless pit, and the risk is not
warranted. Thank you.

MR. PATRICE: Thank you, Mr. Marker, for
your comments. The next speaker is Miss Rosemary
Annan, 3025 East Ryan Road, Oak Creek,
Wisconsin. And then we have two additional people
after Miss Annan. If anybody else wishes to
speak after the next two, please raise your hand
and Otto Dohmick will get you a slip. Miss
Rosemary Annan.

MR. TURK: Those slips are just for
people who haven't talked before.

MR. PATRICE: You don't have to fill out
another form. It's just for people who haven't
spoken. Is there a Miss Rosemary Annan? I
believe it's M-H-N-O-P-Q-S-O-N. No? We'll put that
aside. Every public hearing there's one that
— and if I mispronounce it —

ANDJELICA TRIFUNOVICH: I know who I am.
It happens every time.

MR. PATRICE: Andjelija.

ANDJELICA TRIFUNOVICH: Andjelija.

MR. PATRICE: Pardon me?

ANDJELICA TRIFUNOVICH: Andjelija.

MR. PATRICE: Andjelija Trifunovich.

ANDJELICA TRIFUNOVICH: When they stop, I
know that's me.

MR. PATRICE: Is it Trifunovich?

ANDJELICA TRIFUNOVICH: No, Trifunovich.

MR. PATRICE: Trifunovich.

ANDJELICA TRIFUNOVICH: But you're close,
so that's fine.

MR. PATRICE: 3723 East Squire Avenue,
Cudahy.

ANDJELICA TRIFUNOVICH: I'm a former
resident of the City of Chicago. I was actually
born and bred, though, in Cudahy, Wisconsin. One
of the reasons that has prompted me to leave
Chicago and come back to Cudahy is Powerekis, is
that 30 million dollar project. That for me as a
human resource manager, as a hotel management
employee almost knocked me off my socks, actually
knocked me off the chair when I heard it was coming
to Cudahy. I was that excited, but I need one more
thing that's going to keep me here. I need that
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people are international tourists for whom a train or rail system would have been perfect. So again, I'm selfish, I want my tourists to come to this little neck of the woods too, so that's all I have to say. I will sit down.

Mr. Perz: Thank you, Miss Trifunovich. The next speaker is Vera Trifunovich, 3923 East Squire Avenue, Oshkosh, followed by Claude Vanderven, and that's the last of the filled-out slips that I have. I'm sorry, I do have one -- Miss Vera Trifunovich.

Vera Trifunovich: Vera.

Mr. Perz: Vera. It's spelled Vera so I apologize.

Vera Trifunovich: Vera, it's a rolled R sound. I've got a tricky name as well. I just want to add a brief comment to the general discussion this evening, and it's pretty much in the vein of my sister who just spoke a minute ago, and again relates to the fact that our economic development in Wisconsin can only benefit from the additional number of people that would either commute from Chicago or make their way much more easily around Milwaukee and the Southeastern Wisconsin counties. And to me, again I speak

selfishly in saying that this discussion or this effort or this reality hopefully that becomes, you know, a real commuter rail system sometime soon seems like it's been a long time coming.

I too have lived in Japan, and I've traveled extensively in Europe. For all the proclamations that we hear that our economy is the strongest here in the U.S. or our military is the strongest, or this or that is the strongest, we have a paucity of public transportation especially in Wisconsin, and it's to our detriment, not only for tourists, and that's where my sister is speaking, from the perspective of working in the hotel industry and knowing people that travel in and around the Midwest, but also from the perspective of someone that could potentially work in Chicago and live in Oshkosh and again kind of keep the money going between the two cities which can't hurt either one of them.

So as far as I'm concerned, I again can't wait for this type of effort to become a reality, whether it's a commuter rail, you know, it could be a Metro connection to Milwaukee or an extension of Amtrak, an addition of an Amtrak station, all of those kind of ideas, I think it's about time we're

are very selfish.

I want this because I've experienced this in other cities. I've lived in Japan. I've lived in Korea. I've lived in several countries within Europe. I have never been without public transportation, never. And I go on it by myself.

I got a map, and most of these countries I know may have been words, and I can make myself -- you know, find my way around the city and be a viable tourist. I can still spend my money.

Now, we have one little problem. In Chicago when tourists come and they find out that Amtrak has restricted service, they don't come here. Most of them are too afraid to rent a car and to drive to Milwaukee. And I've been plugging Summerfest like you would not believe and all the facts that happen within the area. St. Martin's Fair is a wonderful thing for people to experience that America feel, this is what America's like.

So I push all these things, but people have no way to get here. Greyhound gets stuck on the highway so you're three hours late. Amtrak has limited service, so I can't push all the tourists that were in Chicago looking to come to Milwaukee because they have no way to get there. And a lot of these

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talking about it, and I certainly hope it becomes a reality sooner rather than later. Thank you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Miss Trifunovic for your comments this evening. The next speaker is Claude Van der Veen, if I'm saying that right, Greater Milwaukee Green Party, 3340 East Allston Avenue in Oak Park.

CLAUDE VAN DER VEEEN: I would just like to address the people who don't want their tax dollars to subsidize the railroad. Our taxes already subsidize airlines and gasoline and cars and that infrastructure and that subsidy is enormous. I personally would like to see my tax dollars subsidize an alternative to the one-person occupancy cars. That form of transportation is a dinosaur, I'm sorry, it's a dinosaur. It's killing our --

UNIDENTIFIED: How did you get here tonight?

CLAUDE VAN DER VEEEN: I drove.

MR. PATRIE: Sir, he didn't interrupt you when you spoke, and I think it's a courtesy to let him finish his comments.

CLAUDE VAN DER VEEEN: But for what it's worth, I do ride my bicycle to and from work and I do take the train. In any case, I personally would like to see my tax dollars used for something as an alternative to cars. Thank you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. Vanderven.

I'm sorry you were interrupted. The next speaker is Mr. Greg McAndrews 8930 33rd Avenue in Kenosha.

MR. MCANDREWS: I'm one of the people who lives in Kenosha and works in Milwaukee. My car's about ten years old. It has about 278,000 miles, so does my butt. But more importantly, I lose -- ten hours a week are lost in my life. That makes me mad. What could I have done with that time -- could have done some homework, could have read a book. I used to take the bus between Kenosha and Milwaukee, and it's difficult to read, really difficult to do anything. I can tell you some kind of funny stories on that particular bus route, but that's not the point.

I do support your effort. I think -- I commend the idea of connecting some of the most highly densely populated areas along the lakefront. Evanston particularly, connecting that with Milwaukee. More importantly, connecting that whole north shore with the airport. I have friends that

live in the northern suburban area who hate O'Hare, who love Mitchell Field. That dedicated route, that connection, that little bus thing I think is one of the best features of your plan. And I don't believe it was in the initial one, so I commend you for looking at how you can connect and use the rest of both systems, the rail system which can move lots of people between certain points, but then also how you get to some specific points, some feeders that would connect to commuter and all those kinds of things, I think will really utilize and encourage people to utilize this.

I also note the difficulties that Dan Johnson and his company have. All along the whole system, the whole suburban area here, it's difficult to recruit and then retain employees who prefer a more cosmopolitan lifestyle. Many people really enjoy the rural aspect of Southeastern Wisconsin, but they also like to get into Milwaukee, they like to get into Chicago.

We in Kenosha have many people who have moved up, St. Charles from Illinois, they have relatives. My grandmother lived there and traveled back and forth. It's much easier on the train actually from Metra than going on the

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elevators. It takes you way out west and then you have to come way back east. So on behalf of the many people who commute and waste ten hours a week, I would say that I would be willing to pay quite a bit to buy back that ten hours. So thank you for your efforts.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. McAndrews, for your comments. That completes the public comment form that I've received. Has anyone not been given the opportunity to speak and would like to have the opportunity to speak? If you raise your hand, Otto can get you a card. Is there anybody else that would like to speak, please raise your hand. My responsibility tonight is to make sure everybody that attends the public hearing has an opportunity to speak. Mr. Michael Thaller.


MR. PATRIE: Thaller.

MICHAEL THALLER: Sorry about my handwriting there.

MR. PATRIE: Go ahead, sir. Thank you.

MICHAEL THALLER: My name is Mike Thaller, and I'm retired. I used to teach transportation geography, and I'm familiar with transportation systems. When I first came to this

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area. I used to do quite a bit of work down in Evanston, Illinois. And this was in the late 1960s, and I used to take the Chicago and Northwestern trains down. There were five to six a day even though the railroad was suffering. It was a very convenient and very well-used service. And if I didn’t feel like doing that from this area, I could always take the Northshore with 40 trains a day or the Milwaukee rail with 12. At the end of the decade of destruction, the 1960s in rail service, I had four Amtrak trains each day on that.

I still do go down to Evanston, Illinois. I went down the other day, and I drove down to Kenosha and took the Metro in from there, and it was very convenient. I would love to drive across and park right down on Layton Avenue and take it, and this is a very convenient service. It was a tragedy to lose this service back in the 1960s, and I would hope that after two decades that the re-building process would begin. Commuter rail has proven popular around the United States. It has boomed in the last 20 years.

Lastly, being familiar with transportation systems, to my knowledge, although there are many well-run systems I’ve used around the world, there is no public transportation system that operates without a subsidy. This is actually a social cost, and I think it should be a reasonable cost, and I think we should be concerned about costs. When I looked at this study, I was hoping that a reasonable alternative would be chosen as a beginning phase, and I think this medium level of service is exactly that, and I hardly supported their results, and do remind people that the whole idea of public transportation without a subsidy is a myth. Thank you.

MR. PAYNE: Thank you, Mr. Thaller, for your comments. Has anybody else not been given the opportunity to speak who wishes to speak, please raise your hand, and I will get you a card. Otherwise, if there’s someone who has already spoken who would like to speak again for another three minutes, if they’d raise their hand. Mr. Walker, come to the microphone, please. You have a second three minutes, sir.

KEVIN WALKER: It shouldn’t take me that long. Oh, something else, last time I showed my local credentials. I also have experience riding on foreign systems. I think this is my Jerusalem ticket, and I’ve ridden the electric train to go from Haifa to Tel Aviv. It’s a little bit more than the distance between Milwaukee and Racine -- no, between -- roughly the distance between Milwaukee and Chicago, but I’ve ridden buses in -- I mean I’ve ridden public transportation in Rome, Paris, Cairo, you know, Damascus, Greece, but basically I’m a veteran of real travel from being a kid. My father Alfred Walker took me along on his job when he worked on the old interurban train, you know, went all the way from Sheboygan down to Waterford and stuff like that. In fact, I remember the first time I saw a cow when I was a kid. I must have jumped three feet backwards.

But basically I’ve got a long involvement with riding commuter rail systems and mass transit, but the reason why it’s spreading in communities like wildfire is because -- and also unlike light rail, the divisiveness of that wholly hybrid is largely absent from commuter rail. And also buses don’t excite communities as genuine rail travel does.

When I was at the X 2000 demo a few years ago with the former Amtrak board member, Governor Tommy Thompson, the chairman -- the sit-ins from Columbus was exhilarating and it was also infectious because it means that your community is connected. And this is why the 32nd Street rail corridor plan that the Working Group has has received such interest, because the economic development aspect of revitalized rail corridor alone has made politicians and business people sign on with Working Group on Transportation’s plan because it’s oriented around the needs of blue collar and wage earning communities which form the bulk of the plan. And just like the Metro plan does, it widely makes use of an existing infrastructure. The 32nd Street rail corridor which goes roughly from around Miller Park, goes north just past Good Hope Road or so, this forms the spine of a ready-made system, and it originally was a highway for trains. You’ve got the river, and you’ve got the harbor, and you’ve got the rail system, Menomonee Industrial valley, you got this upside down T, or take the train travel up there. Later on they’ve added spines to take you to every which way, so we’ve got the makings of a ready-made system. You join that with Metra, you can live and work -- you can live in Milwaukee, work in Chicago or vice versa, you know.

This is a trend that we should augment,
and if we can do it by wisely using taxpayer dollars making use of an existing infrastructure, and not these French hybrids -- you know, like French trains that run on tracks with laser beams and stuff. Let me tell you, the first time it snows here, the first time it snows and you get road salt and gravel and, you know, that black ice in there, those trains will grind to a screeching halt. We don't need all this nonsense.

Train travel is actually technology that is almost three centuries old. The first trains were running in the 1700s. This is a tired and true mechanism. It's not some futuristic weird hybrid idea and that's why -- and that's why Metra is something we look forward to, especially when you join it to the needs of communities with your own infrastructure and your own commuter rail plan.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you, Mr. Walker. Is there anyone else that has not been able to speak yet? Mr. Vanderwee, you have another -- a second three minutes, Mr. Vanderwee.

CLAUDE VANDERWEE: As long as the last person's three minutes? I'm just going to make this comment and I'm guilty of this as well. People are dying to support our addiction to oil today in the Middle East, and also it's killing us by way of pollution and car accidents. I don't know the figures, but I bet that riding a train is an awful lot safer per passenger mile than driving on our highways, and I would like to just add those comments to this process. I believe they're relevant. Thank you.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you. For the record, that was Mr. Claude Vanderwee. Is there anyone that hasn't been given the opportunity to speak the first time? Is there anybody who would like a second three minutes? Mr. Markar, Mr. Jeff Markar.

JEFF MARKAR: Just so everybody is aware, we keep on hearing about tourism, according to the latest statistics I have so you can compare Chicago with Milwaukee is that from 2001 when I called the Milwaukee Convention Visitors Bureau they told me that 3,750,000 people were estimated to have visited Milwaukee for tourist purposes in 2001. The Chicago Convention and Visitors Bureau reported 62 million making Chicago the third most important destination in the United States. And where does that leave Chicago compared to Milwaukee? Well, in Gurnee, which has very limited public transportation opportunity to get to, 35 million people visited, just to give you an idea compared to Milwaukee, ten times. Thank you.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you, Mr. Rapport. Is there anyone who hasn't been given an opportunity to speak the first time? Mr. Rapport, you want a second three minutes, Mr. Joe Rapport.

JOE RAPPORT: Everybody talks about being subsidized. Well, health care is not subsidized in the private sector. Health care costs are rising, and one thing about it, if these health care costs aren't addressed very shortly, you will have no businesses in the State of Wisconsin. You might have tourism, but you'll have no businesses because no one will be here.

What happened is when I started working in 1946 there were 5,000 employees at Laddish. New technology has come in, and it has affected us drastically. I believe we got 750. You had Mayers here. You had booth here, you had -- I can't think of some more, but enough companies have left the State of Wisconsin. The thing is I wish there would be a focus on health care as mass transit. Grant you, we do need mass transit for the public. There's no doubt about it, but it can't come out of taxpayers. It has to be subsidized by Amtrak or Metra or whatever the case may be. Thank you very much, and I appreciate for you listening to me.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you, Mr. Rapport, for the comments. Anybody else not given a chance to speak the first time? Is there anybody else that would like a second three minutes? We'll give you three minutes. Miss Potter and then Mr. McDermott. Miss Potter.

NORMA POTTER: Thank you. I just want to state for the record some of the key points in the study that perhaps I didn't get a chance to speak about before. But in terms of the jobs, the projected jobs, there are 147,100 projected jobs located within one-half mile of the stations on the Wisconsin side alone. In terms of population because this density issue gets brought up a lot thinking that there won't be enough people to ride the train, but in the SEHPC study there's a 540,000 projected population to live within three miles of the stations. That's a lot of folks who want to live near stations and take the Metra to their jobs or to take the Metra because they choose or they don't want to drive.

One of the things that we've learned as an organization is that young talent, those people
that are young that want to live and work in
Wisconsin, they do not want to drive cars. They
choose to live and work in regions with public
transportation. By having commuter rail in our
corridor, by linking us, by linking the corridor of
Milwaukee and Chicago and extending that also to
Madison, we create a corridor, a triangle, if you
will, that is no powerful in terms of the seven
characteristics that young talent want to live in,
that we would have the largest seven indicators in
the United States to attract and retain young
talent.

Those of us that are interested in
economic development, if you talk to anyone
involved in this field, you will find that what
they say is their number one job in economic
development is to attract and retain young talent
because this state is going to have a severe labor
shortage, so I believe that commuter rail is going
to be key for the future in Southeastern Wisconsin.
Thank you.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Miss Potter.
That was Rosemary Potter. Mr. Mckinlays, I believe
you only had one three-minute spot, so.

GREG MCKINLAYS: I would also like to

recommend you consider utilizing vendors -- Metra
has a very good track record of running trains,
certainly that makes a lot more sense than trying
to start something new. I would suggest that as --
should you ever get to the point of selling tickets
that you consider an integrated ticket. The reason
I say that, I live in Kenosha, we have a very good
bus system. There's one right by the corner of my
house, and Milwaukee has a great bus system.
There's a bus that goes right by my office. If I
have to buy three tickets, my enthusiasm will wane
as well as just gets kind of complicated, so I
really highly recommend that you look at some sort
of an integrated fare system so people can get on
at their house and get off wherever they're going
to go, so I wish you luck.

Certainly I know the funding is going to
be a tremendous difficulty. I guess I would
consider transportation as a whole looking at not
just the highways, not just the rail, not just the
bus, not just the airport, but certainly where you
get your money is going to be a real challenge, and
how you implement this I certainly wish you well.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. Mckinlays.
Is there anyone that hasn't had a chance to speak

the first time? Is there anyone that hasn't had an
opportunity to speak a second time and would like
to? Mr. Thallier.

MICHAEL THALLIER: I would just like to
make a comment on the type of stations that work
particularly well, and I heard the comment about
the Lake Dock on the Milwaukee service there on
Metra. I think people might find it surprising to
know on Metra today what the east side of Chicago
looked like, what the second highest loading
station in the whole system is of some 200
different stations. It's a place called route 59
near Aurora, Illinois, out in a cornfield a few
years ago there, that the Burlington Northern
interfaced commuter services. I believe that it
puts on 5,000 riders a day. Friends of myself went
out there, and we're amazed at the loading on this.
They're on non-stop trains in rush hour, run
between there and route 59. This is an interface,
a station actually where the lower line south
crosses a major highway, and I think there are all
sorts of possibilities for that type of thing on
this service. So I might urge that any station we
can acquire the parking be modeled after a park and
ride station with plenty of parking that's

reasonable, if not free, on that and be modeled
after Lake Cook Avenue and 59. It's been proven so
successful in attracting passengers to the system.

MR. PATRIE: Thank you, Mr. Thallier. Is
there anyone that hasn't had an opportunity to
speak for the first time? Is there anybody that
hasn't had a chance to follow up their comments?
If not, then I will call a close to the public
hearing portion to the meeting tonight. Thank you,
Miss Dorna Rank for being the transcriptionist
tonight and prepare the record. Thank you all for
coming. Staff will be here to answer any questions
that you might have.

(Proceedings concluded at 7:40 p.m.)
A-62

STATE OF WISCONSIN | I DD:

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE | I

L. MALCOLM R. BARK, a Registered
Professional Reporter and Notary Public In and for the
State of Wisconsin, do hereby certify that the above
public hearing was recorded by me on the 1st day of May,
2003, and reduced to writing under my personal
direction.

I further certify that I am not a
relative or employee or attorney or counsel of any of
the parties, or a relative or employee of any attorney
or counsel, or financially interested directly or
indirectly in this action.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set
my hand and affixed my Seal of Office at Milwaukee,
Wisconsin, this 5th day of May, 2003.

[Seal]

Rotary Public
In and for the State of Wisconsin


Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Commuter Rail Commons
May 1, 2003
Cudahy City Hall
Submitted by
Southeastern Wisconsin Coalition for Transit NOW
PO Box 565, Sussex, WI 53089
Contact: Rosemary Peters, Executive Director
926-414-0520, rnpeters@transitnow.org

Thank you for this opportunity to express our opinion about a project we believe is vital to the future of SE Wisconsin.

TransIT NOW is a regional 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that works to improve linkages between people and jobs, improve economic development, increase accessibility, reduce air pollution, decrease traffic congestion and stabilize land use in SE Wisconsin by providing community education and outreach, expert information, and a platform for the development of positive local and regional transportation solutions.

Two years ago, our board of directors made a decision to prioritize our work in developing commuter rail. It was a decision that recognized the important role that commuter rail can play in improving the quality of life in our region. Since that time, we have continued to work on a variety of projects, including this important issue.

We believe that this project is important for the following reasons:

1. Improving the quality of life for people in SE Wisconsin by providing easy access to jobs and activities.
2. Promoting economic development by creating jobs and attracting businesses.
3. Reducing traffic congestion and improving air quality.

In conclusion, we believe that the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Commuter Rail Commons project is a crucial step in improving the quality of life in our region. We urge you to support this important initiative.

Endorsers:

[Endorsement list]

Educational:

[Educational endorsement list]

Businesses:

[Business endorsement list]

Richard A. Kramer, CMD - Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation
Brett H. Bouden, President - Medical College of Wisconsin
Brian D. Ausman, President - Milwaukee County Medical College
Jim Voss, President - Milwaukee County Technical College
Michael J. Thiede, President - University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
S. Robert Shulman, President - Marquette University

Key Findings of the Concept of R-R Commuter Rail
April 28, 2005

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Endorsers:

[Endorsement list]

Educational:

[Educational endorsement list]

Businesses:

[Business endorsement list]
Commuter rail service needs to go north, too

When the Metra commuter rail service from Rock Island to Chicago was started in 1961, many people suspected it would be only a temporary measure to get commuters over the Yellow Creek bridge until a football stadium was built in the area. However, the need for a more efficient and reliable commuter rail service has continued to grow as more and more people have moved into the suburbs.

For several years, Metra has been planning a commuter rail service from Rock Island to Chicago, under study by the Illinois Department of Transportation. The Illinois Metropolitan Transportation Planning Council has recommended that the service be extended to Rock Island, and the council has received more than 300 signatures on a petition urging its extension.

The benefits of such a service extend beyond the obvious time savings for commuters. It would also provide an economic boost for the communities along the route, offering increased business and tourism opportunities.

The proposed service would include daily service between Rock Island and Chicago, with connections to other Metra lines. It would also include a stop at the Rock Island 3rd Avenue station, allowing passengers to transfer to other Metra lines.

The cost of the project is estimated to be $1.5 billion, with funding from both federal and local sources. The project is expected to be completed within 10 years.

In conclusion, the need for a commuter rail service from Rock Island to Chicago is clear. With the support of the communities involved and the commitment of the state and federal governments, this project can become a reality and benefit the people of the region.
Commuter rail makes sense for Milwaukee

On the subject of whether the Metra commuter rail line should be extended from Kenosha to Milwaukee, I have to point out that this proposal is not lightthinking. It also has some liberal, "green" appeal to it. But to "Milwaukee" is generally written from our state's "blue collar" perspective.

The state of Wisconsin should view this as a project with regional, not just local, benefits.

S.C. Johnson would love to see this happen. It's also backed by the American Waterways Association. It's a project that has the support of local leaders, including the Metro Milwaukee Association of General Contractors, the Greater Milwaukee Association of Retailers and the Milwaukee Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. The project also has the backing of major employers including Miller Brewing, CNC/We Energies, U.S. Mediapath and others.

If you think this project is too expensive, I'd like to ask you how much you want to pay for a trip to Kenosha. To pay $1 million per day in taxes to one person is a waste of money. We're paying for the infrastructure already. We're just not using it.

The commuter rail would be a way to get people to work. It would encourage people to live in Milwaukee instead of driving to work. It would also reduce congestion on the roads.

I think this is a great idea and I hope it happens.
SIGN-IN ROSTER
Public Informational Meeting and Hearing
Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study

May 1, 2003
Cudahy City Hall
Council Chambers
5000 S. Lake Drive
Cudahy, Wisconsin

Name Address City


Commission Staff

Kenneth R. Yunker.......................... Deputy Director
Otto P. Dobnick............................. Principal Planner
Gary K. Korb............................... Regional Planning Educator
Welcome to the public meeting and hearing on the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Alternatives Analysis Study, and specifically the preliminary recommended plan for commuter rail. My name is Ken Yunker. I am the Deputy Director of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. I will now briefly review the format for today’s meeting and hearing. The session has three parts: the first part consisted of the open house that was held here this afternoon from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at which the public had an opportunity to review information regarding the study and preliminary plan and an opportunity to ask questions of study staff; the second part of the session will consist of a presentation on the study in general and specifically the preliminary plan; and, the third part of the session will be the public hearing, with statements from those of you that are present this evening who may wish to offer formal comments on the preliminary plan.

As you entered the room here tonight, you had an opportunity to fill out a speaker registration form on which you could indicate your desire to be heard. If anybody needs a speaker registration form at this time, please raise your hand and a study staff member will give you a speaker registration form, and when you have one filled out to speak, also raise your hand and they will pick those forms up. After the presentation on the study and the preliminary plan, those of you who wish to be heard will be called upon to make your statements in the order in which the forms have been submitted. Your statement will be taken down by study staff and recorded. The statements will be documented in the study’s record of public comments and will be presented to the Advisory Committee that is guiding the conduct of the study. We will now provide to you a presentation on the study and the preliminary plan.

[Staff Presentation]

It is now time to receive comments. This hearing is intended to receive your comments concerning the preliminary plan. I want to emphasize that the purpose of the hearing is to hear your comments, and not to be a question and answer period. There was an opportunity to meet with study staff and to review study materials earlier, and study staff will be available after the hearing this evening to answer additional questions.

We ask that you keep your comments to about ____ minutes. We want everyone to have an opportunity to express himself or herself this evening, and if you don’t have enough time to provide your comments in the ____ minutes allowed, you may have an opportunity to speak again. If time permits, you will be allowed to speak a second time after all persons that have registered to speak have had an opportunity to do so. When you provide your comments, please come up to the front and use the microphone so that the court reporter and everyone else in the room can hear your comments.

I would also like to point out that comments may also be provided in writing. Forms for this purpose, which may be submitted this evening or mailed to the address on the form, are available from study staff at the entrance to the room. The public comment period on the plan extends through May 16, 2003, and written comments may be provided to the Commission through a variety of other methods. For contact information such as a mailing address and e-mail address, please see the study newsletter available at this meeting.

[Public Comment Portion of Meeting]
Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study

Public Informational Meetings and Hearings
April - May, 2003

Presentation Outline

- Study Purpose
- Transit Alternatives Considered
- Study Findings and Conclusions
- Study Advisory Committee Preliminary Recommendation
**Purpose of Study**

- Evaluate alternative commuter rail and bus services which will better connect the Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee areas to each other, and to northeastern Illinois
  - Improve transit mobility
  - Attract increased transit ridership
  - Contribute to desirable economic and community development

- Examine alternative means of managing, operating, and funding these commuter rail and bus services

**Study Advisory Committee**

- Counties – Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee
- Municipalities – Cities and Towns in corridor
- Business – KABA, MMAC, and RAMAC
- Railroads – CP, UP, and Metra
- Transit Operators – Coach USA, MCTS, BUS, and Kenosha Transit
- Regional – CATS and SEWRPC
- State – Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Federal – Federal Transit and Highway Administrations
Alternatives

- Commuter Rail - Extension of Metra commuter rail service from Kenosha to Racine and Milwaukee, operated as a single through route
- Commuter Bus - Improved limited-stop commuter bus service between Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee, coordinated with Metra service at Kenosha and Waukegan
- Combination Rail and Bus - Extension of Metra commuter rail from Kenosha to Racine with coordinated, limited-stop commuter bus service between Racine and Milwaukee

Alternatives (continued)

- Two levels of service considered
  - High - 15 daily trains or buses in each direction
  - Medium - 7 daily trains or buses in each direction
- All day service permitting travel at all times in both directions
  - Commute to and from Milwaukee or Chicago, or any other location in corridor
  - Travel in mid-day and evening and on weekends
- Shuttles to connect commuter rail to GMIA and downtown Milwaukee
Summary of Study Findings and Conclusions

- Level of Service Findings
- Ridership Findings
- Capital Cost Findings
- Operating Cost and Revenue Findings
- Cost Effectiveness Findings
- Land Development and Redevelopment Findings
- Economic Development Findings
- Environmental Review Findings

Level of Service Findings

- The commuter rail alternative was concluded to offer the highest level of service
  - Most direct no-transfer service
  - Highest level of comfort, reliability, and overall attractiveness
  - Highest average speeds and shortest travel times for the majority of trips
  - Greatest potential to increase passenger carrying capacity in the short and long term
Ridership Findings – Forecast Average Weekday Ridership

- **Commuter rail alternative**
  - Highest - 5,100 trips under a high level of service
  - 4,100 trips under a medium level of service
  - Comparable to average weekday ridership on other new-start commuter rail lines in United States

- **Commuter bus alternative**
  - Lowest - 4,100 trips

- **Combination rail and bus alternative**
  - 4,400 trips under a high level of service
  - 3,700 trips under a medium level of service

Ridership Findings (continued)

- **Estimated average trip length**
  - Commuter rail alternative - 27 miles
  - Combination rail and bus alternative - 19 miles
  - Commuter bus alternative - 18 miles

- **Forecast annual passenger-miles of travel**
  - Commuter rail alternative
    - 38.2 million under high level of service
    - 30.8 million under medium level of service
  - Combination rail and bus alternative
    - 23.6 million under high level of service
    - 19.7 million under medium level of service
  - Commuter bus alternative
    - 20.0 million
Ridership Findings (continued)

- Trips attracted from other modes
  - About 60 percent of the ridership on the commuter rail alternative, and about 50 percent of the ridership on the bus alternatives would represent new trips attracted from the automobile - the remaining ridership would be diverted from existing bus and rail service

Capital Cost Findings

- The commuter bus alternative would have the lowest capital cost - $19 million
- The commuter rail alternative would have the highest capital cost
  - $225 million - high level of service
  - $152 million - medium level of service
- Combination rail and bus alternative
  - $166 million - high level of service
  - $146 million - medium level of service
Annual Operating Cost Findings

- Commuter bus alternative
  - Total operating cost: $3.4 million
  - Total passenger revenue: $1.6 million
  - Net operating cost: $1.8 million

- Commuter rail alternative
  - Total operating cost: $18.6 - $26.8 million
  - Total passenger revenue: $3.2 - $4.0 million
  - Net operating cost: $15.4 - $22.8 million

- Combination rail and bus alternative
  - Total operating cost: $12.7 - $18.2 million
  - Total passenger revenue: $2.3 - $2.8 million
  - Net operating cost: $10.4 - $15.4 million

Annual Operating Cost Findings (continued)

- Considerations in costs of commuter rail
  - Proposed service is more extensive and comprehensive than typical weekday peak-period peak-direction commuter rail service
  - Costs include all incremental costs of extending Metra service
    - Includes new trains which would operate from Chicago to Milwaukee and serve some entirely northeastern Illinois reverse commute travel
    - Includes trains sized (8 cars rather than 3 to 4 cars) to meet northeastern Illinois peak passenger loads
Cost Effectiveness Findings

- The operating cost per vehicle-mile for the rail and bus alternatives are comparable to other commuter rail and bus transit systems indicating estimated costs are realistic and reasonable.
- The commuter bus alternative would have lower costs per passenger and per passenger-mile than would commuter rail or combination rail and bus.
- The operating cost per passenger-mile for the commuter rail alternative is generally similar to bus transit systems in Southeastern Wisconsin.
- The operating cost per passenger and passenger mile for the commuter rail alternative is generally similar, though modestly higher, compared to existing and new-start commuter rail systems.

Potential Land Development and Redevelopment Impact Findings

- Commuter rail may be expected to have land use development and redevelopment impacts:
  - Commuter rail represents a long-term permanent commitment to, and investment in, high quality transit service.
  - Investment in residential, office, and retail development within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of stations.
  - This investment would have further positive influence on adjacent neighborhoods and areas.
- Potential influence of commuter rail is apparent from experience of other commuter rail systems, including Metra in northeastern Illinois.
**Potential Land Development and Redevelopment Impact Findings (continued)**

- Potential influence already being recognized within the corridor
  - City of Cudahy - proposed transit center
  - City of Racine - intermodal transit center
  - Racine County Economic Development Corporation (RCEDC) study
- Would assist in meeting regional land use development objectives
  - Through promotion of land use development and redevelopment in central city areas including long established communities of Kenosha, Racine, South Milwaukee, Cudahy, St. Francis, and Milwaukee

**Potential Economic Development Impact Findings**

- Commuter rail may have the potential to help increase economic development and growth in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor
- The Racine County Economic Development Corporation (RCEDC) has advocated for commuter rail for this reason
  - Would more closely link the Racine area with the Chicago and Milwaukee areas
  - Would better connect all corridor communities to each other and to Chicago and Milwaukee areas
  - May help establish and promote a Chicago-Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee mega-metropolitan area
**Potential Economic Development Impacts Findings (continued)**

- Major employers such as S. C. Johnson have stated commuter rail is essential to maintaining and expanding their presence, and attracting qualified employees.
  - Improving accessibility to employees
  - Improving area quality of life

**Environmental Review Findings**

- Minimal or no adverse impacts expected from each alternative
  - Compatibility with existing land uses
  - Land acquisition and possible displacements
  - Low-income and minority populations
  - Visual and aesthetic
  - Historic and cultural
  - Farmlands
  - Parks and open spaces
  - Water resources
  - Biological resources
  - Hazardous material sites
Environmental Review Findings (continued)

- Possible minor impacts attendant to commuter rail - all of which can be mitigated
  - Noise and vibration impacts
  - Safety at railroad grade crossings
- Potential beneficial impacts - through attraction of automobile trips to transit
  - Potential reductions in highway traffic would be modest, but not insignificant - IH 94, IH 794, and Lake Parkway among facilities with potential reductions
  - Air quality and pollutant emissions - very small reductions in ozone-related air pollutants

Principal Differences Among Alternatives

- Principal differences
  - Level of service offered by each alternative
  - Capital and operating costs
  - Ridership
  - Potential land development and economic development impacts
- Higher cost of the commuter rail alternative provides benefits and advantages that cannot be provided by commuter bus
Potential Advantages of Commuter Rail Over Commuter Bus

- Potential land development and redevelopment impacts around stations
- Potential to increase economic development and growth
- Higher level of service
- Higher ridership

Potential Advantages of Commuter Bus Over Commuter Rail

- Lower capital and operating costs
- Acts as own distributor in downtown Milwaukee
- Flexibility to change routes and stops
- Faster and easier implementation
**Study Advisory Committee Preliminary Recommendation: Transit Service**

- The commuter rail alternative is recommended for implementation
  - Implementation should proceed based on a medium level of service
- Reasons
  - Commuter rail’s potential land use and economic development impacts outweigh its increased cost
  - Commuter rail provides a superior and more attractive level of service
  - Commuter rail would attract more ridership, particularly longer distance regional trips

**Study Advisory Committee Preliminary Recommendation: Organization, Management, and Funding**

- State of Wisconsin should be responsible for implementation and funding
  - Service would be implemented through contracting with Metra
  - Funding for implementation and operation would be provided from Federal and State funds with no local share
  - However there would be the potential for local governments to be responsible for station development, operation, and maintenance as is typical of other commuter rail systems such as Metra
- Reasons
  - Trips would be regional and interstate in nature
    - Interstate trips between Wisconsin and Illinois
    - Longer distance trips between and through counties in Southeastern Wisconsin
    - Trips would otherwise be carried on State Trunk and Interstate highway systems
  - Wisconsin Department of Transportation is the lead for contracting for Amtrak Hiawatha passenger rail services in Southeastern Wisconsin and has in-house staff and expertise for contracting with Metra
Study Advisory Committee Preliminary Recommendation: Organization, Management, and Funding (continued)

- State legislation - State implementation and funding will require State legislation
- Other options considered
  - State implementation and funding with local funding share
  - Multi-County commuter rail or transit authority
  - Multi-Government Cooperative

Remaining Study Steps

- Report public comment and feedback to Advisory Committee
- Advisory Committee makes final recommendation
- Final recommendation transmitted to Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Racine Counties and corridor municipalities for their consideration and approval
- Final report and County and municipal actions transmitted to Wisconsin Department of Transportation and State of Wisconsin
Appendix B

WRITTEN COMMENTS RECEIVED BY THE COMMISSION REGARDING THE KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
Appendix B-1

WRITTEN COMMENTS RECEIVED VIA LETTER, FACSIMILE, AND FORM DISTRIBUTED AT PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS AND HEARINGS

May 16, 2003

Kenneth Yukor
SEWPRC
PO Box 1500
Waukesha, WI 53187-1507

Dear Mr. Yukor:

As the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission considers whether to support the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee (KRM) Commuter Rail, I would like to express my support for this expansion. The Commission has been presented many sound arguments for the service from Transit NOW and citizens throughout the region, which need not be restated by me at this time. I would simply comment that with the level of economic activity that is occurring between Kenosha and Milwaukee and the many private offices in between, the time has come when it makes plain sense to proceed ahead.

Quite simply, all a person needs to do is to travel along the Interstate between Kenosha and Milwaukee and you can see firsthand the level of activity that is occurring. Businesses are supplying customers, workers are traveling to places of employment and citizens are exploiting entertainment opportunities. Unfortunately, at this time there exists relatively one option on how to move between these communities. The creation of the commuter rail will provide a second alternative that will reduce congestion, help the environment and allow residents to avoid commuter traffic.

The spirit of Milwaukee is committed to improving the overall image of the greater Milwaukee area as a great place to live, work, learn and play, so that we might grow our great city. While we deal with people's perceptions of Milwaukee by talking about the new Milwaukee, we find that reality must match the message. Fortunately, that is the case where rail is concerned. The line will move people, businesses and life - in general does not drown out, in the area of mass transit. Implementation of the KRM Commuter Rail will be key in making sure our entire area can be told.

Sincerely,

Dean Arnaud
President

Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter trains

Four hearings accumulating so much positive comment from the general public might need no further reinforcement for the Planning Commission's recommendation. After all, we worked in support for the commuter rail option eventually chosen. My preference is well known. However, the enduring nature of this decision and the decades-long gain K-R-M commuter trains will provide for tri-state region and towns deserves more than the hyped-up combination, as important as that facet is and as important as SEWPRC's role is in defining and verifying it.

Southwest Wisconsin forty years ago led its "interurban" North Shore trains and by 1973 all trains carrying passengers has vanished away, except for a few Milwaukee-Elkhorn trains which paused at the Milwaukee Road station in Sturtevant. Travel by train was regarded as anachronistic, as cars became almost the sole means of travel, even for repetitive trips, such as commuting work.

In northwestern Illinois, similar economic resources on train travel were closing in, but the concentration of trains, tracks and people around Chicago masked the deteriorating financial conditions for train travelers, even for commuters making the same trip to and from work five days each week. Unlike Wisconsin, northwestern Illinois chose to sustain its commuting alternatives, to respond to private sector warnings about dwindling revenues and raise costs for commuter trains. By 1983, NE Illinois was adapting to tax-supported commuter train services, with taxes supporting both road-based infrastructure and operating subsidies.

By 1983, the context in economic viability was becoming clearer - northwestern Illinois was paying better wages and building more homes and offices than southeast Wisconsin. In particular, the industrial cities along the Wisconsin border of Lake Michigan - Kenosha, Racine, South Milwaukee, Cudahy, Milwaukee - were struggling at multiple factors burdened manufacturers too severely and Wisconsin lost employers at these manufacturing companies.

In 2003 we envision a new direction for regional employment, building manufacturing and owning the learned skills and talented people that comprise the prosperous categories of modern society - just as manufacturing once brought prosperity to these cities. But we must devise ways for attracting these talents, those people, and surely a prerequisite must be providing access to amenities and to other modes of travel.

For southeastern Wisconsin, our planning direction is clear: we must create a modern, multi-mode network of roads, highways, airports and transit which afford residents cost-effective access to recreation and to jobs each weekday. Commuter trains fulfill one aspect of that multi-mode network, and Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter trains will begin a continuing operation which will convey commuters to and from jobs more efficiently, more reliably. Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter trains will link with existing Metra trains and tracks in northwestern Illinois to leverage our strengths and start-up commuter train services toward renewed prosperity.

Unlike northwestern Illinois, we are able to devise a well-coordinated plan in advance as we and others to our existing, single-mode network of roads and highways. K-R-M commuter trains will become the cornerstone for a SEE Wisconsin network of multimode travel and commuting, comparable to cities like Seattle and Dallas which set forth long-range goals and long-term infrastructure which enables connections between all travel, bus, travel, and train travel.

Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter trains will set an example for other regions to emulate, just as our 1956 adoption of regional planning offered an example for others to imitate and improve upon.

By Norman Siler

PO Box 278
Somers WI 53171
Phone: 262/905-0135

May 11, 2007
Ken Yunker
Saukville Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
P.O. Box 1077
Waukesha, WI 53187-1077

Dear Mr. Yunker,

Please accept this letter of support from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Southeast Region Research Center. The project is the development of a feasibility study for the potential development of a new Wisconsin railroad service that could help meet the needs of the people of our state. The study would provide a comprehensive analysis of the potential benefits and costs of such a service, and would consider various modes of transportation that could be used to support the proposed service.

Sincerely,

Bob Ciejka
Executive Director

The project team is working on a feasibility study for the potential development of a new Wisconsin railroad service that could help meet the needs of the people of our state. The study would provide a comprehensive analysis of the potential benefits and costs of such a service, and would consider various modes of transportation that could be used to support the proposed service.

Sincerely,

Bob Ciejka
Executive Director
The John Muir Chapter of the Sierra Club supports the $132 million plan to expand Chicago-area commuter trains from Kenosha to southeast Milwaukee. A clear economic advantage is the use of upgraded existing tracks, eliminating the need for purchasing costly rights-of-way. Additional stops in Waukegan, St. Francis, and Milwaukee are planned.

The SEWRPC study report downplays commuter rail to be affordable with 80% of the capital cost coming from various federal transportation programs.

Commuters want safe, efficient, and quiet. The KRM commuter rail project is an attractive public transportation system that will help in revitalizing and reconnecting our communities. It is a transportation choice that will link homes, work, shopping and recreation, diagnostically together, and provide jobs in new businesses, small businesses, and existing communities.

Kenosha Rail-to-Rail commuter train service is important to SE Wisconsin. It will:

- Provide a fast, modern, comfortable, and affordable travel option using existing right-of-way. Rail travel is less reliant on weather and construction delays.
- Be an accessible and practical alternative for commuting. With 96,000 jobs and 48,000 commuters predicted in 10 years, three out of Wisconsin’s five largest cities are on the KRM route.
- Cut down on traffic growth by offering more transportation options. Studies have shown that permitting more travel does not alleviate the congestion problem.
- Cut air pollution. More trains operating will absorb train noise, which now is 76% of the hazardous air pollutants in Wisconsin.
- Be accessible to people with disabilities and bicycles as well as those with disabilities, and those who don’t own a car.
- Provide speed by allowing faster development to existing communities around transit stops.
- Be a more economical infrastructure investment than creating wider highways. Public investment in rail infrastructure provides rapid one-to-one returns in property benefits and economic productivity.

Advantages of commuter rail transit service include preservation of the rail corridor for future, optimizing would-be development by using an underutilized corridor (which has access points, providing transportation choices that are off-road public, less weather sensitive) and maximizing the use of federal programs.

In addition:

- We support consideration of providing more than the 3 daily trains, in 2023.
- We support consideration for reducing the 3 daily trains.
- Provide electrical service to a computer should be included.
- Accommodating bicycles.
- Handicap accessibility should be well designed.
- Provide sufficient capacity for rail service from stations to work places that are not within walking distance.
- Include the KRM commuter rail project as part of a multi-modal transportation plan for SE Wisconsin in the federal plan for implementation.
- We support implementation of smart growth in the communities along the rail corridor to ensure adequate protection of natural areas and wildlife habitats.
- We support the KRM commuter rail project to reduce traffic, pollution, and sprawl and to provide a healthier environment and more choices for our families.

Sincerely,

Paul F. Mathews
President

---

The letter is dated May 14, 2001.

Mr. Kevan Yaukas
SEWRPC
P.O. Box 1167
Waukesha, WI 53187-1167

Dear Mr. Yaukas,

I am writing to express my support for the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter rail project currently under consideration. I have had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Eric Marzec, the SEWRPC executive director, and I believe that this project is an important step in addressing the transportation needs of our region.

In downtown Milwaukee, the performing and visual arts are fast becoming one of the city's major industries. In the Downtown Theater District alone, several new venues have opened in recent years. The integration of public transportation will provide an easy way to get to and from these venues.

Analysis of our data shows that high-quality performing and visual arts are offered in downtown Milwaukee. Our data shows that the average attendance at the major venues is over 100,000 annually, generating over $5 million in gross ticket sales. The performing and visual arts have long played the role of catalyzing events and creating a year-round, culturally vibrant downtown.

In addition, we are concerned that the project will not be able to accommodate the expected growth in demand for public transportation. The project should be designed to accommodate the expected growth in demand for public transportation.

The project should also be designed to accommodate the expected growth in demand for public transportation.

Sincerely,

Paul F. Mathews
President
Mr. Kenneth Yunker
Deputy Executive
SEWREPC
P.O. Box 1607
Waukesha, WI 53187-1607

May 12, 2003

Dear Ken,

I am writing to express my strong support for the extension of the Metra line through southeastern Wisconsin to Milwaukee. Contrary to what some may think, all is not rosy in the future, nor is the past. The need for effective mass transit at the regional level is more acute now than ever for this area, and the need will only intensify. We have relied for too long on a freeway system that is limited in efficiency by physical constraints, economics, and urban competing needs. We need a new regional architecture built on a base of solids foundations and new fixed—flexible—light rail transportation. The Metra extension is essential to this transition to a more balanced and effective transportation system. Our competing regions are already doing this, and we cannot afford to be left behind. At a local level, stations in central Racine and Kenosha will give these cities a lift and begin to reverse the decline started by construction of I-94 years ago.

Funding should not be an issue. If we can plan for billions of dollars of freeway construction with no budgeted funds, surely we can find a solution of how to build a facility to address new needs. Thank you for all the good work you and SEWREPC have done on the Metra project. Please consider giving it your strongest recommendation for moving forward.

Sincerely,

Steve T. Beza
Program Officer
Sustainable Development
and the Environment

B-4
May 8, 2003
Kenneth Yunker
SEWRPC
P.O. Box 167
Waukesha, WI
53187-1677

Dear Kenneth Yunker,

I am writing to support the KRM Commuter Rail Mass Extension in Southeast Wisconsin. This train would use the existing rails and would upgrade them. The train would connect Kenosha to downtown Milwaukee. It would be making stops in Cudahy, St. Francis (with airport shuttle), South Milwaukee, Oak Creek, Caledonia, Racine, and Scissors.

If you have driven through Racine or Milwaukee you know that traffic can be bad especially during the winter season when there is a lot more construction going on. This train would provide a faster, more reliable, easy and more affordable alternative than the crowded highways. Making more lanes for traffic doesn’t always solve the problem of congestion and making more lanes costs a lot more money in the long run.

This train will also reduce air pollution since there would be fewer cars on the road. According to the EPA, 75% of hazardous air pollution comes from vehicles. Improving the air quality would not only be beneficial to the environment and global warming but also to every one of us living today.

It is becoming more obvious that we need to start using more energy efficient ways of transport. The way we are using our oil is harmful and will lead to more oil wars. We keep on putting money into building roads and airports but why not rail? It seems that other parts of the world have the right idea with trains like Europe. It would be great if we could hop on a train and travel around the US as easily as you can in Europe. This KRM Commuter Rail would be a great start to making the future a better place. I would appreciate a response to what is currently happening.

Sincerely,

Brad LaHatte
124 E. Concord Ave
309 May Hall
Kewaunee, WI 54022

Jane Hannemann
May 12, 2003

Hi Kenneth - Racine - Milwaukee

I am writing to support the KRM Commuter Rail Mass Extension. This train would use the existing rails and would upgrade them. The train would connect Kenosha to downtown Milwaukee. It would be making stops in Cudahy, St. Francis (with airport shuttle), South Milwaukee, Oak Creek, Caledonia, Racine, and Scissors.

I grew up in Racine, WI on a farm. My father created the train from there. (Small town of 17200) to Random Lake, Portage and Sturgeon Bay. It is time to bring all that back. Let’s start with the Racine extension to Milwaukee. It’s responsible, forward thinking, about re-learning from the past.

Sincerely,

Jane Hannemann
After more than two years of study and analysis, the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Transit Corridor Advisory Committee recommended extension of commuter rail service from Kenosha to Milwaukee at a medium service level (7 trains per day, twice per hour). This recommendation was based on detailed research and information developed by the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWWRPC) that produced a series of Technical Reports that considered such things as transit alternatives (bus and rail), Ridership forecasts, capital improvement needs and costs, environmental and land use review, operating and maintenance costs, social impacts, financial analysis of each alternative, and organization/management of each alternative.

The University of Wisconsin-Parkside formally and strongly endorses the preliminary recommendations of the Transit Advisory Committee.

Benefits

- UW-Parkside has more than 6,000 students, faculty and staff. The majority resides within the Chicago-Milwaukee corridor. A substantial number commute to campus on a daily basis (Monday – Friday). Most by private automobile.

- UW-Parkside has the most diverse student population of all UW campuses, a diversity that reflects the demographic characteristics of southwestern Wisconsin. In addition, the school actively encourages returning and non-traditional students. Proponents of diversity and access can be further enhanced by commuter rail.

- UW-Parkside is also known as a "gathering place" for residents of Kenosha and Racine counties for non-university events as theatrical and musical productions, business exhibitions and community-based social and cultural events. Provision of commuter rail offers a travel alternative to those visitors as well.

- UW-Parkside is already a participant in a number of business and community collaborations throughout the region. Commuter rail allows easy access to and from the campus on a daily basis for participants in these programs from Milwaukee to Chicago.

- The Corridor Study Transit Planning process that a new commuter rail station be developed along mile east of UW-Parkside. Transit shuttle service between the campus and the station can be developed in a manner that makes use of commuter rail even more attractive.

- Day-to-day "origination-end" aspects of UW-Parkside make it one of the largest trip generators within the Kenosha-Milwaukee corridor. Marketing efforts geared toward those potential riders can have a significant affect on the use of commuter rail service.

Significance of Proposed Somers Commuter Rail Station

The Corridor Study Transit Planning process that a new commuter rail station be developed in the Town of Somers, Kenosha County. The location of the proposed station is expected to be more than one mile from the UW-Parkside campus and transit links between the two can be efficiently established. Implementation of these commuter rail service, along with development of the commuter rail service, will significantly benefit the faculty, staff, and students at UW-Parkside. Benefits will accrue to businesses, commuters, and the general public who use the commuter rail service.

The Regional Nature of UW-Parkside and Its Reliance on Transportation Services

The following comments intend to summarize and emphasize the educational, economic, and cultural significance of UW-Parkside and its region. The institution provides itself on its role of educational excellence, diversity and community involvement, and these attributes are included in its core principles.

Implementation of a well-planned, reliable mass transit alternative within the Kenosha-Milwaukee corridor can assist the university to meet its goals while also contributing positively to the overall quality of life in the region.

UW-Parkside was founded in 1990. The campus is now part of the University of Wisconsin comprehensive university system, primarily offering a full range of undergraduate programs, but offering some graduate programs as well. The campus Mission, vision, and goals, is to offer a full range of post-secondary education to residents, businesses, and institutions in southeastern Wisconsin and northern Illinois.

The UW-Parkside campus is located less than 2 miles east of I-94 in the northeastern corner of Kenosha County in the Town of Somers. The campus is just southwest of I-94; the campus sits on a ridge of land whose topography is relatively flat and open. The campus provides a wide variety of vegetation, including trees and shrubs, and grasses. A variety of wildlife species is common to the area, including birds, mammals, and reptiles. The campus is bisected by U.S. Highway 45, which runs through the center of the campus.

The campus is designed to provide a variety of housing options for students, including both on-campus and off-campus accommodations.

The campus is located within a 30-minute drive of major metropolitan centers, including Milwaukee, Kenosha, and Racine.

UW-Parkside is recognized as having the most diverse student population of all UW campuses. This diversity is reflected in the demographics of the campus, but, more importantly, it reflects the university's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

The campus offers a wide variety of cultural and intellectual events, including concerts, lectures, and film series.

The campus is located within a 30-minute drive of major metropolitan centers, including Milwaukee, Kenosha, and Racine.

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diagonally (southeast northwestern) through the western portion of the campus from EWH "31" to CTH "E".

The central or "academic core" area of the campus is encircled by a private road, Inner Loop Road. Support facilities, including housing, student activities, physical plant, athletic fields and parking areas are located outside this core area. Outer Loop Road separates the built areas of campus from the Pike River. There are four main parking areas on campus. Purchase of an annual parking permit is required for use of any of the parking areas. One parking lot is for exclusive use by residential students; the other three are designed as remote parking lots for use by commuting students and staff. One lot is located north of the academic core near Parkside Union; one lot is located southwest of the academic core at the intersection of CTH "86" and Outer Loop Road; one lot is located east of Wood Road. A university-sponsored bus makes a continuous circuit of the campus (Monday – Friday) to shuttle passengers between buildings and to and from the remote parking areas.

Commuter bus transit to UW-Parkside is less than adequate. There are no regional commuter bus service stops at or near the campus. However, three extensions of local bus routes of both the Kenosha and Racine transit systems to several stops throughout the campus. Although commuting students and staff have the option to transfer to these routes elsewhere in Kenosha or Racine, their primary purpose is to offer local transit access to the campus. It should also be noted that the UW-Parkside campus is the only interconnect between the two transit systems.

CONTACT INFORMATION
Dick Oldenburg, Campus Planner
University of Wisconsin – Parkside
(920) 835-2255

Lenny Keever, Assistant Vice Chancellor – University Relations
University of Wisconsin – Parkside
(262) 595-2561

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WRITE COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENSHEILA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
May 1, 2003
Cudahy City Hall, Council Chambers
205 E. 1st Street
Cudahy, Wisconsin

NAME: Louis Blahnik
AFFILIATION: WP
Mailing Address: 1201 Hart Dr.
Waukesha, WI 53188

Comment:
- I live in Parkside and work in Milwaukee. I am a frequent user of the commuter rail. I would like to see more frequent service.

Write comments may be recorded on the form and a copy mailed to the Planning Commission as required by law. If you wish to present your comments at the hearing, please contact the Planning Commission at the above address to make arrangements. Comments may also be submitted via facsimile or e-mail at wipike@uwsp.edu.
I firmly believe the economic vitality and future growth of this region will be heavily dependent upon the ability to provide alternative, affordable transportation links. This rail corridor from Kenosha to Milwaukee should also be extended at least as far as Milwaukee to the North Shore suburbs.

Thank you.

Written comments may be recorded on this sheet, and on any attached pages, as may be necessary, and left at the registration table or given directly to a WI/SEWRPC staff member. Additional comments will be accepted through May 18, 2003, and may be sent to the WI/SEWRPC office, P.O. Box 6107, W230 S8152 Rockwood Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-6107. Comments may be submitted via fax (262) 547-1103 or email to wi@sewrpc.org.

Thank you.

I'd like to address the people who don't want their tax dollars to subsidize the RR. Our towns already subsidize airlines, and the gasoline/crude infrastructure. And that subsidy is enormous.

People - we're dying this day to support our addiction to oil. It's also killing us by way of pollution, by way of accidents.

Thank you.
Written comments may be recorded on this sheet, and on any attached pages, or may be necessary, and will be the responsibility of the SEWRPC staff member. Additional comments will be accepted through May 16, 2003, and may be submitted to the SEWRPC office, P.O. Box 487, W230 N16812 Rockwood Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1687. Comments may also be submitted via fax (262) 571-1100 or e-mail to wskarz@sewrpc.org.

Thank you.

Edward Rohtke
Affiliate

May 1, 2003
Cudahy City Hall, Couriess Chambers
5318 S. Lake Drive
Cudahy, Wisconsin

Comment:

I am very much in favor of the Metro extension to the WDM computer. We can afford the entire project without any tax money, and it is a good project for the Miller stadium situation that was implemented a short time ago. I strongly believe that professional athletes are directly over paid and that the owners of these professional teams are just as culpable as the athletes. I appreciate your hard work and hope this will be a reality before 2006.

Thank you.

Edward Rohtke
Affiliate

May 1, 2003
Cudahy City Hall, Couriess Chambers
5318 S. Lake Drive
Cudahy, Wisconsin

Comment:

We spent a billion dollars on a failed sewer system, 400 million on a new stadium with a new roof and now a whole train system. Is a dead rodders coal to come for lunch? The state is $2 billion in the red, the county is broke and the city of Cudahy cannot afford police but the train system keeps emptying on what a waste of taxpayers money (no more taxes).

Thank you.

Waste comments may be recorded on this sheet, and on any attached pages, or may be necessary, and will be the responsibility of the SEWRPC staff member. Additional comments will be accepted through May 16, 2003, and may be submitted to the SEWRPC office, P.O. Box 487, W230 N16812 Rockwood Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1687. Comments may also be submitted via fax (262) 571-1100 or e-mail to wskarz@sewrpc.org.

Thank you.
B-10

Mr. Yunker, your consideration of any comments on behalf of the Waukesha Chamber of Commerce are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Paul D. Burkholder, President
Waukesha Chamber of Commerce

3569 East Burwood Avenue, Waukesha Wisconsin 53186
414-483-8655 www.waukesha.org

---

Kathryn Yunker
May 1, 2003
SEWREC
P.O. Box 1667
Waukesha, WI 53187

Dear Mr. Yunker:

Thank you for informing me of the meeting to be held May 1st, 2003 at City Hall in
Cudahy.

I appreciate the opportunity to express the importance of the Metra Extension to our
community.

First, Cudahy has a strategic location to Mitchell International Airport that will allow
a convenient means of moving people from the south (not far away as Chicago) to our
airport. This in itself will increase economic growth to the airport, as well as growth
to Cudahy’s business community.

Second, Waukesha harbor has been closed, it will help in the growth of the harbor in
North and South, and will draw more people to our harbor. This in turn will increase
economic growth to the harbor, as well as growth to Waukesha’s business community.

Third, the Metra Extension will allow for convenient transportation to and from
Milwaukee, Racine, and Kenosha Counties for employment purposes.

Fourth, the Metra Extension would allow safe and convenient travel to the many
events that happen in Milwaukee, such as the Milwaukee Art Museum, etc. and would
take the pressure off the City of Cudahy.

The City has designated a park and ride station and has plans for hotel accommodation,
restaurants, and entertainment that will serve the passengers of the Metra Extension very
well.

3569 East Burwood Avenue, Cudahy Wisconsin 53110
414-483-8655 www.cudahychamber.com

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Mr. Yunker, your consideration of any comments on behalf of the Cudahy Chamber of
Commerce are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Paul D. Burkholder, President
Cudahy Chamber of Commerce

3569 East Burwood Avenue, Cudahy Wisconsin 53110
414-483-8655 www.cudahychamber.com

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WERNEN SPOKES

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KINOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY

April 10, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
501 Piering Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

Name

Affiliation

Melting Address

Note

Comment

50 WIS. NEEDS EXPANDING NAL
REGARDLESS OF PROJECTED COSTS OF
IMPROVEMENTS TO NARROW A MAJOR
ROAD PROBLEM.

Building more roads perpetuates
our pollution, congestion and
dependence problems.

Thank you for everyone for their efforts
to make KRM a reality.

Thank you.

WERNEN SPOKES

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KINOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY

April 10, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
501 Piering Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

Name

Affiliation

Melting Address

Note

Comment

50 WIS. NEEDS EXPANDING NAL
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PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 10, 2003
Kracie Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Bates Building
901 Penning Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

None

WILLIE BROWNE
Affiliation
Concerned Citizen
Mailing Address
511 W. 68TH ST.
Racine, WI 53402

Comment
I suggest that transit service should be dedicated to a single route to achieve the following benefits:

1. Reduced traffic congestion
2. Improved air quality
3. Reduced dependence on oil
4. Reduced environmental impact
5. Improved transit reliability and accessibility
6. Reduced traffic congestion

Finally, it is just another concern.

WITNESS: WILLIE BROWNE

Thank you.

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 10, 2003
Kracie Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Bates Building
901 Penning Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

None

R. M. KARLS
Affiliation
Mailing Address
507 HARVEY
RACINE, WI 53405

Comment
I would like to express
my support for the transit service. It would provide many benefits, including improved air quality, reduced congestion, and increased mobility.

Thank you.

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 10, 2003
Kracie Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Bates Building
901 Penning Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

None

D. D. BURT
Affiliation
Mailing Address
1356 W. 59TH ST.
RACINE, WI 53405

Comment
I support the expansion of the transit service. It would greatly improve the accessibility and quality of life in the area. With the new service, more people will be able to travel more easily, leading to a better quality of life for everyone.

Thank you.
WILLIAM E. TSENG, HENRY LIN, JAMES F. HARRIS, JR., VICE PRESIDENTS

April 30, 2003

Phil Evenson

SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
P.O. Box 5017
Waukesha, WI 53187-0007

Dear Mr. Evenson:

This letter is being provided as the formal comments of the Racine County Economic Development Corporation (ROECD) with regard to the extension of commuter rail service to Racine County by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) in accordance with the provisions of the State Comprehensive Planning Act. The comments, as required, have been provided in consultation with the County Administrator and the Planning Director of the Racine County Economic Development Corporation.

The March 2001 unemployment rate in Racine County was 5.4%, compared to 5.5% for the State of Wisconsin. The City of Racine's unemployment rate for the same period is 4.9%. It is expected that the recently completed Racine County Economic Development Plan (RCEDP) estimates that Racine County has lost over 5,000 jobs.

In 2002, the ROECD Board of Directors and the Racine County Board adopted the EDP (_positive action provided herein). The EDP includes seven challenges that we must rise to or face a more economic downturn, including "Racine County being the catalyst for the revitalization of the Milwaukee-Chicago Corridor." A strategy in support of this challenge is the implementation of the commuter rail system that is being proposed here.

The ROECD Board of Directors and the Racine County Board adopted the EDP (positive action provided herein). The EDP includes seven challenges that we must rise to or face a more economic downturn, including "Racine County being the catalyst for the revitalization of the Milwaukee-Chicago Corridor." A strategy in support of this challenge is the implementation of the commuter rail system that is being proposed here.

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COMMUTER RAIL IN Racine County is a catalyst for economic development and growth.

The ROECD Board of Directors and the Racine County Board adopted the EDP (positive action provided herein). The EDP includes seven challenges that we must rise to or face a more economic downturn, including "Racine County being the catalyst for the revitalization of the Milwaukee-Chicago Corridor." A strategy in support of this challenge is the implementation of the commuter rail system that is being proposed here.

The ROECD Board of Directors and the Racine County Board adopted the EDP (positive action provided herein). The EDP includes seven challenges that we must rise to or face a more economic downturn, including "Racine County being the catalyst for the revitalization of the Milwaukee-Chicago Corridor." A strategy in support of this challenge is the implementation of the commuter rail system that is being proposed here.
B-13

WHITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 10, 2003
Racine County Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Boulevard
901 Freedom Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

Barbara E. McDaniel
Executive Director

AFSCME

ATTN: John R. Kiess, Chairman

Mailing Address:

503 North Main Street
Kenosha, Wisconsin 53140

This is not just new for the cities with planned apps on the train route. When cities are strong, suburbs benefit. The entire corridor will become more vibrant from the improved land use, tax base and regional competition that commute rail can assist in building.

In our densely populated and highly developed commute, we have few opportunities to significantly improve mobility. Racine is very fortunate to have an existing right-of-way available for use at its own yard now. Trying to obtain a new right-of-way for commuter rail would be prohibitively costly. Costs associated with such a new line would be substantial. By using existing right-of-way, XRDM Consumers can provide convenient and reliable mobility in a corridor that has few other viable options for increasing mobility to the densest populations of workers, employers and residents. This right-of-way is an incredibly valuable asset that could easily disappear if not used. We've heard just one right-of-way that can never be replaced.

The 350,000 jobs and 440,000 population are projected within 2 miles of the planned Wisconsin train stations alone. This represents a considerable opportunity for communities on the route that have ongoing transportation issues. The very people who cannot afford automobile transportation or do not have a license to drive would have access to a regional job market that is currently unavailable to them. The 6th Street neighborhood where the Racine train station is planned is one of many areas in the county that could benefit from improved access to jobs and education as well as the economic benefits that the rail service will provide.

Community rail should be a priority for Racine. If we do not take this opportunity today, we will certainly regret our shortsightedness in the years to come as our city and region struggle to be economically competitive. XRDM commuter rail is a small investment that will yield huge benefits for our community.

RACINE COUNTY
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
WILLIAM L. McREYNOLDS
720 Wisconsin Avenue
Racine, WI 53401
(262) 637-3373
Fax: (262) 637-2649
william.mcree@co.racine.wi.us

POSITION PAPER ON COMMUTER RAIL
COUNTY EXECUTIVE WILLIAM L. McREYNOLDS

I support the concept of extending commuter rail service to Racine County. I believe that having commuter rail service in Racine County would assist in the economic development of the County and southeastern Wisconsin. However, I cannot support any plans for bringing commuter rail to Racine County that involves a subsidy from the property taxpayers of this County. That is not an acceptable option at this time.

To: Kenosha-Racing-Milwaukee Commuter Rail Metro Extension

From: Roger Gorton

President

Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce
202 S. 1st Street
Racine, WI 53401
(262) 634-1971

As president of the Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce, a Racine-based non-profit association representing 800 businesses employing approximately 30,000 employees, I believe XRDM Commuter Rail is a must-have...for too many reasons.

The Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee (KRM) commuter rail extension is a rare and extraordinary opportunity to help us become a winning city in a winning region. Here’s why the Meet theextension in a “must-have” for Racine.

Commuter rail will improve the value of our community. It only takes a quick look to see how property values increase in communities served by the Metra. Economic activity and capital investments increase when people and businesses are attracted to the convenience and accessibility that a train station offers. Improved property values, and new jobs grow the tax base—something we desperately need.

Commuter rail will help to attract businesses and jobs to Racine. Today’s businesses require workers, customers, and other regional access to a diverse and high-quality workforce. Using transit services such as commuter rail can provide this essential access to all workers, including college graduates and other high-income talent that are often our economic focus.

Younger professional jobs generally need that rail transportation for commuting. Demographic projections show that within the next decade, a declining workforce population will result from that being held by the most utilized trains in the United States. Racine needs the transportation amenities that attract and retain talented businesses.

We expect our economy to thrive. And we certainly need to assist existing employees with that access to labor so that they can stay in Racine.

Three of Wisconsin’s largest cities will be served by the Metro Extension and the entire corridor will be better connected to one of our nation’s premier cities—Chicago. The educational, cultural and economic opportunities that are aligned along the Milwaukee-Kenosha-Chicago corridor are incredible, to say the least. Developing this incredible potential is a key part of the Racine County Economic Development Plan. The economic plan prioritizes commuter rail as a catalyst to developing this economic corridor. We must begin to function as a corridor to realize our full range of economic opportunity.

This is not just new for the cities with planned apps on the train route. When cities are strong, suburbs benefit. The entire corridor will become more vibrant from the improved land use, tax base and regional competition that commute rail can assist in building.

In our densely populated and highly developed commute, we have few opportunities to significantly improve mobility. Racine is very fortunate to have an existing right-of-way available for use at its own yard now. Trying to obtain a new right-of-way for commuter rail would be prohibitively costly. Costs associated with such a new line would be substantial. By using existing right-of-way, XRDM Consumers can provide convenient and reliable mobility in a corridor that has few other viable options for increasing mobility to the densest populations of workers, employers and residents. This right-of-way is an incredibly valuable asset that could easily disappear if not used. We’ve heard just one right-of-way that can never be replaced.

The 350,000 jobs and 440,000 population are projected within 2 miles of the planned Wisconsin train stations alone. This represents a considerable opportunity for communities on the route that have ongoing transportation issues. The very people who cannot afford automobile transportation or do not have a license to drive would have access to a regional job market that is currently unavailable to them. The 6th Street neighborhood where the Racine train station is planned is one of many areas in the county that could benefit from improved access to jobs and education as well as the economic benefits that the rail service will provide.

Community rail should be a priority for Racine. If we do not take this opportunity today, we will certainly regret our shortsightedness in the years to come as our city and region struggle to be economically competitive. XRDM commuter rail is a small investment that will yield huge benefits for our community.
My name is Morris S. Reece; I reside at 1439 Crabapple Dr., Racine, WI.

Unfortunately due to a prior commitment I am unable to attend this evening’s hearing.

My comments. I am in full support of the Metra Extension proposal from Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee. Unquestionably, I believe this is a part of a mature approach to developing our economic and employment connection with the rest of the world, clearly in an area where we seem to be so disconnected from fertile economic growth.

Finally, this is an opportunity that will cost us less now and our children and grandchildren will respect this wonderful legacy we collaboratively have left them to build on, for their future economic growth and development. This is the right thing to do RIGHT NOW!

Thank you
Morris S. Reece
May 16, 2001
3550 N. Port Washington Rd.
Milwaukee, WI 53210

Subject: KBEP/RACER Public Hearing

Dear [Name]:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed KBEP/RACER corridor in the area. I believe it is important to consider the impact of this project on our community and the environment.

Firstly, I am concerned about the potential increase in traffic and the impact it will have on our daily commute. As a resident of [City], I see firsthand the consequences of increased traffic congestion, especially during rush hours. It is crucial that we explore alternative modes of transportation to reduce our dependence on cars.

Secondly, the proposed corridor will affect the local wildlife and natural habitats. As an avid nature lover, I am worried about the potential loss of green spaces and the disruption of local ecosystems. It is important to find a balance between development and preservation.

I urge you to consider these issues and involve the community in the decision-making process. Public input is crucial to ensure that the project meets the needs of all residents.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
Written comment may be recorded on this sheet, and on any attached pages as may be necessary, and left at the registration table or given directly to a SEWRPC staff member. Additional comments will be accepted through May 16, 2003, and may be sent to the SEWRPC offices, P.O. Box 1607, W230 N1812 Rockwood Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53186-1607. Comments may also be submitted via fax (262) 547-1803 or e-mail atwisnetsewpco.org.

Thank you.

#52548-0

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Thank you.

#52548-0

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Thank you.
B-17

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA- RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSPORT STUDY
April 30, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
901 Freling Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

From: Randel VanDusen
Affiliation: 40216 MANHATTAN DVR
Racine, Wisconsin 53402

Comment: I support the expansion of the Milwaukee Joint County Airport in Kenosha to accommodate the growth of air travel. I would like to see the airport expanded to include a larger number of runways and a new terminal building. I believe this would benefit the region and create new jobs.

Thank you.

#20389-13

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA- RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSPORT STUDY
April 30, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
901 Freling Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

From: Peter Goerg
Affiliation: 1237 Nicholas Rd
Franklin, WI 53132

Comment: I support the expansion of the Kenosha-Milwaukee Joint County Airport. It is important to accommodate the growth of air travel and provide new runways and a new terminal building. I believe this would benefit the region and create new jobs.

Thank you.

#20389-14

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA- RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSPORT STUDY
April 30, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
901 Freling Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

From: Betty Givens
Affiliation: 5420 Wisconsin Ave. #110
Racine, Wisconsin 53404

Comment: I support the expansion of the Kenosha-Milwaukee Joint County Airport. It is important to accommodate the growth of air travel and provide new runways and a new terminal building. I believe this would benefit the region and create new jobs.

Thank you.

#20389-15

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA- RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSPORT STUDY
April 30, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
901 Freling Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

From: James J. Butterick
Affiliation: 730 Highland Ave
Mount Kisco, NY 10549

Comment: I am concerned about the proposed expansion of the Kenosha-Milwaukee Joint County Airport. The airport is already a major hub for air travel and I believe it is important to consider the impact on the surrounding community.

Thank you.

#20389-16

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA- RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSPORT STUDY
April 30, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
901 Freling Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

From: Betty Givens
Affiliation: 5420 Wisconsin Ave. #110
Racine, Wisconsin 53404

Comment: I support the expansion of the Kenosha-Milwaukee Joint County Airport. It is important to accommodate the growth of air travel and provide new runways and a new terminal building. I believe this would benefit the region and create new jobs.

Thank you.

#20389-17

Thank you.

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA- RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSPORT STUDY
April 30, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
901 Freling Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

From: Betty Givens
Affiliation: 5420 Wisconsin Ave. #110
Racine, Wisconsin 53404

Comment: I support the expansion of the Kenosha-Milwaukee Joint County Airport. It is important to accommodate the growth of air travel and provide new runways and a new terminal building. I believe this would benefit the region and create new jobs.

Thank you.

#20389-18

Thank you.

Thank you.

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA- RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSPORT STUDY
April 30, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
901 Freling Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

From: Betty Givens
Affiliation: 5420 Wisconsin Ave. #110
Racine, Wisconsin 53404

Comment: I support the expansion of the Kenosha-Milwaukee Joint County Airport. It is important to accommodate the growth of air travel and provide new runways and a new terminal building. I believe this would benefit the region and create new jobs.

Thank you.

#20389-19

Thank you.

Thank you.

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA- RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSPORT STUDY
April 30, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
901 Freling Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

From: Betty Givens
Affiliation: 5420 Wisconsin Ave. #110
Racine, Wisconsin 53404

Comment: I support the expansion of the Kenosha-Milwaukee Joint County Airport. It is important to accommodate the growth of air travel and provide new runways and a new terminal building. I believe this would benefit the region and create new jobs.

Thank you.

#20389-20

Thank you.

Thank you.

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA- RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSPORT STUDY
April 30, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
901 Freling Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

From: Betty Givens
Affiliation: 5420 Wisconsin Ave. #110
Racine, Wisconsin 53404

Comment: I support the expansion of the Kenosha-Milwaukee Joint County Airport. It is important to accommodate the growth of air travel and provide new runways and a new terminal building. I believe this would benefit the region and create new jobs.

Thank you.

#20389-21

Thank you.

Thank you.

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA- RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSPORT STUDY
April 30, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
901 Freling Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

From: Betty Givens
Affiliation: 5420 Wisconsin Ave. #110
Racine, Wisconsin 53404

Comment: I support the expansion of the Kenosha-Milwaukee Joint County Airport. It is important to accommodate the growth of air travel and provide new runways and a new terminal building. I believe this would benefit the region and create new jobs.

Thank you.

#20389-22

Thank you.

Thank you.

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA- RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSPORT STUDY
April 30, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
901 Freling Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

From: Betty Givens
Affiliation: 5420 Wisconsin Ave. #110
Racine, Wisconsin 53404

Comment: I support the expansion of the Kenosha-Milwaukee Joint County Airport. It is important to accommodate the growth of air travel and provide new runways and a new terminal building. I believe this would benefit the region and create new jobs.

Thank you.

#20389-23

Thank you.

Thank you.

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA- RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSPORT STUDY
April 30, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
901 Freling Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

From: Betty Givens
Affiliation: 5420 Wisconsin Ave. #110
Racine, Wisconsin 53404

Comment: I support the expansion of the Kenosha-Milwaukee Joint County Airport. It is important to accommodate the growth of air travel and provide new runways and a new terminal building. I believe this would benefit the region and create new jobs.

Thank you.

#20389-24

Thank you.

Thank you.

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA- RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSPORT STUDY
April 30, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
901 Freling Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

From: Betty Givens
Affiliation: 5420 Wisconsin Ave. #110
Racine, Wisconsin 53404

Comment: I support the expansion of the Kenosha-Milwaukee Joint County Airport. It is important to accommodate the growth of air travel and provide new runways and a new terminal building. I believe this would benefit the region and create new jobs.

Thank you.

#20389-25

Thank you.

Thank you.
TESTIMONY FROM SUPERVISOR DIANE M. LANGE
Racine County Board, District 3
Re: Metra Rail Hearing
April 30, 2003
Gateway Technical College
Racine, Wisconsin

My comments support the need for the Metra rail expansion project that will better link our community to the Milwaukee-Chicago corridor. Racine County has embarked in implementing a vigorous economic plan to energize our economic area. This Metra expansion project is a critical component to this plan.

We have strong educational, economic, and community partners that help us to provide an increasingly well-trained workforce as well as help provide the intellectual capital to generate innovative ideas and ways of doing things. Through the leadership of our Racine County Economic Development Corporation at which Racine County government is a strong partner, we are working creatively outside of the "Racine County" box and seeing the need to think more regionally to grow an economy. We want to strengthen our connections to other educational, cultural, business, and workforce interests in this Milwaukee-Chicago corridor.

Last summer, in June, our county board received a briefing on the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Freeway System Reconstruction Study and Preliminary Recommended Plan. The 37-mile freeway system is nearing the end of its service life and will be requiring major reconstruction. Part of the regional plan prepared by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission called for us to figure out ways to sustain sprawl and significantly expand public transit. Even if light rail and commuter rail are expanded, they predict increased congestion and freeway traffic volume.

The estimated cost for this freeway reconstruction was an eye-popping $8.25 billion over 30 years—an additional two lanes are added to 127 miles of the freeway. If we just reconstruct and meet the modern design standards with no additional lanes, that amount would be reduced by 12% of that cost, but congestion would be much higher. "Peak-and-should rate is 5-15.3 lanes higher on congested freeway segments" according to that report.

Meanwhile the American Lung Association gave our county an "F" for air quality. Increased auto congestion is one important contributor to this. As a public health nurse and a county board supervisor, I am concerned about the health as well as financial impact of this. Poor air quality in six counties in Southeast Wisconsin and "severe cases non-attainment" for our transportation system states are already limiting local business from expanding or relocating to our area. Expanding public transit is a key task that we must engage in if this is to be turned around.

Our neighbor, the state of Illinois, received $450 million from the US government for rail support. Our state needs to more aggressively go after this money and put a priority on getting a comprehensive rail plan developed. I believe our federal legislative officials will then be successful in getting Wisconsin a more fair share of federal tax money to meet the transportation needs of our region.

Getting the Metra Rail expansion will help us provide part of the infrastructure needed to raise and attract business to grow our economy and improve our environment. We have not failed to plan, and we don’t plan to fail.

Thanks for your time.

Sincerely yours,
Diane M. Lange
2908 Ruby Ave
Racine, WI 53402
262-639-0356

#42259 v3
Written comment:
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 10, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
900 Penning Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

Name: Tony Ferraro
Affiliation: 
Mailing Address: 15 Michigan Ct. 
Racine WI 53402

Comment:
WHY DE EMPLOYMENT
KENOSHA'S PRIORITY IS ECON
WHY, WHICH REQUIRES AN \nAGGREGATE OF PEOPLE WHO 
TRANSPORT BUSINESS. PUBLIC
ACCESS IS INHIBITING FOR 
RACING TO IMPROVE ACCESS 
TO MARKETS, WE NEED PUBLIC
NOW!

Written comments may be recorded on this sheet, and on any attached pages as may be necessary, and left at the registration table or given directly to a SEWRPC staff member. Additional comments will be accepted through May 16, 2003, and may be sent to the SEWRPC office, P.O. Box 1607, W299 N1612
Rokewood Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1607. Comments may also be submitted via fax (262) 547-1050 or e-mail at wisnet@sewrpc.org.
Thank you.

Written comment:
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 10, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
900 Penning Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

Name: Liz Stehle
Affiliation: Instructor - Gateway Tech College
Mailing Address: 5046 N. Woodburn
Whitefish Bay, WI

Comment:
- Metra
- enough (high level of service)
- Continuously placed stations
- (downtown Milwaukee -
Eastside sites -
Racine sites)

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Rokewood Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1607. Comments may also be submitted via fax (262) 547-1050 or e-mail at wisnet@sewrpc.org.
Thank you.

Written comment:
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 10, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room
Racine Building
900 Penning Drive
Racine, Wisconsin

Name: Robert Green
Affiliation: 
Mailing Address: 3326 28th Avenue
Kenosha WI

Comment:
I think this addition to the 
metra route is a good idea. 
It would seem well 
considering I may be going to 
school in Milwaukee and 
could use the transportation.

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Rokewood Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1607. Comments may also be submitted via fax (262) 547-1050 or e-mail at wisnet@sewrpc.org.
Thank you.
Good afternoon, thank you for coming here and allowing us to contribute our input on the importance of the K-R-M commuter rail.

Governor Doyle was here last Friday and had a great press conference regarding the importance of the rail. He asked whether the K-R-M rail would help the economy. I thought the governor was asking whether the K-R-M rail would help the economy, but I was wrong.

The governor was asking whether the K-R-M rail would help the economy. I thought the governor was asking whether the K-R-M rail would help the economy, but I was wrong.

We view this as a positive development, and it is a means to an end.

Respectfully,

Walter Rendo, President
Hispanic Business & Professional Association, Inc.
Name: B-21
Affiliation: 
Mailing Address: 
Comment: 

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Thank you.
B-22

Name: LINDA J SCHAEFER
Affiliation: 
Mailing Address: 225 Lake Ave 
Racine, WI 53402

Comment:

AS A RETIRED WOMAN WHO USES THE TRAIN FROM KENOSHA TO MILWAUKEE WORKS 40 LAY 2 DAYS A WEEK TO REACH THE TRAIN STATION AS A VERY NICE WAY TO TRANSPORTATION I DEMAND TO KNOW IF KENOSHA PHASE 2 IS TRULY GOING TO BE EXTENDED WITHOUT ANY VIOLATION OF THE CONTRACT I SEE PROPOSED FOR KENOSHA TAKING THE TRAIN INTO CHICAGO TOLVA KANSAS TRANSFER SHORE OR TOWN OFFER INCREDIBLE THESE MAKES PEOPLE WHO USE THE THE STATE USES THE THE FACILITIES IN MILWAUKEE

Written comments may be recorded on this sheet and on any attached pages as may be necessary, and left at the registration table or given directly to a SEWRPC staff member. Additional comments will be accepted through May 16, 2003, and may be sent to the SEWRPC office, P.O. Box 1607, W139 N15812 Rockwood Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1607. Comments may also be submitted via fax (262) 547-1169 or e-mail at wispsr@sewrpc.org.

Thank you.

B-23
Dear Kenneth Yunker,

In southeastern Wisconsin, we need reliable transportation alternatives, which is why we are strongly in favor of the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter rail Metra extension.

Corporately, I know we would use Metra. I also know that some of our employees who live in northern Illinois would use Metra. Also, as immediate past president of the new Racine Art Museum, located in downtown Racine, I know that visitors from Milwaukee and Illinois could use Metra to visit the museum, greatly stimulating tourism revenue in our community.

Metra would reduce congestion on our roads and decrease environmental pollution as well.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

President/CEO

John K. Shannon, Jr.
Quick Cable Corporation
5700 Quick Drive
Franklinville, WI 53138
Phone: 1-262-924-3100 Ext. 211
Fax: 1-262-924-3199
Website: www.quickcable.com
E-mail: jshannon@quickcable.com

Testimony Regarding Commuter Rail Service Extension
April 2003

My perspective is that of a 33-year race track and business professional who has been commuting to Milwaukee for the past nine years.

I firmly believe that southeastern Wisconsin’s (and, of course, Milwaukee) future growth depends upon a balanced transportation options for its residents. Metra is a three-legged stool. While this region has invested heavily in a highway system and airports, we still lack a crucial third leg: efficient, frequent commuter rail service. A major investment in rail would enhance the area’s overall transportation infrastructure. That’s because commuter rail offers many benefits that highways and airports can’t provide, including energy efficiency, reduced infrastructure, improved air quality and reducing the dependence of existing roads and bridges. Most importantly, the third leg of the stool will provide transportation flexibility for people to work in and from jobs and terms.

In particular, holds irrigation for the residents of Racine, Kenosha, Racine, South Milwaukee, Caledonia and St. Francis.

In the next few years, we have a chance to move into the future with a rail system that will provide a balanced transportation infrastructure.

As mentioned, the commuter rail system has received national attention from the Federal Railroad Administration. Our community can take pride in being a leader in the development of a rail system that will provide economic benefits for the region.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

President/CEO

John K. Shannon, Jr.
Quick Cable Corporation
5700 Quick Drive
Franklinville, WI 53138
Phone: 1-262-924-3100 Ext. 211
Fax: 1-262-924-3199
Website: www.quickcable.com
E-mail: jshannon@quickcable.com

Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
Attention: Mr. Kenneth Yunker
PO Box 1097
Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1097

April 29, 2003

Dear Mr. Yunker:

Please support the extension of commuter rail service from Kenosha to Racine and Milwaukee.

To achieve success with any infrastructure development is critical. And, when investing in a transportation system, you must support more than cars and highways. Unlike expanded highways, the proposed train service would be accessible, affordable, and reliable, while revitalizing urban areas and protecting the environment.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Thomas A. Noe

1626 North Prospect Avenue
Apartment 307
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

April 29, 2003

SEWRPC
PO Box 1097
Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1097

To Whom it May Concern:

Please consider expanding the Metra service up to Milwaukee with the stop along the way. This would be such an improvement for commuters to Milwaukee. As a Westside resident, I know many students (my daughter being one of them) and workers that commute north, either daily or in the case of students several times a week. The train would be such a saver, especially in the winter. I feel strongly about this because my daughter totally lost her car (fortunately she was injured) while driving between three a week to Concordia this past semester. I don’t know how the train would have stopped at a convenient area for her, but I know that many people commute to UW-Milwaukee, and MACC from our area.

The train combined with the bus system could provide a safe, clean transportation network that would hopefully decrease traffic on the major highways and around the Milwaukee area. Again, please consider approving this plan.

Thank you,

[Signature]

MRS. CLAUDIA DASH
6225 E. 50 Avenue
Kenosha, WI 53144
April 21, 2003
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
PO Box 1607
Waukesha, WI 53187-1607

Dear Mr. Yunker,

I write this letter on behalf of my wife, the secretary to Ms. Kathleen J. Racine, and myself. We have been residents of Racine for 22 years and are very concerned about the quality of life in our community.

I support the plan for a commuter rail service that will provide a much-needed alternative to the current traffic congestion and pollution. The proposed route will offer a direct connection to downtown Milwaukee, reducing commuting times and improving the quality of life for residents.

I urge you to consider the benefits of this project and to support it in the best interest of our community.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Gloria Roth
103 Waukegan Road
Racine, WI 53403

April 25, 2003

SEWRPC P.O. Box 1607
Waukesha, WI 53187-1607

To Whom It May Concern:

SEWRPC has done a superb job in their studies on KRM. We should go along with their plans and put commuter rail and other forms of mass transportation high on our agendas. They should do more than concentrate on highways.

I am writing in favor of the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter rail initiative. It makes old thing that takes so long to get to the city the inter-city travel between the largest cities along the Lake Michigan shore. Illinois is very forward thinking in its plans to extend their commuter system. Wisconsin should take this small first step to develop a commuter rail system along the same lines.

Please give more thought to light rail options that are convenient and inexpensive. Chicago’s extensive system has kept Chicago downtown viable and easily accessible from outlying areas. One reason Milwaukee downtown has not moved away is because the only way to get there from outlying areas is by car. Racine downtown has suffered the same fate. It was a mistake to take the old streetcar commuter line away. The KRM would be a way of restoring it to Wisconsin’s rapidly developing area. We need new travel options that are just highways. Development tends to congregate around rail stops making concentrations of housing and jobs more convenient for those who choose to work and live near them. Avoid spread, go for the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Commuter Rail Initiative.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Emily J. Yank

May 5, 2003

B-24
TO: SEWRPC
FROM: [Name Redacted]
RE: WISERIDE Proposal
Date: April 24, 2003

The WISERIDE proposal is based on the premise of promoting smart growth and increased economic opportunities for the suburban counties, with the goal of increasing transit ridership on I-43 in the Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee corridor. However, in the long run, it does not address traffic, land use, and development issues in areas around the urban centers served by the plan. My reservations about WISERIDE center not on the plan itself but on the absence of a comprehensive planning tool for all of southeast Wisconsin. Such a tool is needed to guide development and redevelopment fostered by the plan and experienced outside the narrow rail KRM corridor.

I have two specific concerns related to WISERIDE. The first deals with conserving open space and its benefits across the corridor, and the second involves low-density urban sprawl around cities served by commuter rail, especially Milwaukee.

1) WISERIDE itself does not assure preservation of open spaces critical to the long-term viability of Southeast Wisconsin. Given the attraction of open spaces in Wisconsin, WISERIDE will likely draw population north. This poses a threat to these spaces, specifically to the environmental corridor, prime agricultural land, and rural areas outside the planned urban service area. Since the early 1970s, we have experienced scattered, unplanned, often unsustainable and energy-wasting development along I-43. WISERIDE should propose regional development and redevelopment within a 4-mile radius of corridor portions to the east of I-44. Hopefully, that will result in more efficient development of urban areas for a time. But it does not guarantee preservation of open spaces that return the water table, cleanse the air, and provide natural and recreational resources to the urban environment. These features are provided by environmental corridors, prime agricultural land, and rural areas outside the planned urban service area. And WISERIDE does not assure their preservation.

2) As a North Shore resident and Trustee in the Village of Fox Point, I am concerned that WISERIDE along with SEWRPC’s proposed for I-43 will contribute to problems associated with low-density urban sprawl. The current proposal to widen I-43 through New Shore to four lanes in each direction already threatens to encroach on our community infrastructure and erode the tax base of several municipalities. By itself, the current I-43 proposal means increased traffic loads north and south of Milwaukee and a doubling of noise, light, air, and water pollution in urban areas along I-43. Add to this that the line is removed from Milwaukee’s Metro Center, a “Metra” facility could foster additional development north beyond Milwaukee. The past two decades have seen land development in southeast Wisconsin increase around 33% while the population increase has been much lower, about 3%. WISERIDE does not address the problems associated with low-density urban sprawl that the plan itself may foster.

In summary, WISERIDE faces a step in the right planning direction, where it could be counterproductive for the region. The plan delivers on its promises, Southeast Wisconsin needs managed SMART GROWTH to conserve open space and address problems associated with low-density urban sprawl, and to assure development of the region in a wholesome manner. Together WISERIDE and managed SMART GROWTH would foster wise use of our lands and infrastructure. Together they would assure a viable future for all of southeast Wisconsin and its citizens.

[End of letter]

---

[Public Informational Meeting and Hearing]

[Reply to WISERIDE Proposal]

[Author's Handwritten Notes]

[End of Handwritten Notes]
B-26

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 24, 2003
Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
900 E. Michigan Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: Evelyn Trethewey-Andrewski
Affiliation: 
Mailing Address: 
Consent: I consent to the use of my name, address, and other personally identifiable information, in the preparation and dissemination of information, in connection with the project.

Written comments may be recorded on this sheet and on any attached pages or may be necessary and left at the registration table or given directly to a SEWRPC staff member. Written comments will be accepted through May 16, 2003, and may be sent to the SEWRPC offices, P.O. Box 1417, W236 N3182 Rockwood Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1417. Comments may be submitted via fax (262) 547-1145 or e-mail at wispace@sewrpc.org.

Thank you.

-- ELV1N

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 24, 2003
Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
900 E. Michigan Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: Adrian I. Vreepersen
Affiliation: Disabled Adult
Mailing Address: 7120 S. 57th St
Consent: I consent to the use of my name, address, and other personally identifiable information, in the preparation and dissemination of information, in connection with the project.

Written comments may be recorded on this sheet and on any attached pages, may be necessary, and left at the registration table or given directly to a SEWRPC staff member. Written comments will be accepted through May 16, 2003, and may be sent to the SEWRPC offices, P.O. Box 1417, W236 N3182 Rockwood Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1417. Comments may be submitted via fax (262) 547-1145 or e-mail at wispace@sewrpc.org.

Thank you.

-- ADRIAN I. VREEPSERSEN

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 24, 2003
Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
900 E. Michigan Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: Dave R. Gruel
Affiliation: Self
Mailing Address: 571-268 St
KRISMAS W1 509
Consent: I consent to the use of my name, address, and other personally identifiable information, in the preparation and dissemination of information, in connection with the project.

Written comments may be recorded on this sheet and on any attached pages, may be necessary, and left at the registration table or given directly to a SEWRPC staff member. Written comments will be accepted through May 16, 2003, and may be sent to the SEWRPC offices, P.O. Box 1417, W236 N3182 Rockwood Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1417. Comments may be submitted via fax (262) 547-1145 or e-mail at wispace@sewrpc.org.

Thank you.

-- DAVE R. GRUEL

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 24, 2003
Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
900 E. Michigan Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: Janice A. Kowalski
Affiliation: DEPT. OF CITY PLANNING
Meeting Address: 2579 S. WENTWORTH
Consent: THIS SHOULD HAVE HAPPENED YESTERDAY! IT'S LONG OVERDUE.

Written comments may be recorded on this sheet and on any attached pages, may be necessary, and left at the registration table or given directly to a SEWRPC staff member. Written comments will be accepted through May 16, 2003, and may be sent to the SEWRPC offices, P.O. Box 1417, W236 N3182 Rockwood Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1417. Comments may be submitted via fax (262) 547-1145 or e-mail at wispace@sewrpc.org.

Thank you.

-- JANICE A. KOWALSKI
B-27

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 24, 2003
Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
99 E Michigan Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: Michael Kazda
Affiliation: Rockford
Mailing Address: 125 N Jackson St 711
Milwaukee, WI 53203

Comment: YES! More!
ALL THE WAY!
For Experience,
For Sustainable Development,
For The Environment.

Thank you.

* 0296-05

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 24, 2003
Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
99 E Michigan Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: Richard J. Stefanik
Affiliation:
Mailing Address: 200 N Highland Ave Apt 220
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Comment: I would ride the Metro line route 26 from Kenosha to Milwaukee. It would lower air pollution from auto. I am against the bus alternative...

Thank you.

* 0299-05

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 24, 2003
Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
99 E Michigan Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: Robert Beresford
Affiliation: Bus Driver (Milwaukee)
Mailing Address: 525 N 37th St.
Milwaukee, WI 53210
(414) 264-2333
beresford.mike@ymail.com

Comment: I would like provision for buses to take that outside line, avoid the transit only area. I would use our buses if our destination.

Thank you.

* 0297-05

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE
CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 24, 2003
Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
99 E Michigan Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: Glen Zastrow
Affiliation: 19 Years of Experience (Milwaukee)
Mailing Address: 921 N 20th St.
Milwaukee, WI 53202
(414) 264-4327
home 961-1896

Comment: I enthusiastically support this.
You can help. Let the people know how I can
advocate.

Thank you.

* 0269-05
**B-28**

**WRITTEN COMMENT**

**PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING**

**KENOSHA-RAINE-MILWAUKEE**

**CORRIDOR TRANSPORT STUDY**

April 24, 2003

Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Light Room

900 E. Michigan Street

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

---

**Name:** Gena Rice  
**Affiliation:**  
**Mailing Address:**  
---

**Comment:**

I support extending Metra Commuter Rail north of Kenosha to Racine & Milwaukee. The Wisconsin State portion of the funds would come from the Metropolitan Transportation Interagency (MTA). The financing would be secured and publicly accountable. The Metra extension is also a wise use of the budget.

---

**Thursday, April 24, 2003**

Written comments may be recorded on this sheet and on any attached pages as may be necessary and left at the registration table or given directly to a SEMPOC staff member. Additional comments will be accepted through May 16, 2003, and may be sent to SEMPOC, P.O. Box 1657, W299 N1812 Rockwood Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1657. Comments may also be submitted via fax (262) 547-1410 or e-mail at Waukesha@semeco.org.

Thank you.

---

**Name:**  
**Affiliation:**  
**Mailing Address:**  
---

**Comment:**

I think commuter rail is the way to go.

---

Written comments may be recorded on this sheet, and on any attached pages as may be necessary, and left at the registration table or given directly to a SEMPOC staff member. Additional comments will be accepted through May 16, 2003, and may be sent to SEMPOC, P.O. Box 1657, W299 N1812 Rockwood Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1657. Comments may also be submitted via fax (262) 547-1410 or e-mail at Waukesha@semeco.org.

Thank you.

---

**Name:**  
**Affiliation:**  
**Mailing Address:**  
---

**Comment:**

I support extending Metra Commuter Rail.

---

Written comments may be recorded on this sheet, and on any attached pages as may be necessary, and left at the registration table or given directly to a SEMPOC staff member. Additional comments will be accepted through May 16, 2003, and may be sent to SEMPOC, P.O. Box 1657, W299 N1812 Rockwood Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1657. Comments may also be submitted via fax (262) 547-1410 or e-mail at Waukesha@semeco.org.

Thank you.
WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 24, 2000
Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
600 S. Michigan Drive
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: James V. Boyland
Affiliation: Alcoa Accessory
Mailing Address: 3227 N. Center St.
Milwaukee, WI 53211-3030

Comment:

The proposed alternative is a developmental land.

The amount of ridership definitely greatly to the level of service. I lived in this area in the 1970s.

Thank you.

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 24, 2000
Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
600 S. Michigan Drive
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: Michael Forbey
Affiliation: Pavelec Corporation
Mailing Address: 4718 N. Bluegrass
Milwaukee, WI 53210

Comment:

I support the hybrid or light rail option.

Thank you.

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 24, 2000
Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
600 S. Michigan Drive
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: William Boyland
Affiliation: Murray Hill Neighborhood Association
Mailing Address: 3227 N. Center St.
Milwaukee, WI 53211-3030

Comment:

This has been an excellent area.

Thank you.
**PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING**
**KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY**
April 24, 2003
Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
800 E. Michigan Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**WILLIAM C. GOTTSCHALK**
Attorney, Met. Express
Mailing Address: 227 Robert St.
Wauwatosa, WI 53223

Comment:

IT'S ABOUT TIME!

Alternative modes of transportation are essential for economic development in the future. Commuter rail is imperative because it takes vehicles off of highways (like buses). I believe that the cost would fairly quickly be overtaken by the benefits of economic development in the corridor.

Thank you.

**EXHIBIT #1**

---

**WILLIAM C. GOTTSCHALK**
Attorney, Met. Express
Mailing Address: 227 Robert St.
Wauwatosa, WI 53223

Comment:

Algonquin Parkway should be supported. The RRM commuter rail project is a great investment in a system that will improve quality of life. It should definitely improve quality of life.

A WISEST FOR THE FUTURE.

Thank you.

**EXHIBIT #2**

---

**SUE (CLOUSTON) STABLES**
Attorney, Property Owner
1800 North Alpine, Stage 3 Lead Project
Mailing Address: 1800 N. ALPINE ST.
MILWAUKEE, WI 53202

Comment:

THE COMMUTER RAIL MAKES GOOD SENSE.
THAN A PATROL THE RRM ARE SURELY,
THE IDEAS CONCEPT.
OPPORTUNITY OF OFFERING RAIL IN THE STAGE 3 LEAD ENVIRONMENT.
THE PROJECT ECONOMIC SENSE.

Sue Clouston

Thank you.

**EXHIBIT #3**

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B-30
Written Comment

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY

April 23, 2003
Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
900 E. Michigan Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: Brian Jones
Affiliation: 1000 Friends of Wisconsin
Mailing Address: 142 E. Truesdell Ave
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53007

Comment:

1000 Friends of Wisconsin would like to express its strong support of the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Rail and Bus Alternative. Such projects, if completed, would provide a Cost-effective and Citywide network to increase regional mobility and economic opportunities throughout the region.

Thank you.

4/23/03

For more information contact:
Lisa McManus, Policy Director (608) 662-5049 ex. 1, 3734 W. Lisbon, Transportation Analyst (608) 662-5197

1000 Friends of Wisconsin
142 E. Truesdell Ave
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53207

Statement on Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Rail and Bus Alternative

1000 Friends of Wisconsin would like to express its strong support of the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Rail and Bus Alternative (KRM) line, which is a level of service that would improve the quality of life for residents in the region.

The KRM line would encourage better land use and development patterns, particularly by reducing the number of cars on the road. In addition, the KRM line would help reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality in the region.

In conclusion, 1000 Friends of Wisconsin supports the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Rail and Bus Alternative.

For more information contact:
Lisa McManus, Policy Director (608) 662-5049 ex. 1, 3734 W. Lisbon, Transportation Analyst (608) 662-5197

1000 Friends of Wisconsin
142 E. Truesdell Ave
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53207

Written Comment

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY

April 26, 2003
Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
900 E. Michigan Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: Chris Hanson
Affiliation: APS, Inc.
Mailing Address: 2933 N. Shoreland Ave
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211

Comment:

Thank you.

Written comments may be recorded at this hearing and transcripts may be released as necessary. Written comments may be submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Office of Public Participation, 900 E. Michigan Street, Room 107, P.O. Box 10341, W23511 Navajo Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53187-1034. Comments may also be submitted via FAX: (414) 296-1083 or email to requests@wisdot.wi.gov.

Thank you.

4/26/03

B-31
I am Peter W. Bevac, Vice President of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce (MMAC). The MMAC is a four county Chamber of Commerce representing more than 2,000 businesses in Milwaukee, Waukesha, Washington and Ozaukee Counties.

The MMAC has a blueprint for prosperity which outlines a set of strategies that will empower metro Milwaukee to compete successfully with other regional economies. We believe these initiatives will create higher paying jobs, more capital investment, a business start, and better quality of life for more of our citizens.

The KRM Commuter Rail multi extension is part of our blueprint that we support. I have been involved in the advisory group that SEWRPC has used as a sounding board for the study of the commuter line. We agree with the selection of the medium range of service and feel it is appropriate to take the next step to begin the ESOP design process. We support the proposal to have the State of Wisconsin be the lead agency. The service would likely be contracted with METRA, the Chicago area commuter rail provider. The issue of local funding needs to be addressed. The final element on the cost of the capital and operating grants have to be more exactly determined before a final decision is made.

The project promises significant economic development in the older urban areas along Lake Michigan. Investment will occur near the stops. Housing options would likely expand. People with no cars or two wage earner families will use these services on a daily basis or built of them may use the commuter train as opposed to a car to get to work. People can live near a station and commute north or south to jobs in northern Illinois, Evanston, Lakeview, and Milwaukee and stops in between. This will support attendance and employment.

We also see a slight benefit in reducing the need for auto trips on I-94 on an intraregional basis. This is not expected to be of a significant, but it will. People will make housing decisions based on a firm rule that connects many employment nodes. This will help attract people to the region who use these systems in other areas. Young professionals are likely users of this system. It provides choice.

www.mmac.org
759 North Milwaukie Ave, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202
Phone: (414) 271-3751
Fax: (414) 271-3751
B-33

April 24, 2003

I strongly support the expansion of the Metra system from Chicago to Milwaukee. I have lived in Milwaukee for three years (since graduating from UW-Milwaukee), and have never owned a car. As a result, I am very well aware of the logistical and weaknesses of Milwaukee’s public transportation options. The Amtrak, while reliable, is too expensive for me and many of my friends and colleagues to use on a regular basis.

I have often wanted an affordable and reliable way to travel to Chicago. An option such as the Metra would allow me to apply for many jobs in the Chicago area that would be untenable otherwise. I would love to be able to continue living in Milwaukee while working in Chicago. More generally, easy access to Chicago would provide a new wealth of choices for both business and leisure for many Milwaukeeans.

On an environmental level, the Metra can only be perceived as an improvement over the train. It would reduce traffic, pollution, and accidents on I-94. Once in Chicago, one wouldn’t need to fuel and pay for parking (or worry about a car while visiting the museum). I am confident that as more Milwaukeeans hear about such an option, we will have more enthusiasm for the plan, particularly if gasoline prices and insurance costs keep rising.

If the City of Milwaukee wants to be seen as a cosmopolitan center, we will have to embrace more sensible urban solutions – the Metra expansion is a perfect example. It is a straightforward, simple solution to a growing problem. Regardless of what the price tag comes to now, an expansion of this type will only cost more later. Therefore, we should implement the Metra expansion as soon as possible.

Joel Kwasler
220 S. Ivanhoe Pk
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Written Comment
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 24, 2003
Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
900 E. Michigan Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: John Stewart
Address: 517 N. 2nd Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Comment:

In favor of expanding the line to Milwaukee. It

will make more travel options than we have now.

Some of us will ride the train to be more happy. When

we do, we don’t have to use the roads. This should make

those who would not consider leaving town very happy!

Written comments may be recorded on this sheet, and on any attached pages as may be necessary, and left at the registration table or given directly to a SWPRC staff member. Additional comments will be accepted through May 20, 2003, and may be sent to the SWPRC offices at 900 E. Michigan Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202. Comments may also be submitted via fax (414) 278-1054 or e-mail to comments@swprc.org.

Thank you.

#12534 vI

Written Comment
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 24, 2003
Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
900 E. Michigan Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: John Pardnik
Affiliation: Commercial Association of Realtors Wisconsin
Mailing Address: john@carcom.com

Comment:

Terrific concept!

Great for the transportation needs of the entire region.

Will be good for business along the corridor.

Written comments may be recorded on this sheet, and on any attached pages as may be necessary, and left at the registration table or given directly to a SWPRC staff member. Additional comments will be accepted through May 16, 2003, and may be sent to the SWPRC offices at 900 E. Michigan Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202. Comments may also be submitted via fax (414) 278-1054 or e-mail to comments@swprc.org.

Thank you.

#12536 vII
B-34

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 24, 2005

Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
395 E. Michigan Ave
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: Jeremy G. Pulte
Affiliation: MILWAUKEE SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING
Mailing Address: PO Box 3537
MILWAUKEE, WI 53201-3537
Comment: I concur with the advisory committee that a state-funded contract with MOLP would be the best solution. MOLP has on-time rates of over 90% on all of its lines. I also believe that the service would be well served to extend to Milwaukee's western suburbs. If multiple lines are desirable, a financial advantage would be lost due to its leverage from MOLP.

Written comments may be recorded on this sheet, and on any attached pages as may be necessary, and left at the registration table or given directly to a SEMMPC staff member. Additional comments will be accepted through May 16, 2005, and may be sent to the SEMMPC office, P.O. Box 1677, W289 N1812 Rockford Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53186-1817. Comments may also be submitted via fax (262) 547-1103 or e-mail at writein@semmpc.org.

Thank you.

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PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 26, 2005

Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
395 E. Michigan Ave
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: Pat L. Ludwig
Affiliation: MILWAUKEE SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING
Mailing Address: PO Box 3537
MILWAUKEE, WI 53201-3537
Comment: What is the estimated cost for the proposed line? What is the construction time line? Thank you very much.

Written comments may be recorded on this sheet, and on any attached pages as may be necessary, and left at the registration table or given directly to a SEMMPC staff member. Additional comments will be accepted through May 16, 2005, and may be sent to the SEMMPC office, P.O. Box 1677, W289 N1812 Rockford Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53186-1817. Comments may also be submitted via fax (262) 547-1103 or e-mail at writein@semmpc.org.

Thank you.

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PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 26, 2005

Downtown Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room
395 E. Michigan Ave
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: Ron Stacz
Affiliation: MILWAUKEE SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING
Mailing Address: PO Box 3537
MILWAUKEE, WI 53201-3537
Comment: I have been extremely frustrated with SEPTA for the past year and feel that the SEPTA's service and operation is unacceptable. I would prefer to see a system which is more efficient and modern. You have the SEPTA operating as a model for what a corridor transit study should be. Thank you very much.

Written comments may be recorded on this sheet, and on any attached pages as may be necessary, and left at the registration table or given directly to a SEMMPC staff member. Additional comments will be accepted through May 16, 2005, and may be sent to the SEMMPC office, P.O. Box 1677, W289 N1812 Rockford Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53186-1817. Comments may also be submitted via fax (262) 547-1103 or e-mail at writein@semmpc.org.

Thank you.

---
I support the Metro Rail and land use impact on Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha, and Kenosha County. I am a resident of the area and have been following the project closely. The project will provide a more efficient and environmentally friendly transportation system, which will benefit the communities involved. Thank you.

Michael Howard
490 W. 40 ST
Milwaukee, WI 53205

To me, the main thing is that we need to be here at all citizens of the country, of the state. If we don't have a system that works, we're going to have a problem. I believe in a well-functioning public transit system in the future. I'm looking forward to the progress. Thank you.

Eugene Blum
270 S. 3rd St
Milwaukee, WI 53207

Affidavit:
Sue Gub (GROUP) - MILWAUKEE AND KENOSHA COUNTIES
Mailing Address:
480 S. Wisconsin Ave
Milwaukee, WI 53201

Comment:
Affidavit:
Xavier Museum (GROUP) - MILWAUKEE AND KENOSHA COUNTIES
Mailing Address:
270 S. 3rd St
Milwaukee, WI 53207

Comment:
Affidavit:
John Doe (BUSINESS) - MILWAUKEE AND KENOSHA COUNTIES
Mailing Address:
200 E. Wisconsin Ave
Milwaukee, WI 53203

Comment:
Affidavit:
Jane Smith (GROUP) - MILWAUKEE AND KENOSHA COUNTIES
Mailing Address:
300 N. 40 ST
Milwaukee, WI 53205

Comment:
Affidavit:
John Doe (BUSINESS) - MILWAUKEE AND KENOSHA COUNTIES
Mailing Address:
200 E. Wisconsin Ave
Milwaukee, WI 53203

Comment:
Affidavit:
Jane Smith (GROUP) - MILWAUKEE AND KENOSHA COUNTIES
Mailing Address:
300 N. 40 ST
Milwaukee, WI 53205

Comment:
B-36
WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 24, 2008
Dawson Town Center, Harbor Light Room
900 S. Michigan Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: Michael Parker
Affiliation: None
Mailing Address: 209 N. Water St.
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Comment:
Unfortunately, I live on the far north end of the City and do not have access to the train. That is the
reason I have not heard of any opinion to the plan that is being discussed.

SECOND PAGE

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 24, 2008
Dawson Town Center, Harbor Light Room
900 S. Michigan Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: Michael Parker
Affiliation: None
Mailing Address: 209 N. Water St.
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Comment:
I also understand that the severe snow storms can make public transportation on
the lines impossible. The main issue that needs to be discussed is the number of
people that can be transported during the winter months. The city should
consider a shuttle service to the train station to make it easier for people to
use the train. The shuttle service could be an affordable and user-friendly
option. It would also help reduce the number of people affected by the
delays caused by severe weather conditions.

Third Page

WRITTEN COMMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND HEARING
KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
April 24, 2008
Dawson Town Center, Harbor Light Room
900 S. Michigan Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Name: Michael Parker
Affiliation: None
Mailing Address: 209 N. Water St.
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Comment:
I strongly support the rail alternative. It is a more convenient and efficient mode of
transportation, and it has the potential to attract more commuters and tourists.

Thank you.
In closing, I would like to say that developing the Chicago – Kenosha – Racine – Milwaukee corridor is critical to our economic future. This corridor could become one of the nation’s most important economic corridors and commuter rail is the link that connects our local economies together. This Metro extension is the catalyst for realizing the success of this economic region and we need to move it forward.

Background from Study Report

- Commuter rail is a key component in developing Milwaukee-Chicago economic corridor.
- 147,500 projected jobs are within 1.2-mile walking distance of train stations in Wisconsin alone.
- Commuter rail is important as a marketing and workforce development tool. It increases mobility for all, draws businesses and new jobs and helps expand the labor force by attracting new talent.
- Commuter rail is comparable in costs and service levels to other new systems (operating costs).
- Serves minority, low income and mobility impaired populations well.
- Commuter rail will assist in implementing the regions land use and transportation planning goals.
- Costs are affordable and funding is doable with 89% of the capital costs coming from federal programs. Additionally, a new funding source was identified: FTA 5307 formula funds for fixed guideway in urban areas over 200,000 in population.
- No funding sources will divert funds from existing transit services.
- Adding passenger capacity is very efficient and cost effective.
- Unexpected or temporary travel in rider ship are easily absorbed.
- Would reduce peak hour traffic on the area highways from 4.1% - 12.2%, depending on the specific highway being addressed.
- Will improve air quality and has no significant negative environmental impacts.

Commuter rail provides good rider ship, is simple to navigate and has high-predicted value.
To: SEWRPC
FROM: Joe Haubrich
RE: Comment re: Kenosha-Racine Milwaukie Commuter service.

I support the Commuter Rail-High Level of Service alternative.

The commuter rail or the affiliation rail and bus alternative are NOT viable alternatives. I do the Wisconsin Commuter Rail (WCR) runs from Kenosha to Milwaukee on a daily basis. While our bus driven is always crowded and his bus, the commuter rail runs give extremely poor and unreliable service. The buses are uncomfortable for a 40-minute ride and frequently break down. The Kenosha-Milwaukee runs consistently operate with the oldest buses, which have the most problems. If the temperature is 85 or above, we are guaranteed to have air conditioning service windows open to expose. When the Margarita interchange and other road projects begin, the Shorelines Road improvement between Kenosha and Racine, delays will occur and we will offer no service to any other potential riders.

The Commuter Rail - High Level of service will give a dependable, comfortable ride to commuters. My husband has ridden the Metra system to Chicago for years. When we decided to return to Wisconsin to be closer to our families, we chose to live in Pleasant Prairie because of its proximity to the Metra Station. The trains are always on schedule and few, if any, technical problems. It is a safe, pleasant ride with a consistent schedule.

The Commuter Rail - Medium level of service does not provide enough trips to be beneficial for most commuters.

The commission should also note the additional benefits of transportation services. Over the years, we have seen the economic impact of the Metra stations at the various stops along the way. Shopping districts and other businesses flourished in these areas. We also witnessed the "technical corridor" spring up in Naperville, Illinois. Part of the credit is due to the Metra stations and other services via the Metra system.

I urge SEWRPC and the communities involved to support whole-heartedly the Commuter Rail - High Level of Service.

Joe Haubrich
1433 Cooper Road
Muskego, WI 53158
B-40
April 11, 2003

Kenneth Vunker
Southeastern Wis. Regional Planning Commission
P.O. Box 1607
Waukesha, WI 53187-1607

Re: Commuter Train Extension from Kenosha to Milwaukee

Mr. Vunker,

This is a good idea for many reasons and I hope SWGC agrees and recommends this service. Reasons:

- Reduced congestion by producing spread by concentrating people in downtown areas
- Trains are as much government subsidies as cars
- Trains pollute less per person per mile
- Rail right-of-ways use much less land than highways
- Passenger cars for the trains are made in Milwaukee (All right. I know this is just a selfish economic reason.)

Please consider this a positive response for the public hearings coming up April 23-May 11. I am unable to attend.

Russell C. Jones
Russell C. Jones
319 Waukesha Cambrin
Waukesha, WI 53188

Mr. Kenneth Vunker
SEN/PC
P.O. Box 1607
Waukesha, WI 53187-1607

Dear Mr. Vunker,

I'd like to express my strong support of the Commuter Train Extension Plan. The planning process will help to spread the urban communities out and reduce the traffic congestion that exists today. The commuter train will help to reduce traffic, pollution and spread out the population and provide a healthier environment for our children.

Thank you,

Sharon Maisor
April 7, 2003

Mr. Kenneth Yunker
SEWRPC
P.O. Box 1607
Waukesha, WI 53187

Dear Mr. Yunker:

We are eager and ardent supporters of the KRM Commuter Rail Matt Study in SE Wisconsin. It would use existing right-of-way, and is a user-friendly, reliable, safe alternative to congested highways -- and she needs to keep building them.

It is also a positive link between SE Wisconsin and the greater Chicago metropolis. Nice.

We need more transportation options in SE Wisconsin, not more freeways. Investing in trains seems much smarter, efficient and economical than widening highways.

Thanks for hearing us out.

Paul and Mary Counsell
3403 N. Lake Drive
Milwaukee, WI 53211
February 17, 2003

I favor expanding Metra from Kenosha northward to Milwaukee. I live in Milwaukee but frequently travel to Kenosha, and therefore this service would be useful to me.

In addition, building this system will help protect our environment and will reduce traffic congestion in I-94.

Sincerely,

Tim Kiefer
1007 N. Cass St. Apt. 410
Milwaukee, WI 53207

December 16, 2002

300 E. Post View Dr.
Racine, WI 53402

To Ken Yunker - SEWRPC
9/10 North East Ave.
P.O. Box 197, Waukegan, IL 60085-0197

Dear Mr. Yunker,

I attended the Metra meeting in Kenosha December 11th and want to compliment you on your presentation. It was clear, positive, to the point, informed, and understandable to all the attendees. Thank you for that. More people would have attended if it were not for the heavy snow in Kenosha.

Many of us hope that the Interurban comes because it is a reality in the near future. Wisconsin has an extensive highway system but is obviously lacking in mass transportation options. Building Metra will do nothing for the town of Kenosha or the nearby communities. It will help Kenosha soils enhance the water problem. People live in these areas. I do not have that luxury and I want to drive everywhere. It would be neat to have Metra as an option for Kenosha and Racine and elsewhere on the mass transit. The GMR should push a new option and give us better choices.

Why is winning such a problem? Highways and airlines are heavily subsidized so why is it difficult to imagine subsidizing a small train initiative as a public good?

Yours truly,

Nancy Dufler

CC: Ken Leonard
Appendix B-2

WRITTEN COMMENTS RECEIVED VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL
AND THROUGH THE STUDY WEB SITE

Date received: 5/16/2003
Name: Laura P. Byste
Organization: Milwaukee, WI 53207
Comments:
I endorse the Metra Extension because it will:
* Assist in revitalizing our economy
* Develop the Milwaukee-Racine-Chicago economic corridor
* Provide easy, reliable regional access to labor, education and jobs
* Build our tax base
* Make us more competitive in attracting business and talent
* Increase property values near stations and community-wide
* Improve our air quality
* Make our city a better place to live and do business
* Be a smart investment in mobility using existing rail right-of-way in a densely populated corridor.

Date received: 5/16/2003
Name: Janice L. Franke
Organization: Taxpayers Against Airport Growth
Address: 5858 S. 112th Street
Hales Corners, WI 53130
Comments:
I support the commuter rail system. We need to move in the direction of inexpensive commuter rail rather than more and more highways. There will be less air pollution and less dependence on foreign oil.

Date received: 5/16/2003
Name: Marilyn A. John
Organization: Taxpayers Against Airport Growth
Address: 1061 Tuscola Lane
West Bend, WI 53095
Comments:
This message is also from my husband. We are very interested in cutting down the amount of pollution, traffic and congestion in the city of Milwaukee. Light rail will allow the people in the inner city to have methods of transportation, especially since a high percentage can not afford cars.

Light rail will also eliminate the need to ruin the beautiful city of Milwaukee by increasing the Marquette Interchange to ten lanes or whatever ridiculous plan has been promoted recently. The transportation designs for highways have lacked vision and the light rail idea has been given little attention. Act now! Let’s get started with light rail to save the city of Milwaukee.

Date received: 5/16/2003
Name: Russell J. Burkel
Organization:Milwaukee, WI 53242
Comments:
I attended the hearing in Cudahy on May 1.
I think the benefits of a commuter rail system connecting with the Chicago Metra are obvious. It would definitely improve the economic health and quality of life of southeastern Wisconsin. Concerning the level of service, I agree with the concept of an extension of the existing Kenosha-Chicago service. Frequency of service should be the same. The cost projections however seem very high. To high. Have Metra or SEWRPC considered and shopped for used rail coaches? If Amtrak cuts back on long distance rail there may be coaches available. Surely serviceable used coaches are available in North America.

Also the track and signal costs at $69.9 million seem very high. Has a worldwide search been done to find the most cost effective signalling systems?

The British have a saying, “Value for Money”. Rail at $150 million plus, does not pass the test. Cost reduction is the key to taxpayer support of this effort. If the cost of rail is not reduced, I then think the bus alternative is the only feasible system.

Date received: 5/16/2003
Name: Laura P. Byste
Address: 3132 A. S. New York
Milwaukee, WI 53207
Organization:
Comments: I endorse the Metra Extension because it will:
* Assist in revitalizing our economy
* Develop the Milwaukee-Racine-Chicago economic corridor
* Provide easy, reliable regional access to labor, education and jobs
* Build our tax base
* Make us more competitive in attracting business and talent
* Increase property values near stations and community-wide
* Improve our air quality
* Make our city a better place to live and do business
* Be a smart investment in mobility using existing rail right-of-way in a densely populated corridor.

Date received: 5/16/2003
Name: James Gallagher
Organization: greater milwaukee green party
Address: 1001 e. keefe ave
milwaukee, wi 53212
Comments: I am very interested in having new rail options develop between Milwaukee and Chicago. I think that extending the Metra into Milwaukee is a great way to do this. I believe this is a great alternative to driving for commuters and weekend travelers. It would also be a great way to improve air quality and cut down on the load on highways by cutting down on automobile travel.

However, I believe that if the Metra is to be expanded, proper consideration should be given to promote it to encourage people to use it as a replacement for driving. Discounts, tax relief and advertising should be considered as part of the plan.

Date received: 5/16/2003
Name: Russell J. Burkel
Organization:Milwaukee, WI 53242
Comments: I attended the hearing in Cudahy on May 1.
I think the benefits of a commuter rail system connecting with the Chicago Metra are obvious. It would definitely improve the economic health and quality of life of southeastern Wisconsin. Concerning the level of service, I agree with the concept of an extension of the existing Kenosha-Chicago service. Frequency of service should be the same. The cost projections however seem very high. To high. Have Metra or SEWRPC considered and shopped for used rail coaches? If Amtrak cuts back on long distance rail there may be coaches available. Surely serviceable used coaches are available in North America.

Also the track and signal costs at $69.9 million seem very high. Has a worldwide search been done to find the most cost effective signalling systems?

The British have a saying, “Value for Money”. Rail at $150 million plus, does not pass the test. Cost reduction is the key to taxpayer support of this effort. If the cost of rail is not reduced, I then think the bus alternative is the only feasible system.

Date received: 5/16/2003
Name: David N. Boucher
Address: 1727 North 34th Street
Milwaukee, WI 52208
Organization:Milwaukee, WI 53233-2552
Comments: Improved commuter rail service linking communities in southeastern WI with Chicago and each other is long overdue. I commend those visionaries willing to put in the effort to push rail service - light or heavy - in the region. I will willingly use it, especially if there are accommodations for bicycles. Rail and cycle are natural companions - I have used the combination regularly on the east coast. This is a must greater priority than highway expansion, particularly as the county of Milwaukee is concerned.

Thank you
David Boucher
Date received: 5/16/2003  
Name: Kay Gregor  
Organization: SEWRPC  
Address:  
Comments:  
We are very fortunate to have the right of ways still in place. I hope our leaders will see that we move smartly to take this opportunity to expand train travel. It is not only smart, but it is the right thing to do for so many reasons: mobility of employment opportunities, the environment, less pollution, culture advantages, cost is not that high in relationship to other expenditures: ball parks, terrorism training (recent Chicago run-through), etc. This is an important part of our infrastructure! Please do the right thing, you can even raise my taxes to do so!! Kay Gregor, Racine - age 58 homeowner and employed by a non-profit organization in downtown Racine.

Date received: 5/16/2003  
Name: John D. Griffith  
Organization: Tri City National Bank  
Address:  
Comments:  
Tri City National Bank endorses the Metra Extension because it will:  
* Assist in revitalizing the Greater Racine economy by attracting employers seeking locations that provide a wide variety of transportation options and easy access to Racine area sites.  
* Develop the Milwaukee-Racine-Chicago economic corridor by stimulating access of people and employers into the Greater Racine community.  
* Increase our tax base through surrounding development where Metra links are established and increased employment expansion.  
* Stimulate increased investment in quality of life and destination point businesses through ease of access to Lakefront and Downtown Racine areas.  
* Create greater employment opportunities for Greater Racine area residents, particularly within the Central-City of Racine, by providing access to Chicagoland and Milwaukee area employers.  
* Make the Greater Racine area a more attractive place to live and do business  
* Be a smart investment in mobility using existing rail right-of-way in a densely populated corridor  
* Achieve one of the seven challenges of the Racine County Economic Development Corporation’s Economic Development Plan for Racine, calling for the creation of a Chicago-Racine-Milwaukee Economic Corridor. This challenge can only be truly met through a viable transportation link between the three communities. We urge you to proceed with this planned expansion as both the initial start-up and annual investments will have a positive impact on the Greater Racine market.

Date received: 5/16/2003  
Name: Bill Sell  
Organization: Bike The Hoan Coalition  
Address: 316 N. Milwaukee #555 Milwaukee, WI 53202  
Comments:  
Mr. Ken Yunker  
SEWRPC  
Dear Ken  
As you know, I live and work between Bay View and downtown. I commute by bicycle when I can. I am writing in support of the Metra plan. In fact, when my business needed me to do so, I commuted to Chicago. Driving was such a chore that it eroded my ability to work effectively in an executive sales environment. Amtrak at that time was just not flexible enough for my needs. And too costly, even when it became available. A friend commutes every day, but he has a 6 figure salary, and a family who needs to be in Milwaukee.

I lived in Hales Corners when there was an interurban transit system. In 20 minutes we were on 3rd and Michigan, but I was too young to appreciate what the value of that was.

Please do not be tempted to compromise on Metra with the plan to mix bus and rail. Once your clientele has to monkey around with transfers and schedules, the car or Amtrak will begin to look relatively attractive and the value of Metra will be corroded.

A fixed rail alternative, according to my reading, will attract economic development. And there will be a day when gasoline is no longer cheap, and rail by then will be much more costly than it is now.

One more thing: to work with your Illinois planners to convince Metra of the value of bringing bicycles on board. If we ever get to a weekend service, that might be the chance to give this bike transit a good test. Oh, yes, I would love to have Metra take me and my friends to Highland Park on summer evenings, to the Ravinia music festival. Someday.

Date received: 5/16/2003  
Name: Nancy Davlantes  
Organization:  
Address: 5883 Sugarbush Lane Greendale, WI 53129  
Comments:  
Please add my name to those support the extension of the METRA rail line into Milwaukee. I would welcome the opportunity to ride the train to Chicago and stop in between. We need alternatives to the automobile and I think this is a great idea!

Thanks for taking my comments.

Date received: 5/16/2003  
Name: Maureen A. Schuerman  
Organization: Oak Creek, WI 53154  
Address: 8767 S. Knollhaven  
Comments:  
Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,  
i am in full support of extending the Metra train through Racine, the south suburbs of Milwaukee and the city of Milwaukee.  
I live and have a business in Oak Creek and I travel to Chicago approximately once a week. Taking a train to Chicago would allow me to grow my business as well as reduce my car emissions.  
In the end, I would be able to improve our state by bring more money into Wisconsin by expanding my business and by improving the environment in our area.  
Because of these benefits to our state, I ask you to support the extension of the Metra train line.  
Thank you for considering my input.  
Sincerely,  
Maureen Schuerman  

Date received: 5/16/2003  
Name: Rene O’Connor  
Organization:  
Address: 1979 S. 15 St. Milwaukee, WI 53204  
Comments:  
I fully support the KRM. This is exactly what we need to grow.

Date received: 5/16/2003  
Name: Sharon M. Ward  
Organization: Wardski’s Inc  
Address: 1979 S. 15 St. Milwaukee, WI 53204  
Comments:  
I think the Metra as proposed will be a valuable asset to those of us in southeastern WI and will also provide alternate transportation to those communities services by Metra both in WI & IL.  
It will also allow less congestion at O’Hara as Mitchell Field in Milwaukee will be more easily reached and vice-versa.

Date received: 5/16/2003  
Name: Kit (Vivian M.) Keller  
Organization:  
Address: W62 N799 Sheboygan Road Cedarburg, WI 53012  
Comments:  
I heartily support the Chicago Metra extension, and other innovative proposals like it.  
I grew up in the midwest and lived in the Washington, DC area for five years before coming to Wisconsin in 1993. In Washington, DC I observed that public transportation helped mitigate traffic congestion and also improved the economy, safety, and friendliness of the neighborhoods around stations. Although the Metra extension is
I found that my life in our nation’s capital region was easier because of the benefits of a well-planned multi-modal transportation system. The system was so good that it enticed me to use it and leave my car at home. My daily walk one mile to the station and one mile from the station to my office helped to keep me in great physical condition. As we plan our transportation system, we really need to be thinking about making healthy physical activity part of community design. It is a growing national priority in the face of obese children who now evidence serious diseases once reserved for obese adults and obese adults who have chronic diseases that could have been prevented through a more active life style.

We have designed physical activity out of our transportation system. We need to change that!

I have followed the Metra issue in the newspaper and via newsgroups and want to weigh in personally to say “make this happen!” We owe this to future generations. The traffic congestion and the frenetic and dangerous driving behavior of many motorists in Southeastern Wisconsin is not taking us in the direction of a sustainable region that people and businesses really want to invest in. We need to turn the tide and focus on long-term transportation that is sustainable and makes sense. Will people adjust their behavior like I did? Yes, I believe they will. I continue to make healthy transportation choices, and it seems to inspire other people. My life and my neighborhood is better because of the daily transportation choices I make.

We need to put as much time, money and effort into promoting public transportation and other alternatives like bicycling and walking as we have committed to encouraging people to drive automobiles at an ever faster pace in ever larger cars that use ever more fuel.

I highly recommend making pedestrians the first priority in the design of stations and the ingress and egress areas. The result will be a greater sense of “welcome, we’re glad to see you” for everyone. In developing the plans for the Metra extension, please be sure to include bikes on the system as well as bike parking at the stations.

Since moving to Wisconsin 10 years ago, I have increasingly wondered why there is such resistance to light rail (another transportation option I highly encourage). The economic development opportunities that accompany a well-planned light rail system are remarkable and much needed in Milwaukee. I just returned from Portland, Oregon. That city is living evidence of what 25 years of solid planning can do to promote improved community quality of life. Our region is falling behind. We need to take a more courageous and sustainable, well-planned approach to all that we do. That’s smart growth.

Thank you for your consideration!

Date received: 5/16/2003
Name: Barbara A. DeMatthew
Organization: 2108 Geneva St
Racine, WI  53402
Comments: Racine really needs to have the metra come here. By connecting Milwaukee/Racine/Kenosha and the Greater Chicago area - it would improve the economy and the environment in southeastern Wisconsin.

Date received: 5/16/2003
Name: M. Williams
Organization: 3145 South 47th Street (Apt. 5)
Milwaukee, WI  53219
Comments: To Whom It May Concern:

I am in support of the Commuter Rail Alternative for the KRM corridor study. It is my strong impression that this alternative will better serve Milwaukee and neighboring lake front communities in SE Wisconsin if it also accommodates the following:

1. Audible/Visual information (especially emergency exit information) in a multi-lingual format
2. Facilities for persons with limited mobility, persons with disabilities and/or low-vision (steps, seats, schedules, etc.)
3. Facilities to accommodate bicycles, walkers, wheelchairs on the commuter trains AND short & long term bicycle parking at each anticipated station (racks, lockers, etc.)
4. The commuter rail service should coordinate with local transit service at all anticipated stops. Local transit service should accommodate all of the before mentioned travel needs (bikes, walkers, wheelchair, etc.) to provide seamless transportation options.
5. If possible, the commuter rail travel time from Milwaukee to Chicago (and vise versa) should be improved. The current predictions are that commuter rail service will take over 2 hours one way.

Thanks for your time.

Date received: 5/16/2003
Name: Therese M. Van Ryne
Organization: Leadership Racine
Address: 3641 Pleasant Lane
Racine, WI  53405
Comments: I endorse the Metra Extension because it will:
* Assist in revitalizing our economy
* Develop the Milwaukee-Racine-Chicago economic corridor
* Provide easy, reliable regional access to labor, education and jobs
* Build our tax base
* Make us more competitive in attracting business and talent
* Increase property values near stations and community-wide
* Improve our air quality
* Make our city a better place to live and do business
* Be a smart investment in mobility using existing rail right-of-way in a densely populated corridor

Thank you for all you do! Have a great weekend!

Date received: 5/16/2003
Name: David Schlabowske
Organization: The Bicycle Federation of WI
Address: 1845 N. Farwell Ave., Suite 220
Milwaukee, WI  53202
Comments: I am writing in support of the Metra KRM extension to Milwaukee. I support spending transportation funds on mass transit. I also support increased spending on multimodal links. To that end, I would like to see Metra offer bicycle storage on a regular basis should it connect to Milwaukee.

Thanks You,

Dave Schlabowske
Milwaukee Program Manager
The Bicycle Federation of WI

Date received: 5/16/2003
Name: Paul W. Roberts
Organization: Leadership Racine
Address: 1801 Park Ave.
Racine, WI  53403
Comments: Hello-
I am in favor of the extension of passenger rail service beyond Kenosha Wis. to Milwaukee Wis. with stops in between. I would love to park my car and ride the fast, reliable, resource efficient mode of transportation that is enjoyed by some of the most advanced thinking societies in the world.

That would be one less car from Racine to Milwaukee at least 5 days a week and after 6 or 7.

Let's get this happening and get a sustainable economy going.

Thank you for your time,
Paul Roberts

Date received: 5/16/2003
Name: Bonnie B. Prochaska
Organization: Sustainable Racine
Address: 413 Main Street
Racine, WI  53403
Comments: Last year the Sustainable Racine Advisory Board officially endorse to support the efforts being made to extend the commuter rail line up to Milwaukee.

From it's inception, Sustainable Racine has identified the need in the Greater Racine Area that rail service needs to be available from Milwaukee to Chicago. Giving more people the opportunity to live, work and enjoy the Greater Racine area.
The Sustainable Racine Advisory Board strongly endorses the extension.

Date received: 5/16/2003
Name: Debra S. Truckey
Organization: Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce
Address: 300 5th Street
Racine, WI 53402
Comments: PLEASE! Keep the funding in the budget for the KRM Commuter Rail project. This connection between people and employment opportunities is critical as we think forward to our next generations.

Please don’t lose sight of this valuable project.

Debbie Truckey
Mobility Manager
RAMAC
262-681-1830
dtruckey@wi.rr.com

Date received: 5/16/2003
Name: John T. Dickert
Organization: Racine Planning Commission
Address: 2400 Kinzie Ave.
Racine, WI 53406
Comments: As a member of the planning comission in Racine and a Realtor for Coldwell Banker, I can assure you that there is nothing more important for the growth and revitalization of Racine than commuter rail. As a person who has had the privilage to have traveled the world, one common denonominator for every great city I have witnessed is the strong support of their infrastructure and mass transit.

The need is necessary and vital to our long term sustainability.

Help us grow together.

John

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: Rosanne Kuemmel
Organization: Racine Planning Commission
Address: 4227 Harvest Ln
Racine, WI 53402
Comments: I wish to voice my opposition to the extension of Metra (or any other rail service) north from Kenosha to Milwaukee. We cannot afford this in good economic times much less when our economy is struggling. Racine has the highest unemployment in the state, and we cannot afford to spend millions of dollars in start-up costs and subsidies every year. The well is dry!!!

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: Joan T. Rack
Organization: Racine Planning Commission
Address: 4324 S. Lenox Street
Milwaukee, WI 53207
Comments: I am in favor of the commuter rail plan to extend Metra from Kenosha to Milwaukee. It will provide an inexpensive means of transportation between Chicago and Milwaukee. I’ve wanted this service extended for many years. However, I support the higher level of service, which would include several trains running in the evening. This will allow people from Illinois to attend sports, festival and theater events in Milwaukee, as well as Wisconsinites doing the same in Chicago. Perhaps costs could be saved by not running as many trains during midday, but adding trains in the evening. A second benefit of the extension would be to attract air passengers to Mitchell Field. I look forward to hearing of the progression of this plan.

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: Joshua Waldoch
Organization: Racine Planning Commission
Address: 4324 S. Lenox Street
Milwaukee, WI 53207
Comments: To who it may concern,

I totally disagree with the notion of a commuter rail from Kenosha to Milwaukee. There already is Amtrak, and if that is not located exactly right, it would be much cheaper and cost effective than adding something that will cost $15 million annually after initial start up costs. I don’t see how Wisconsin with a $2 bil. deficit and rising, can afford to bring that kind of an increase without having to increase taxes that are already going to be increased to fix our budget problems. Wisconsin doesn’t need anymore increases when it already is one of the highest taxed states.

Another reason I disagree with the commuter rail is that it will be a failure. I don’t believe, and haven’t seen high enough demand for there to be commuter rail. Once again I will use Amtrak as an example. Not to long ago it had to cut back on routes because there was not enough people using it. I don’t see how this will be any different. Milwaukee is not Chicago. Again, I state that I am extremely opposed to the idea of a commuter rail system.

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: Ron Vandenboom
Organization: Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce
Address: 524 124th St
Franksville, WI 53126
Comments: Commuter rail has been over, and over been proven to be a waste of money and energy. Nobody rides them, they are useless.

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: Gladys Simandl
Organization: Racine Planning Commission
Address: 4371 S. Lake Drive
Cudahy, WI 53110
Comments: I support and applaud your efforts to expand the Metra to Milwaukee. This will increase recreational and educational activities to the people of the county. Thanks

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: Leona G. VandeVusse
Organization: Racine Planning Commission
Address: 4371 S. Lake Dr.
Cudahy, WI 53110-1241
Comments: I support extending the Metra line into Milwaukee. It will be a great benefit to my community (Cudahy) and will expand recreational and educational opportunities for me personally. Please expedite the process of extending train travel for all citizens to improve commuting and reduce pollution. Thank you. Feel free to contact me if I could be of additional assistance (414-744-9941). Dr. Leona VandeVusse

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: James Morrison
Organization: Racine Planning Commission
Address: 620 North St.
Racine, WI 53402
Comments: My wife Sylvia and I favor establishment of commuter rail north from Kenosha through Racine and on to Milwaukee. We currently make use of the Metra system by driving to Kenosha and riding to Chicago from there. Currently, because we are senior citizens, we have senior passes from Metra which saves us 50% in rail costs. Also, we believe commuter rail will benefit the communities by offering opportunities for employment and enable existing companies to recruit employees from outside their communities. This is a forward-looking step that Southeast Wisconsin must have.

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: Mary Louise Mussoline
Organization: Racine Planning Commission
Address: 2969 N. Shepard Ave
Milwaukee, WI 53211
Comments: I support the Metra because I think that public transportation via train will enhance our economic base by linking communities to jobs and entertainment. The East Coast trains are very valuable and convenient, we should have similar service. Saves on time, traffic and environment.
I attended the May 1, 2003 Meeting held at Cudahy, listened to some of the presentation and the comments given by participants at that meeting. That’s the only meeting I attended, but I felt compelled to give my comments concerning the proposed plans for this transit corridor. Besides, written comments were encouraged.

This transit corridor already has the greatest amount of public and private transit, anywhere in the state of Wisconsin. I will be concerned here, with Milwaukee to Chicago runs, but it must be understood that there are generally, an equal number of return trips available. Existing transportation modes follow:

Amtrak. Milwaukee to Sturtevant to Glenview to Chicago. Milw departure times are: 0620, 0800, 1050, 1PM, 3PM, 5:45PM, and 7:30 PM. 7 trips daily except Sunday when the earliest one is eliminated. This gets passengers to Chicago in around one and one half hours. One-way fare is $20.

Wisconsin Coach Lines, Kenosha Service. Eight Coach Lines Buses run from Milwaukee to Kenosha via Racine and intermediate stops. Milwaukee Departures are: 0515, 0700, 0850, Noon, 2PM, 4:25PM, 5:15PM & 9 PM. Nine return trips. Current Bus fare to Kenosha is $4. Typical Milw to Kenosha time is One Hour 25 minutes.

These Coach Lines Buses can meet with Metra Trains, Kenosha to Chicago. There are as many as 24 Metra stops in between Kenosha and Chicago. Trains leave Kenosha at 0655, 0617, 0653, 0715, 0715, 0849, 2:49PM, 5:15PM, 11:35PM. That makes Nine, Southbound. A typical time from Kenosha to Chicago is One Hour, 33 min, although they vary a little depending on intermediate stations that may be skipped. There are 8 return trips to Kenosha. Current One Way Adult fare is $6.10.

Many of the comments heard at the Cudahy meeting concerned that there is no way for people to go from Chicago to Milwaukee to Milwaukee for cultural events and the like, probably because the last Amtrak Train isn’t late enough. [Leave Milwaukee at 7:30 PM and Leave Chicago at 8:05 PM.] People should investigate transit options more carefully.


Currently, Greyhound runs 13 trips from Milwaukee to Chicago at the following times: 0315, 0700, 0800, 1045, 12:30 PM, 1:15 PM, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8 PM, 9:45 and 11:45. Note that the 0700, 12:30 PM and 3 PM runs stop at Kenosha and Waukegan and Skokie, on their way to Chicago Downtown. Those trips with the extra stops, take around 3 hours. The Milwaukee to Chicago direct trips take One hour 45 minutes typically. This is only 15 minutes longer than Amtrak. Fare is $13. There are 13 trips Chicago to Milwaukee with 3 of them involving Kenosha.

The above is existing transit within the corridor. Not mentioned are transit systems within Milwaukee, Racine and Kenosha, which can dispense riders from existing train or bus stops. This includes Racine service to Sturtevant, an Amtrak station location.

Now, from what I understand, the recommended proposal is to purchase Four train sets and have Chicago’s Metra operate them. They would run from Milwaukee to Chicago. Even with these trains, Milwaukee to Kenosha time would close to one hour. This is 25 minutes less that the current bus time. Even if this train were available right now, nobody would take this route from Milwaukee to Chicago. Why? Because it would take too long. Milw to Kenosha would be 1 hour and Existing Metra Kenosha to Chicago is One hour 33 minutes. Total time then would be TWO hours 33 minutes, around an hour more than Amtrak. Not likely to be too popular.

Back to the 4 train sets. “Each would have from 3 to 8 cars,” I read somewhere. After the Cudahy meeting ended, I asked a member of the audience who did testify and who seemed knowledgeable about the METRA system, how many passengers each typical coach would carry. He indicated 152 for each bi-level coach. They fill up as the mode of transportation progresses to the Destination at the population center. Therefore, larger longer trains are needed at the start of a run so they can ‘fill up’ as they progress toward Chicago in this case.

Much of your proposed plan is all wrong in so many ways. Let’s look at a couple examples, one from History. What did Railroads do on smaller runs when their passenger count was drying up but they hadn’t gotten permission to abandon the route yet? I remember seeing pictures of these cars. One was a RDC car. This was about the size of one passenger coach and had a diesel engine built in to run the thing. Bud was one of the manufacturers of these. Another was something called a Gas-Electric car. This wasn’t as large as the RDC but there was a gasoline engine in it for power. What could be done, then, since the ridership would not be present at least right away, is to start out with smaller capacity like a RDC (which stands for Rail Diesel Car) and if ridership warrants, add another one. They can be operated in Multiple Units if desired. Someone must make something like this car somewhere in this world. Try countries from the former Soviet Union or China. Furthermore, we can work Metra operating to Milwaukee. Leave them end at Kenosha as they do now. Run these RDC cars Milwaukee to Kenosha with whatever stops in between are desired. Think of all the Media flack you would get if you actually did run an R-D car train from Milwaukee. It would look empty, even at Kenosha, because it would be.

Another example from a different mode of travel. I had occasion to use the computer to find information on an airline flight from Rhinelander to Milwaukee. They use a Beechcraft 1900D Prop plane, which holds 18 passengers and 2 pilots. No room. Now why wouldn’t they use a 747 or 767 or DC-9-30, which holds 84 passengers? Probably because it is not cost effective. That is, there’s not enough traffic or passengers to warrant using such a large aircraft. As the passengers arrive at the HUB of Milwaukee, they would TRANSFER to a larger plane for a flight to Boston, for example.

From comments heard at the Cudahy meeting, I get the idea that some people do not like the idea of Transferring from one train to another. Tough. Let them get used to it. The airline transfer at Milwaukee is a good example, above. I had occasion with a group, to go to South Bend, Ind. We drove to Winnetka because there were no decent Metra connections on Saturday. We took the CTA to it I think it was Randolph St. We then walked a block or so to the underground South Shore Line station for our trip to South Bend. But between Winnetka and Downtown Chicago, we had to transfer from one CTA train to another, by crossing from one side of some station platform to the other. Now, I was certainly glad that others in the group knew how to do this, since I would get all messed up with such activities. Getting off the CTA at the right place in Downtown Chicago is another problem. But what I am trying to point out here is that transfers are part of the transportation scheme. And one has to live with it.

If a passenger in Kenosha wanted to get to Chicago in a hurry, they would do well to investigate first traveling to Racine, thence to Sturtevant to catch Amtrak.

There are those who consider the cost of Amtrak to be excessive. Amtrak costs $20 while this proposed plan would cost about $10.10. This last figure is currently the case also. These figures are from Milwaukee to Chicago. The solution is to increase the subsidy for Amtrak. All the ground transit modes are subsidized anyway. Perhaps a Milw to Chicago ticket could be $15 instead of $20. That may even increase ridership.

Comment was made about travel from Wisconsin to Northern Suburbs in Illinois. This option currently exists with a Coach Lines bus transfer to Metra in Kenosha, or via Greyhound to Waukegan.

Summarizing then, in my view, of the three transit choices that remain from who knows how many have been considered, they are all wrong. In fact, there are already so many transit choices in the Milwaukee Kenoshra Corridor; it makes the rest of the state look sick. I have a cottage in Tomahawk. Do you think I can get to Tomahawk by public transportation? No Way. The closest I can get is Wausau or Rhinelander. Here you spend a ton of money on STUDIES, when there already exists many modes of public transportation in that Milwaukee to Kenosha corridor.

I am not even sold on the RAIL option, but it does make some sense that this method would provide transportation OFF the Road where congestion is just bound to get worse, over the years. Besides, the rail option is faster from Milwaukee to Kenosha by perhaps 25 minutes.

Again, if the rail corridor path from Milwaukee to Kenosha is to be considered, then methods of rail transportation as mentioned earlier, NOT EIGHT CAR TRAINSETS, would certainly be more cost effective. Then, if and when the traffic warrants, great capacity can be added if and when ridership increases at a later time. Much later. Then, some of the comments about re-vitalizing areas along the rail corridor may come true.

Where does the money come from? I heard comments that other than the Federal Transit grants, the remainder of the funds should come from the State. Local funds MAY be used for renovation Depots. This is what I heard at the Cudahy meeting. Well, the State is billions in the hole and funding will not exist from this source. Therefore, I would propose a ½% sales tax be assessed in the communities thru the state who are along the railroad. This would provide transportation to South Bend, Ind. and other areas.

The reason is because the rail option is faster from Milwaukee to Kenosha by perhaps 25 minutes. Well, the State is billions in the hole and funding will not exist from this source. Therefore, I would propose a ½% sales tax be assessed in the communities thru the state who are along the railroad. This would provide transportation to South Bend, Ind. and other areas.

I hope my comments have been acceptable; even they seem to go against the
Thank You,

Charles Merten
1037 White Rock Av.
Waukesha, WI 53186

Submitted via internet 15 May 2003

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: Richard A. Hansen
Organization: Johnson Financial Group
Address: 555 Main Street, Suite 400
Racine, WI 53403

Comments:
As a major employer and catalyst for the betterment of Racine and southeastern Wisconsin, the Johnson Financial Group is greatly supportive and excited about the proposed commuter rail extension in the Kenosha, Racine and Milwaukee corridor. Currently, over 650 of our associates live in these communities and commute to our various locations each day.

Our company does business in various parts of the state, but primarily in southeastern Wisconsin. Our associates conduct business meetings in Racine, Kenosha, Milwaukee and Chicago. A commuter rail service, such as proposed, would be a great benefit to our business; enhancing the ease of doing business with our clients and our colleagues. The service would allow our associates to perform more efficiently and effectively.

During non-business hours we feel certain that our associates would use the commuter rail service to improve their quality of life and participate more actively in the professional and social lifestyles uniquely available in metropolitan Chicago and Milwaukee.

As our company grows, and to further strengthen the synergies with our internal and external partners, there is a greater need for our associates to work in (and commute to and from) the cities of Racine and Kenosha. Both cities are growing rapidly; adding new/anchor businesses daily. Companies are requesting that new associates relocate to move to these communities. In fact, as a company, we’ve found that it is challenging to hire new associates due to their family needs and the difficulties they’ve found in commuting into Racine and/or Kenosha.

Please accept this response as a formal statement of support of the proposed commuter rail service by the Johnson Financial Group and its members. Thank you.

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: Sandie J. Mitcheltree
Organization: Johnson Financial Group
Address: 2747 North 53rd Street
Milwaukee, WI 53210

Comments:
I hope I’m not too late to voice my support for continuing the Chicago Metra up to Milwaukee.

I currently use the Metra, but must drive to Kenosha to do so. Milwaukee is a fine city. Let’s make it better by providing more transportation options. Get people out of those cars!!!

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: Keisha Smith
Organization: Johnson Financial Group
Address: 6629 Hillcrest Drive
Hartford, WI 53027-8851

Comments:
As a Milwaukeean who travels frequently to Chicagoland for both business and pleasure, I definitely favor the expansion of the Metra line. It would also be a great boon for Milwaukee tourism. I know that many of my Chicago friends associate would attend more of the festivals, etc if they could ride the commuter rail here.

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: Kenneth J. Schuh
Organization: Johnson Financial Group
Address: 723 Main Street
Racine, WI 53403

Comments:
I fully support the expansion of Metra into more of Southeastern Wisconsin. For several years while living in the Chicago suburbs, I was a regular Metra rider. The dependability and reliability of the trains were exceptional. Riding Metra sure beat sitting in traffic. I like the idea of rail service expansion, and I like the idea of expanding an existing reliable system (Metra) vs. Wisconsin trying to build a new system. I would hope that some day this could expand northwest and west of Milwaukee.

Let’s take advantage of this opportunity now and reap the benefits, rather than trying to do it 20 years from now, when it will be much more difficult.

Metra’s recent addition of a new line (the North Central Service) a few years back seems to have been a big success. The existing Wisconsin Central tracks were used, but needed the upgrades for passenger service. Likewise, the existing Union Pacific tracks are there between Kenosha and Milwaukee, let’s make the upgrades, and get this done. The region should continue to move forward in this direction.

Thank you for your service in planning the future of Southeastern Wisconsin. Please consider Metra’s expansion in those plans going forward.

Ken Schuh

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: Jay Larkey
Organization: Johnson Financial Group
Address: 5801 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53406

Comments:
From Dr. Jay Larkey (retired) and Lois Malawsky of Fox Point, 414-352-4907. Both are in favor of the Metra extension and improved public transit services. This would be a much more prudent use of resources than continuing to widen highways. Eventually extending commuter rail service to the west and north (if Milwaukee) would also be good. Extending the Metra service would allow them to get rid of one of their cars.

Date received: 5/15/03, 11:45 a.m.
Name: John C. Murphy
Organization: Johnson Financial Group
Address: 2853 W. Giddings St.
Chicago, IL 60625

Comments:
I am supportive of the idea of extending rail from Racine to Milwaukee and from Racine to Kenosha...and our family would use it.

I am still confused about the cost of implementing the project and the anticipated cost benefit.

Thank you

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: Hollis Russinof
Organization: Johnson Financial Group
Address: 6637 N. Roslyn Ave.
Hartford, WI 53027-8851

Comments:
I hope it is not too late to voice my support for continuing the Metra to the Milwaukee County and all points north to Milwaukee County.

Let’s take advantage of this opportunity now and reap the benefits, rather than waiting 20 years from now, when it will be much more difficult.

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Thank you

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: Georgia L. Herrera
Organization: Johnson Financial Group
Address: 723 Main Street
Racine, WI 53403

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Thank you

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: Georgia L. Herrera
Organization: Johnson Financial Group
Address: 723 Main Street
Racine, WI 53403

Comments:
Dear Interested Parties:

Please register my strong support for the extension of commuter rail into Racine County and all points north to Milwaukee County.

I have taken the Metra system in the past to commute to work in Chicago. I would surely use Metra to commute to Milwaukee for my court appearances. I am certain that many of my Chicago friends associate would attend more of the festivals, etc if they could ride the commuter rail here.

Please give this installation of Commuter Rail into Racine County all due consideration.

B-49
Thank you

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: Brian Dey
Organization: Just Cause Wisconsin
Address:
Comments: Dear Sirs:

As co-founder of Just Cause Wisconsin, I feel it necessary to explain our position on Light/Metro Rail. The cost outweighs any benefits. More accessible highways provide more at a far lower cost, and they will be used. We don't have the urban sprawl of New York, L.A. or Chicago. Better use of tax dollars could be used to upgrade our existing freeway system and future development of a freeway corridor east of I-94.

In a time when our budget is at a deficit and our existing freeways need repair, we can not spend money on a system that has failed in other areas of the country. JCW strongly urges you to vote against ANY plan where light/metro rail is involved.

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: John Hanahan
Organization: Racine County
Address:
Comments: I am very much opposed to the proposed expansion. The cost is grossly out of control and is a burden the tax payers can not afford to bear. Ridership is low and will not increase. It is a waste of money.

Date received: 5/15/2003
Name: MARLENE M. SCHERRER
Organization: Racine County
Address:
Comments: WE CANNOT AFFORD MORE COSTS TO TAXPAYERS. LET'S TRY TO LIVE MORE BY THE 'WAY IT WORKS' IN ECONOMICS, RATHER THAN FALLING INTO THE TRAP OF DOING WHAT DOESN'T WORK . . . LIKE overspending, or spending what we don't have.

Let's not have commuter rail UNLESS AND UNTIL we have the money to pay for it without taxpayer subsidy..................THAT'S MY VOTE! Thank you.

Date received: 5/14/2003
Name: Donald A. Wescher
Organization: Greater Milwaukee Green Party
Address: 2110 6th Ave.
South Milwaukee, WI 53172
Comments: Please support the proposed metro rail link between Kenosha & Milwaukee. I have long been concerned about living in a more sustainable society, having been involved in the First Earth Day in 1970. I subsequently learned how various large corporations connected with the automobile industry bought up over 100 municipal trolley lines around the U.S. and then dismantled them to eliminate such competition they were later convicted of anti-trust violations but each corporate executive received a fine of just one dollar (!) and each corporation $10,000 after spending millions to buy up the trolley lines in the first place (there was a documentary about this on public television in recent years). Now we have rush hour congestion needing billions of dollars to continually expand expressways, etc. Indeed, as others have coined the phrase--we now have two seasons here in the midwest, "winter & construction." Ivan Illich, a writer, once wrote that if we added up all the hours we spent upon our automobiles, we actually would get to our destinations faster if we walked there. And that does not even include such factors like perhaps part of the motivation for our military interventions in Iraq and probably elsewhere involving the usage and control of diminishing oil resources. Indeed some analysts feel that we are very close to reaching the peak of oil production on Earth--then what do we do? People complain about the costs of mass transit, but has there ever been a good comparison of rail vs. auto costs that include such things as the accident rates, increased pollution causing higher health care costs (I am a retired nurse), costs of maintenance and expansion, etc.? I was impressed by some of the excellent mass transit systems in Europe when I was in the U.S. Army in Germany and realized that you can only get so many cars in a densely populated area before causing congestion and therefore needing very costly expansion. The proposed rail link provides an option that can relieve such congestion/expansion, which I hope you will support. Thank you.

Date received: 5/14/2003
Name: Cindy Evanoff
Organization: Racine County
Address: 8424 Stonegate Road
Wind Lake, WI
Comments: To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to comment on the proposed commuter rail from Kenosha to Milwaukee. This is probably one of the biggest wastes of taxpayer dollars that could be thought of. We do not have major traffic issues in this area from a commuting standpoint and the cost per rider will be exorbitant. Check out the number of passengers that would ride this on a daily basis to and from Chicago/Milwaukee/Kenosha. I have ridden on Amtrack for business and it is not overcrowded. Please exercise some common sense and spend our tax dollars a little more wisely so that the MAJORITY of taxpayers will benefit from something and not the minority. We are a republic after all and majority rules, not the politically correct minority.

Date received: 5/14/2003
Name: Doan Poelman
Organization:
Address: 2935 Forest View Circle
Franksville, WI 53126
Comments: I just wanted to voice my opinion that I think the expansion of the Metra is a rip-off to taxpayers and will actually worsen Racine's economy, and I am vehemently against it.

I find the anecdotal arguments for this to be utterly insulting. Taxpayers should get

Date received: 5/14/2003
Name: Dorothy Clare Jacobs
Organization: Private citizen
Address: 209 Montana Avenue
South Milwaukee, WI 53172
Comments: After thoroughly reading the information provided online I must say that I am very impressed. I have long thought that commuter service between Racine and Milwaukee is badly needed. Are there plans to extend this service to the Northern and Western suburbs in the future? It seems that the idea of light rail between Waukesha and Milwaukee has died, but the transportation needs are still there.

At this point I am in favor of this service. I will do more investigation into the possible negative sides to this issue.

Sincerely,

Dorothy Clare Jacobs
clobbered so that retired folks can go down to Chicago to play? Why should I have to work harder so that their leisurely transportation can be more relaxing? Taxpayers should have to pay for the fact that certain families don’t want the hassle of two cars? Some of us have to have two cars— I drive throughout the day for my job, and my husband works third shift. Why should I have to pay for another family’s transportation plus my own?

I have heard the argument that this will bring jobs. Studies have proven that this is a "wash" due to just as many people leaving town for jobs as coming to town for jobs. As an active member of the Racine community, and a hiring manager myself, I believe that Racine will see the worst on both sides on this. Our largest companies have made it clear that they want this system BECAUSE they want to hire from outside of Racine, rather than tap into the many unemployed persons in our own community. (It’s an old joke in arranging speakers ‘they have to live a minimum of 60 miles away to be considered an expert.’) On the other hand, our most talented people will leave to find jobs because of Racine’s currently weak economy. In other words, I think this will worsen our downward spiral, on top of draining off more tax dollars.

But the most compelling thought to me is this. Aren’t there better ways to spend $15 million per year to improve our economy than this?

Date received: 5/14/2003
Name: Robert Nemanich
Organization: Future Milwaukee
Address: 2808 Le Salle St.
Racine, WI 53402
Comments: I am enthusiastically in favor of extending the commuter rail system north from Kenosha through Racine County to Milwaukee. It will provide so many benefits to the economy, to the lives of its citizens, reduction of pollution and increase the land values of the communities adjacent to which the rail line would serve. It is a no-brainer!

Date received: 5/14/2003
Name: Marilyn Joyce
Organization: Future Milwaukee
Address: 759 N. Milwaukee
Milwaukee, WI 53202
Comments: To whom this may concern:

The commuter rail is an idea long, long overdue. It is environmentally friendly, conducive to building community relations, the right thing to do and the wave of the future. People will take advantage of the train. They will look forward to relaxing to and from their destination, connecting with family, colleagues, friends or just having the time to read the day’s news. Please continue to see this through. Rail is a big way to connect. In this day and age connecting, staying connected is what it is all about. Thank you.

Date received: 5/14/2003
Name: Dawn Matlak
Organization: Future Milwaukee
Address: 2855 N. Prospect Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53211
Comments: To whom it may concern:

I was given this e-mail as a contact to voice my support for a train running from Milwaukee, through Racine and Kenosha and down to Chicago. I feel it is a long overdue move, as it will encourage people to travel back and forth more who having to shell out for gas and parking, as well as be better for the environment, make the cities more accessible, and drive up visitor/tourism. Thank You.

Date received: 5/14/2003
Name: Cathy D. Mason
Organization: Future Milwaukee
Address: 4414 5th Ave
Kenosha, WI 53140
Comments: I believe I missed the deadline to submit a formal vote in favor of the SE Wisconsin commuter railroad expansion—but I do want to extend my support for the plan. It would expand work, travel and commercial possibilities for everyone in the area. I know I would shop and patronize cultural events in Milwaukee much more often if rail service were available. Thank You—Cathy Mason, historian and writer from Kenosha.

Date received: 5/13/2003
Name: Jeff Moore
Organization: Future Milwaukee
Address: 6744 middle rd. #2
Racine, WI 53402
Comments: Dear sirs:

I am concerned that this foolishness about expanding light rail into Racine is not being looked at with much intelligence at all. Just where do you guys plan on getting the 20 million dollars that is going to be needed at the local level? I am really curious to find out who has these deep pockets that you are trying to shove your greedy hands into. Even if that figure was only going to be 10 million there is no way in the world that Racine taxpayers can afford that kind of money, our property taxes are high enough!

What kind of fool thinks that downtown racine is going to become some kind of bustling tourist trap? There is no way people are going to take an hour trip on a train just to see racine’s downtown. They can go to Milwaukee or Kenosha or Chicago, in the same amount of time and they will be able to get to these places alot faster too. Racine is nothing special that it needs to spend that kind of money so that a few hundred people can use a train that is being subsidized by the entire state. I hope smarter heads prevail and shoot this stupid project down where it belongs, the trash bin.
To whom it may concern:

Although I am not currently a resident of Racine, I spent my entire childhood in the area. It's a region of tremendous resources. In the last decade, I've grown anxious to see the area meet its potential. Racine's historic roots and breathtaking waterfront make it a potential utopia. It just needs some work in its sense of community.

The New York subway is my sole means of transportation between home in Brooklyn and my magazine of employment in Manhattan. I appreciate the train for a plethora of reasons. Taking the train alleviates the cost of maintaining a car, reduces road and highway traffic and discloses the responsibility of driving safely. More substantially, the train has become an easy medium between my two cultural worlds.

Albeit unrealistic to have this non-car-owning lifestyle in Racine, the Metra extension would open up a whole new population to commuters in the area. My commute in New York is essentially a small-scale version of what could potentially happen with Racine’s connection to its larger neighbors. Obviously, Metra would open up the option of Chicago commuters to live in Racine. In more subtle ways, however, it can help broaden the cultural experiences of these neighboring communities. It’s important to acknowledge how little experience most Racine residents have of the streets of Chicago, especially considering their close proximity to its urban core. This commuter rail can open up a convenient and inexpensive channel for Racine to know this seemingly distant city. As well, it can open the floodgates of day-trippers to Racine who can discover it’s charming downtown and museums. Opening up these cultural gates helps Racine identify its niche in the larger community.

I have always been a supporter of a rail system between Milwaukee and Chicago. Not only does it link the two, but it opens up a world of communication between their smaller neighbors.

Thanks for your time

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<td>Organization:</td>
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<td>Comments:</td>
<td>i totally support the metra extension from kenosha to milw. the availability of commuter rail service will allow racine residents the opportunity to expand job opportunities which they desperately need. it will be a plus for businesses that would come to racine. commuter rail would be a blessing for the environment. racine has an existing station that will also be the city bus transfer station which is another plus. we need to get people out of expensive and polluting cars for transportation and get them back on good old trains.</td>
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Sincerely,
Stevan M. Sreckovic

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<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Nicole L. Maney-Bralick</td>
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<td>Organization:</td>
<td>WISPARK LLC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>301 West Wisconsin Avenue Milwaukee, WI 53203</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td>I strongly support the extension of Metra from Kenosha through Racine to Milwaukee, especially if it is part of a well planned intermodal transportation system. The benefits of commuter rail in SE Wisconsin would be very significant.</td>
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Thank you, Nicole

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<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Jerold P. Franke</td>
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**The benefits of commuter rail in SE Wisconsin would be very significant.**

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<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
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<td>Organization:</td>
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<td>Address:</td>
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| Comments:     | **endorse the Metra Extension because it will:**
* Assist in revitalizing our economy
* Develop the Milwaukee-Racine-Chicago economic corridor
* Provide easy, reliable regional access to labor, education and jobs
* Build our tax base
* Make us more competitive in attracting business and talent
* Increase property values near stations and community-wide
* Improve our air quality
* Make our city a better place to live and do business
* Be a smart investment in mobility using existing rail right-of-way in a densely populated corridor

Thank you for listening.

---

**Commuter rail is long overdue in Southeastern Wisconsin. I have lived in Washington, DC, the past few years, and the Metro system here is the only thing holding regional transit together. Northern Virginia (for those of you who may have been there) is an example of what must NOT be done. Freeways and six-lane roads are built non-stop to accommodate growth, and are jammed almost the moment they are built. Mass transit, especially rail, is an excellent complement to the current system, and can take a far heavier passenger burden than roads. I say we go for it!**

Sincerely,
Stevan M. Sreckovic

**The benefits of commuter rail in SE Wisconsin would be very significant.**

---

**To whom it may concern:**

**Although I am not currently a resident of Racine, I spent my entire childhood in the area. It’s a region of tremendous resources. In the last decade, I’ve grown anxious to see the area meet its potential. Racine’s historic roots and breathtaking waterfront make it a potential utopia. It just needs some work in its sense of community.**

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Sincerely,
Stevan M. Sreckovic

---

**The benefits of commuter rail in SE Wisconsin would be very significant.**
Dear Mr. Yunker,

I just wanted to send you a quick note asking you and the other members of SEWRPC to support the extension of Commuter rail service from Chicago to Racine and Milwaukee. This would be a valuable asset to our community as it would continue to encourage growth in our area by providing easy access to the major employment areas. It may also encourage office development in our area as employers may build corporate H.Q. here as they would still have easy access to their manufacturing facilities located in the major metropolitan areas. Thank you for your consideration in this matter and thanks to all the members of SEWRPC for the help they provide to Wisconsin.

Date received: 5/13/2003
Name: Joe Sabol
Organization: CEI Racine
Address: 6328 Washington Ave
Racine, WI 53406-3918
Comments: To Whom It May Concern:
I support efforts to establish the METRA Extension from Milwaukee and Racine to Chicago.

I live in Chicago and have a occasional need for my business to travel to Chicago and I look forward to the opportunity to get on a train and read, write, and prepare for my work. Driving my car is hectic and consumes fuel and creates pollution (although my car is in tune, it still emits CO2!) I would also use METRA for pleasure travel to Chicago.

I have used METRA from Kenosha in the past, but a stop in Racine would be more convenient. I use AMTRAK from Sturtevant, too.

I suggest the route include a stop at Milwaukee’s Mitchell Field - then Wisconsin would truly have an integrated transit plan, like many cities in Europe.

I would support increased fuel tax to pay for METRA costs.

Joe Sabol
6328 Washington Ave.
Racine, Wisconsin 53406-3918
tel: 262.886.5482
e-mail: sabol@exepec.com

Date received: 5/13/2003
Name: Joseph E. Sabol
Organization: CEI Racine
Address: 6328 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53406-3918
Comments: To Whom It May Concern:
I support efforts to establish the METRA Extension from Milwaukee and Racine to Chicago.

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I would support increased fuel tax to pay for METRA costs.

Joseph E. Sabol
6226 Washington Ave.
Racine, Wisconsin 53406-3918
tel: 262.886.5482
e-mail: sabol@exepec.com

Date received: 5/13/2003
Name: Dianne Copus
Organization: CITY OF MILWAUKEE
Address: 3000 W. Wisconsin Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53204
Comments: I endorise the Metra Extension because it will:
* Assist in revitalizing our economy
* Develop the Milwaukee-Racine-Chicago economic corridor
* Provide easy, reliable regional access to labor, education and jobs
* Build our tax base
* Make us more competitive in attracting business and talent
* Make our city a better place to live and do business
* Be a smart investment in mobility using existing rail right-of-way in a densely populated corridor

I look forward to the day that commuter rail service returns to our community.

Date received: 5/13/2003
Name: Collee S. Jones
Organization: CITY OF MILWAUKEE
Address: 3000 W. Wisconsin Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53204
Comments: I’m all for it!

Date received: 5/12/2003
Name: Charles V. Ricchio
Organization: CITY OF MILWAUKEE
Address: 3000 W. Wisconsin Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53204
Comments: I endorse the Metra Extension because it will:
* Assist in revitalizing our economy
* Develop the Milwaukee-Racine-Chicago economic corridor
* Provide easy, reliable regional access to labor, education and jobs
* Build our tax base

Date received: 5/13/2003
Name: Jean Seidel
Organization: CITY OF MILWAUKEE
Address: Milwaukee, WI
Comments: Dear Mr. Yunker,
This email is to encourage you to extend commuter rail to Milwaukee from Chicago. I lived in Chicago for many years, and often had to make trips to Milwaukee, and would have indeed liked the option of a day train up here rather than driving. In addition, since I have been living here in Milwaukee I have had occasion to pick up friends at the Kenosha station, which was obviously not very convenient.

After living abroad in Germany for 9 years, I found the train system to be a wonderful alternative to driving as it allowed easy access to the downtown areas, without the cost of parking. I feel it is important for the economy as well as for the environmental health of this country to reduce our dependence on oil burning vehicles as much as possible and to provide good public transportation. thank you for your consideration.

Date received: 5/12/2003
Name: William Chesn
Organization: RACINE, WI 53403
Address: 826 PARK AVE
Comments: I support Metra Extension.

Date received: 5/12/2003
Name: GIGI OLIVER
Organization: CITY OF RACINE PURCHASING DEPT
Address: 826 PARK AVE
RACINE, WI 53403
Comments: Please extend the rail system for those of us in Milwaukee who love going to Chicago and don’t want to spend a fortune before we get there. It would be greatly appreciated and much used.

Thank you.

Date received: 5/12/2003
Name: Collee S. Jones
Organization: CITY OF MILWAUKEE
Address: 3000 W. Wisconsin Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53204
Comments: I’m all for it!

Date received: 5/12/2003
Name: Charles V. Ricchio
Organization: CITY OF MILWAUKEE
Address: 3000 W. Wisconsin Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53204
Comments: I endorse the Metra Extension because it will:
* Assist in revitalizing our economy
* Develop the Milwaukee-Racine-Chicago economic corridor
* Provide easy, reliable regional access to labor, education and jobs
* Build our tax base
* Make us more competitive in attracting business and talent
* Increase property values near stations and community-wide
* Improve our air quality
* Make our city a better place to live and do business
* Be a smart investment in mobility using existing rail right-of-way in a densely populated corridor

Thank you

Date received: 5/10/2003
Name: Mike Conley
Organization: 
Address: 7433 N Bell Rd
Fox Point, WI 53217

Comments:
Hello,
I support extending rail service from Chicago to Milwaukee, extending beyond the current Kenosha service. I believe rail is an important alternative to automobile transportation, both economically and environmentally. With the increasing numbers of Milwaukeans who travel to Chicago for work or pleasure, I believe rail travel to be a necessity.

Thanks

Date received: 5/10/2003
Name: Susan M. Torosian
Organization: 
Address: 1244 Grove Avenue
Racine, WI 53405

Comments:
I would like to see the Metra Extension because it will:
* Assist in revitalizing our economy
* Develop the Milwaukee-Racine-Chicago economic corridor
* Provide easy, reliable regional access to labor, education and jobs
* Build our tax base
* Make us more competitive in attracting business and talent
* Increase property values near stations and community-wide
* Improve our air quality
* Make our city a better place to live and do business
* Be a smart investment in mobility using existing rail right-of-way in a densely populated corridor

Date received: 5/10/2003
Name: Bryan W. Stedman
Organization: Stedman Family
Address: 3300 Southwood Drive
Racine, WI 53406

Comments:
Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Commuter Rail
My family endorses the Metra Extension because it will:
* Assist in revitalizing our economy, which is really needed at this time.
* Develop the Milwaukee-Racine-Chicago economic corridor. To me, this is very important. We have to look at the great picture and realize we need Chicago.
* Provide easy, reliable regional access to labor, education and jobs; plus it will provide another way for me to take my family to Cubs games :)
* Build our tax base, bigger tax base is good.
* Make us more competitive in attracting business and talent, another good thing. So far we’ve been anti-attractive, be nice to change things.
* Increase property values near stations and community-wide, this may take some time but it the long run it will happen.
* Improve our air quality, true, unless of course they build a bigger coal plant oak creek. But every bit helps.
* Make our city a better place to live and do business; hopefully it will attract people from Chicago to come live in our community. They may still work in Chicago, but hey they’ll be paying taxes here.
* Be a smart investment in mobility using existing rail right-of-way in a densely populated corridor, sounds smart to me, the plan will use existing rail lines. Maybe later some can be added, be nice to see it go to Waukesha, and Madison. But right now I think Kenosha, Racine and Milwaukee is a no-brainer.

Bryan & Tiffany Stedman
262-554-7926

Date received: 5/9/2003
Name: Jennifer Connolly
Organization: 
Address: 

Comments:
I am just writing in hopes that my vote for the Metra commuter rail service will help in the decision process. I live on the northeast side of Racine and I commute to Abbots Park, Illinois (Waukegan Road and Buckley) every day. If the Metra came through Racine, it would be a huge blessing. I originally grew up in the northwest suburbs of Chicago and lived downtown Chicago for several years. All of my family and friends are still there so I do a great deal of driving every week.

Not only would the Metra assist the people of Racine to get to Illinois, I believe the Metra will help the economy of Racine by encouraging people to visit!

Please help make it possible for the Metra to come to Racine!!!!

Thank you

Date received: 5/9/2003
Name: Gregory S. Stone
Organization: Kenosha Unified School District #1
Address: 7211 S Tifton Drive
Franklin, WI 53132

Comments:
Hi:

I am entirely in favor of extending the Metra line into Milwaukee. It makes total sense for workers that commute between these areas, and to encourage more entertainment dollars to move between these large metropolitan areas. Anything to get the cars off the road because, of course, the environment is a primary reason to make this happen. We need more forward thinking proposals like this one.

Good luck in your pursuits!

Greg Stone
To Whom It May Concern:

The prospect of commuter train service between Milwaukee and Chicago is a very exciting one for the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. It is important for us to develop viable transportation alternatives to reduce the parking demand in and around campus. The KRM Commuter Rail extension has the potential to directly affect that issue. Such a transportation service would also link Milwaukee to major population and job centers along the KRM corridor, creating better access to UWM for thousands of potential students, faculty, and staff.

Our ability to attract and retain students, faculty, and staff would be greatly enhanced by regional transportation amenities like commuter rail. Discussions about commuter trains in Milwaukee have been ongoing for over a decade and finally momentum and support are building, and I am hopeful that we will see commuter trains in Milwaukee.

I wish SEWRPC the best of success in its efforts to properly plan for southeastern Wisconsin's future.

Sincerely,

Amy Watson
Community and Local Government Relations
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee

Date received: 5/9/2003
Name: Dawn M. Lazzicka-Imberi
Organization: University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee
Address: 2229 Lorraine Ave
Racine, WI 53404

Comments:

I think the Metra is a wonderful idea and should be considered for many reasons. I myself lived in Japan for two years and found that trains were the best way to travel. They gave me time to concentrate on other things like reading and work instead of driving. I currently drive to Kenosha to take the train to Chicago and the outlying areas or I go to Sturtevant and pay for an expensive Amtrak ride. I do not know that it will catch on with the whole population but I am sure that there are a great many people who would prefer to commute to jobs by train from Racine. It also would help with conserving energy and creating better air quality.

Date received: 5/9/2003
Name: Amy R. Watson
Organization: University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee
Address: 2310 E Hartford Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53211

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern:

The prospect of commuter train service between Milwaukee and Chicago is a very exciting one for the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. It is important for us to develop viable transportation alternatives to reduce the parking demand in and around campus. The KRM Commuter Rail extension has the potential to directly affect that issue. Such a transportation service would also link Milwaukee to major population and job centers along the KRM corridor, creating better access to UWM for thousands of potential students, faculty, and staff.

Our ability to attract and retain students, faculty, and staff would be greatly enhanced by regional transportation amenities like commuter rail. Discussions about commuter trains in Milwaukee have been ongoing for over a decade and finally momentum and support are building, and I am hopeful that we will see commuter trains in Milwaukee soon. UWM supports the KRM Commuter Rail project because it will:

- Assist in revitalizing our economy;
- Develop the Milwaukee-Racine-Chicago economic corridor;
- Provide easy, reliable regional access to labor, education and jobs;
- Enhance our ability to attract talented students, faculty and staff;
- Increase property values near stations and community-wide;
- Improve our air quality;
- Make our city a better place to live and do business.

As a collaborator with Transit NOW, UWM recognizes the importance and effectiveness of Transit NOW's work to help educate the community about KRM Commuter Rail, and to help facilitate the support and cooperation required for this important project to become a reality.

Sincerely,

Amy Watson
Community and Local Government Relations
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee

Date received: 5/9/2003
Name: Diane L. Schacht
Organization: City of Racine
Address: 730 Washington Avenue
Racine, WI 53403

Comments:

As a private citizen, I endorse the Metra Extension because it will develop the Milwaukee-Racine-Chicago economic corridor, assist in revitalizing our economy, build our tax base, improve air quality, make our city a better place to live and do business and provide easy, reliable regional access to labor, education and jobs.

Date received: 5/9/2003
Name: Steven J. Torosian
Organization: Young Professionals of Racine
Address: 1244 Grove
Racine, WI 53405

Comments:

Commuter Rail should be whole heartedly supported for a great many reasons, some of which I detailed below:

1) Economic Development is critical to this area
2) The geographic area being considered has a high concentration of economically disadvantaged citizens. Providing access to jobs should be an important consideration in this decision
3) Commuter Rail will move from fractional based cities into regional based mentalities and develop an important Chicago-Milwaukee corridor.
4) It will attract jobs and young talent.
5) It makes us more competitive
6) Environmentally it makes sense
7) It reduces highway traffic and repair costs
8) It leverages private/public investments
9) It’s fun to ride trains
10) It increases property value and tax revenues
11) Commuter Rail is convenient for young and old alike
12) Revival of Rail initiatives increases desire to renew communities
13) Having access to large quantities of quality employees is a major consideration for business location, more than bricks and mortar
14) Less run-off pollution from highways
15) Rail fares are similar to bus fares
16) Better access to more colleges
17) It will not divert funding sources from existing transit services
18) 80% of the funding will come from federal sources and 10%+ from state sources
19) It’s a great return on investment
20) There seems to be widespread support for this initiative. How often does that happen?
21) Sprawl reduction in a heavily populated areas
22) Safer than driving
23) Workforce development applications are huge!
24) Now is the time for action!
25) No one loses! We all win by this proposal!

Date received: 5/9/2003
Name: Sawyer DeMint
Organization: Sawyer DeMint
Address: 212 Illinois Street
Racine, WI 53405

Comments:

I endorse the Metra Extension because it will:

* Assist in revitalizing our economy
* Develop the Milwaukee-Racine-Chicago economic corridor
* Provide easy, reliable regional access to labor, education and jobs
* Build our tax base
* Make us more competitive in attracting business and talent
* Increase property values near stations and community-wide
* Improve our air quality
* Make our city a better place to live and do business
* Be a smart investment in mobility using existing rail right-of-way in a densely populated area.
While teeming thousands of passengers daily is not what I foresee for Racine, I would guess Metra would have a very healthy start here. It would help us in ways beyond transit in terms of merchants and services attracted to accessible neighborhoods.

Right now we are at a turning point as a city with ever more tourist attractions and more appealing neighborhoods offering competitively priced housing. We need to realize that a sound investment in transit infrastructure would pay huge benefits to many people, as was detailed at the April 30 hearing in Racine. It is also time to think of those who are not able to afford expensive private transportation. We need systems which are available to everyone.

Date received: 5/8/2003
Name: Joelyn Olen
Organization: GERMCANTOWN, WI 53207
Address: 1101 W16049 Santa Fe Drive
Comments: I am adding my voice to the many who want to see the Metra extended from Kenosha all the way to Milwaukee. Commuter rail is a clean, reliable, affordable way for people to travel from community to community and state to state. The AMTRAK is a fine train system but does not service enough communities and has become very expensive. The Metra works well for the suburban Chicago area. With the number of commuters between the Chicago area and the Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha area it makes sense to extend from Kenosha to Milwaukee. The existing rail is in place for this to happen.

Date received: 5/8/2003
Name: Timothy Richter
Organization: SEWRCPC
Address: 442 East Fremont Place
Milwaukee, WI 53207
Comments: I wish to express my support for the expansion of the Metra commuter train to Downtown Milwaukee. This is a very reasonable investment that would benefit Milwaukee probably even more than Chicago. I know I would frequently use the train as a means to travel to Chicago rather than taking my car. Currently, Amtrak service is simply too expensive of an option.

It is essential for the Greater Milwaukee Region have more transportation options. Milwaukee is a big city and desperately needs alternatives to highway transportation and slow bus service. This is a very smart investment.

Thank you

Date received: 5/8/2003
Name: Diane Rosenfeldt
Organization: Ladies and Gentlemen:
Address: 2064 Douglas Avenue
Racine, WI 53402-4616
Comments: I am strongly in favor of the proposed K-R-M Metra extension. I have been commuting to work in Milwaukee via Wisconsin Coach Lines (WCL) for almost 30 years, and am painfully aware of the shortcomings of existing transit options.

I choose to ride the bus because it’s still less expensive, less stressful and more environmentally responsible than driving, but I have watched the level of WCL’s service slide steadily downhill over the years. Since Greyhound stopped coming into Kenosha and Racine, WCL has had a monopoly on bus service in the K-R-M corridor, and has responded not by enhancing its service but by cutting it back at every opportunity. Our route is not subsidized by Racine or Kenosha Counties, and the buses we get are often substandard (i.e. no air conditioning or heat; doors, brakes, lights or seats that are broken; improperly maintained rest room; smells from battery acid in the passenger area); while the newer, better buses are either saved for charters or sent to the upscale, county-subsidized Waukesha routes. Over the past few years, WCL has radically changed run times with no regard to the true needs of its riders, and has altogether cut out all but a few runs (though subsequent outcry did cause it to ultimately rethink a couple of these choices). Our route is considered by WCL to be downsacle, and we’ve actually been told that we don’t get the better buses because it’s felt that we’ll vandalize them. In fact, the ridership on the commute-time routes is largely “regulars”; professionals in a variety of fields, and most of us have better things to do than magic-mark our names on the upholstery. The point is that WCL, while an “existing” alternative to mass transit, can’t be depended upon to serve
the mass transit needs of Kenosha and Racine Counties in the future because it simply does not want to be bothered.

I also echo some of the speakers at the hearings in urging that *more* than "medium" service be implemented for K-R-M. I would love to be able to get to a cultural event in Chicago or Milwaukee without having to worry about driving conditions or parking. I think that having hassle-free access available to cultural amenities as well as business opportunities can only increase the appeal of Kenosha and Racine as "bedroom" communities.

The K-R-M proposal can ONLY benefit everyone. I hope that this initiative goes forward, and sooner rather than later!

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**Date received:** 5/7/2003  
**Name:** Dale Egle  
**Organization:**  
**Address:**  
**Comments:**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,  
I WASN'T ABLE TO ATTEND ANY OF THE RECENT MEETINGS HELD REGARDING THE EXPANSION OF THE METRA TRAIN FROM KENOSHA TO MILWAUKEE, DO TO MY SCHEDULE. MY WIFE AND I ARE VERY MUCH IN FAVOR OF THE EXPANSION, FOR MANY REASONS MANY OF WHICH I'M SURE WERE MENTIONED AT YOUR MEETINGS. I FEEL THE MEDIUM SCHEDULE FOR THE TRAINS WOULD PROBABLY BE BEST TO START. PLEASE GO FORWARD WITH THIS PLAN. I HAVE ALSO WRITTEN MY REPRESENTATIVE PAUL RYAN REGARDING MY SUPPORT IN THIS MATTER. THANK YOU AND GOOD LUCK.

---

**Date received:** 5/6/2003  
**Name:** Moreau and Marilyn MacCaughey  
**Organization:**  
**Address:** Racine, WI  
**Comments:** Gentlemen:

We feel that extending the Metra line through Racine and on to Milwaukee will be a distinct advantage to Southeastern Wisconsin. It will provide opportunities for easy traveling between cities in the Milwaukee - Chicago megalopolis, whether it be for business or pleasure. All of the cities included in this area have a wide variety of attractions, businesses, academic institutions etc., many of which are of world-wide caliber. and of great appeal to both locals and visitors.

Funding will be a challenge but should not be insurmountable.

The old North Shore line had many fans for many years. Metra should be able to attract similar popularity. And reduce auto dependence in the process.

Good luck!

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**Date received:** 5/7/2003  
**Name:** Lauren  
**Organization:**  
**Address:** 2661A N. Fratney  
**City:** Milwaukee, WI  
**Comments:**

I am very much in favor of extending the Metra to provide commuter rail service from Kenosha to Racine and Milwaukee. The commuter rail alternative would provide the greatest benefits.

- Convenience
- Direct service without need for transfer
- Most reliable in variable weather conditions
- Greatest passenger comfort
- Shortest travel time
- Job opportunities
- Economic development along the commuter corridor
- Adaptable to potential future growth in passenger numbers
- High-level of service

Sincerely,

Barbara Eisenberg

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**Date received:** 5/6/2003  
**Name:** Donald B. Lawson  
**Organization:**  
**Address:** 707 Hawthorne Ave.  
**City:** South Milwaukee, WI 53172-1733  
**Comments:** Hi,

I'm in favor of expanding Metra service to bring it all the way to Milwaukee. I would hope that this expanded service would include stops in Racine, South Milwaukee, Cudahy, and Milwaukee.

The reasons for my opinion are:

1) The efforts to bring more people into downtown Racine (via marina development etc.) will be enhanced by allowing people living in downtown Racine to commute by train to either Chicago or Milwaukee.

2) My son, who has epilepsy, may never be able to drive a car. He lives with us in South Milwaukee. He hopes to attend Shimer College in Waukegan. Metra service would allow him to commute from his house to school and back.  

Thanks for opening up this issue to public comment!

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**Date received:** 5/6/2003  
**Name:** Ron Bares  
**Organization:**  
**Address:** 2777 N. 68th St.  
**City:** Milwaukee, WI 53210  
**Comments:**

I am in favor of extending Metra to Milwaukee.

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**Date received:** 5/6/2003  
**Name:** Cheri Briscoe  
**Organization:**  
**Address:**  
**Comments:**

To SEWRPC re: Metra Extension hearings, I wish to testify in support of the Metra Extension proposal. When I go to Chicago, I prefer to take the train, because I can spend my 96 minutes reading while traveling, plus I don't have to pay expensive parking costs, or to use my time searching for a parking place. Metra would expand my train transportation choices, and would be cheaper. I urge you to support the proposed Metra Extension. Of course, the air pollution prevention and savings of costs of expensive freeway widening, plus additional safety concerns, would be an added advantage.
Dear Members of the Committee,

I am in full support of extending the Metra service from Kenosha to Milwaukee. The reasons for this are many; from local benefits to regional concerns.

The regional benefits to Metra are many. This will give employees and employers the ability to move within the region easier than they do now. In today's economy people need options in transportation choices, presently the options are not as good as they should be. The Metra extension will help to connect the Milwaukee-Chicago corridor in a way that it has never been linked before. This will give the area the start to building a regional economy that can attain its potential to be a bigger power in the Midwest than it currently is.

From a local standpoint this will be one of the keys to revitalizing the Racine area. We have led the state of Wisconsin in unemployment for over seven years. Within walking distance of the Metra stations will be the type of good paying family supporting jobs that the people of Racine need. This will enable our residents to have the transportation system they need to get to these jobs.

The location of the Metra station in Racine will also be in an area that we have worked hard at in improving the housing and surrounding area. The addition of the Metra will only accelerate the pace of improvement in this inner city section of Racine.

I am sending this e-mail to let you know you have my full support in extending the Metra rail to Milwaukee.

I'm very happy to hear you intend to use existing rail. I would support a light rail system in Milwaukee even if new track was needed, but I know many people here would not. Hopefully, the use of existing rail can reduce the cost to taxpayers and keep the fares low. I have been to cities and countries with advances light rail systems and have really enjoyed the benefits commuter rail can offer.

With the continued expansion of the Milwaukee area, it's nice to see some minds are addressing our current and future transportation needs. I can't think of a better time to implement transportation alternatives. I would hope use of a system like this could reduce consumption of natural resources.

In addition, an effective system with ridership can help the environment. It is my understanding that even a few riders (that would otherwise drive to Chicago) can greatly lower pollutants.

In order for this extension to be a success, the extension will need to be AFFORDABLE. The current Amtrak commuter to Chicago is very costly ($40.00 round trip per person). It’s less expensive to drive and PARK IN CHICAGO! Especially if you have more than one person. The high cost discourages use of the train and increases dependency on personal vehicles. I am very glad we have the Amtrak. It is certainly a step in the right direction. However, is too costly to be an alternative source of public transportation.

Hopefully, the Metra extension will provide competition which will lower the cost of Amtrak so more people will ride, yet allow both to remain in business.

Should the Metra come to Milwaukee and be affordable, my personal use would be 6-12 times per year.

If there is anything I can do to help bring the Metra extension to Milwaukee, please let me know.

I am full in support of extending the Metra service from Kenosha to Milwaukee. The reasons for this are many; from local benefits to regional concerns.

B-58
And working in the hospitality industry in Milwaukee - also very frustrating to explain.

I think it’s an excellent idea. It may help revitalize downtown Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee. It will be good for tourism in those three cities. It will decrease traffic. It may be a catalyst for train service to other Wisconsin cities.

I wish to express my support for the expansion of the Metra System to downtown Milwaukee. It would provide greatly needed alternative transportation options to the Greater Milwaukee Region.

Thank you for your response.

Sonya Jongsma Knauss
5/4/2003
Grtr Milwaukee Convention & Visitors Bureau
101 W Wisconsin Avenue, Ste 425
Milwaukee, WI 53203
Comments:
Please, please allow this project to be put in motion. I would most definitely use this mode of transportation for a daily commute.

Thank you!

Brigit Yach
Sincerely,
5/5/2003
Grtr Milwaukee Convention & Visitors Bureau
101 W Wisconsin Avenue, Ste 425
Milwaukee, WI 53203
Comments:
I wish to express my support for the expansion of the Metra System to downtown Milwaukee. It would provide greatly needed alternative transportation options to the Greater Milwaukee Region.

Thank you for your time.

Dana Jones
5/2/2003
Access One Inc
2536 N. Wayne Ave, #2R
Chicago, IL 60614
Comments:
I am writing to express by support for the plan to bring commuter rail up from Kenosha to Milwaukee. I reviewed the bus transit alternatives, and found the commuter rail option to be substantially preferable. In particular, the economic development opportunities associated with commuter rail are well established. Cudahy has already begun to plan in this direction. Although implementing the plan entails some (substantial) cost, the increased efficiency in the use of existing infrastructure (track) is an important consideration in favor of this plan.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Nancy Frank
5/2/2003
Department of Urban Planning
P.O. Box 413
Milwaukee, WI 53201-0413

Comments:
I wanted to express my EXTREME SUPPORT for the KRM project. Since moving to Milwaukee 7 years ago I have always believed the Metra should come to Milwaukee. On my many trips to Chicago - I often times will drive to various Metra stations in the northwest suburbs - leave my car, and Metra into the city. This saves me money on gas and parking, relieves me of the stress of driving, and besides - taking the train is just plain fun! After living in Europe and visiting other times - it is a pain to return the U.S. and feel so stranded with our lack of efficient, affordable public transportation. And working in the hospitality industry in Milwaukee - also very frustrating to explain to our transportation friendly out-of-state and out-of-country guests that there is no quick way to get from "here to there", where ever there may be.

KRM makes sense. It makes sense for business, for leisure, for the economy, for the environment, and it would be a dream come true for me! I only live three miles from work - but I would certainly love to take the train and save my employer $100 per month on parking costs. I would love to be able to take the Metra to Chicago. And I’m certain our Chicago visitors and workers that come to Milwaukee would love to be able to take the Metra here.

This idea is long overdue. Do not let it be deterred! Milwaukee needs and wants the Metra!

Sincerely,

Dana Jongsma Knauss
5/5/2003
Grgr Milwaukee Convention & Visitors Bureau
101 W Wisconsin Avenue, Ste 425
Milwaukee, WI 53203

Comments:
I hereby applaud SEWRPC for considering other forms of transportation than highways. I and many others I know strongly support the plan that is currently being studied to expand the Chicago Metra system as far north as Milwaukee’s downtown area. I think that would be a huge step in the right direction.

Thank you for considering my opinion.

Jon H. Ytr
5/3/2003
Access One Inc
2536 N. Wayne Ave, #2R
Chicago, IL 60614

Comments:
I think it’s an excellent idea. It may help revitalize downtown Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee. It will be good for tourism in those three cities. It will decrease traffic. It may be a catalyst for train service to other Wisconsin cities.

Thank you for your response.

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5/2/2003
Grgr Milwaukee Convention & Visitors Bureau
101 W Wisconsin Avenue, Ste 425
Milwaukee, WI 53203
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Stephanie Behne
5/4/2003
Access One Inc
2536 N. Wayne Ave, #2R
Chicago, IL 60614

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P.O. Box 413
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Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Jay C. Blanchett
5/2/2003
Private citizen
2107 E Beverly Rd
Shorewood, WI 53211

Comments:
I support the Metra extension for these reasons:

1. It would provide an alternate commuter path between Chicago & Milwaukee. Currently freeways are the only option. Buses are subject to the same freeway delays as cars, without the advantages of rail travel such as laptop outlets, restrooms, smooth cornering and braking, generous seats and legroom.

2. It would provide a cheap ride between Chicago and Milwaukee. For two years (1996-1998) I rode Metra about twice a week between Kenosha and Downtown Chicago. It cost me about $30 per week, including parking & gas costs from downtown Milwaukee. Amtrak would have cost more than $120 per week. To drive all the way would have cost me more than $40 per week.

3. Those who prefer or insist on driving all the time should be thankful for a rail transportation option from Milwaukee to Chicago.  A Metra extension makes perfect sense.

4. Those who prefer to use rail (and buses, and bicycles) would free up space on freeways and roads in parking lots. They should be thankful that, in addition to gas taxes, the increased efficiency in the use of existing infrastructure (track) is an important consideration in favor of this plan.

Thank you for your time.

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3. Those who prefer or insist on driving all the time should be thankful for a rail transportation option from Milwaukee to Chicago.  A Metra extension makes perfect sense.

4. Those who prefer to use rail (and buses, and bicycles) would free up space on freeways and roads in parking lots. They should be thankful that, in addition to gas taxes, they are not also paying tolls and higher costs for parking.

That said, you need to make sure people are aware that there are currently 26 stops on the non-express trip between Kenosha and Northwestern station, and the extension plan would make it something like 30 stops. You get what you pay for.

Thanks.
We also need to think about a rail alternative between Milwaukee and Madison! Our family votes in favor of the Metra for Racine. I am eager to see the Metra extension to Milwaukee. Environmentally it is a sound idea to provide access to modes of transportation other than automobiles. I am very happy that plans to expand/return commuter rail to Milwaukee from Chicago are progressing so well. I fully support this initiative.

An alternative to highway driving is needed along this corridor. I had a consulting assignment in Kenosha, and would have loved to have been able to take the train instead of driving every day. With a rail alternative, I would also consider taking consulting assignments in Kenosha.

We also need to think about a rail alternative between Milwaukee and Madison!

I wish to express my support for the expansion of the Metra System to downtown Milwaukee. It would provide greatly needed alternative transportation options to the Greater Milwaukee Region. Thank you for your time.
Dear Mr. Yunker:

I am writing in support of the extension of Commuter Rail from Kenosha to Milwaukee. This extension is important to the vitality of the communities served and the economic growth that will be created by this extension. In addition to the economic development, businesses along the corridor will have greater access to a diverse workforce. In Racine an intermodal site is being developed around the renovation of an historic station, which will serve as the Racine Station. This station is in Racine’s central city, which has the highest unemployment rate in the state. Commuter rail will give these unemployed workers greater access to jobs along the corridor.

This project will provide safe and inexpensive mass transit to improve the quality of life in the region and help make us competitive with other areas of the county already served by commuter rail. This project will help to relieve traffic congestion on I-94 and will cost far less than the Marquette Interchange and other freeway expansions, while reducing car emissions in the area.

As Chairman of the Downtown Racine Corporation, commuter rail will provide greater access to our downtown and all of our downtown cultural attractions. This, along with other tourist attractions downtown will be a huge economic boom to our shops and restaurants. The train will also provide an opportunity for Racine residents to have easy access to cultural events and other activities all along the corridor.

With $7 million of Federal New Starts money and $400,000 in the current state budget for this project, it is time for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to take the lead and begin preliminary engineering. My last comment is that I would support the highest level of service in order to provide greater access along the corridor for jobs and cultural events.

Thanks for letting me comment.

Date received: 5/1/2003
Name: Brian L. Anderson
Organization: Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Address: 911 S. Carroll Drive
Comments: I would like to express my support for the metra extension to Racine and Milwaukee county. Having this extension would provide immersurable support for our students who live in these communities as well as those students who spend social time in Milwaukee as consumers of the wonderful businesses in the Milwaukee area.

Date received: 5/1/2003
Name: Jon Richards
Organization: Commuters for a Rapid Transit System
Address: 1720 S. 11th St.
Comments: Dear Mr. Yunker:

I am writing to you in my continued support of expanded METRA rail service from Kenosha to Milwaukee. This proposal is a win-win for everyone. From business looking to expand and seeking more employees, to workers seeking jobs, expanded service with stops in the population centers of southeastern Wisconsin would help promote a better economy. It also helps all commuters in the area and lowers traffic congestion and pollution.

In addition, tourism stands to be helped, throughout downtown Milwaukee and along the lakeshores of Racine and Kenosha by offering expanded opportunities for our neighbors to visit.

I will continue to work and support state funding to help get the preliminary engineering completed. I am confident that with the continued support from elected officials, businesses and community and environmental groups, that we will be able to all work together to achieve this rail expansion.

Date received: 5/1/2003
Name: Steve Miner
Organization: SE Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
Address: 5050 S Lake Drive
Comments: To SE Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission,

I live in Cudahy and I go to Chicago fairly regularly. I am writing to support the extension of the Metra line. I think it would be very useful for Milwaukee County residents and it would help the economies of the communities immediately surrounding the proposed new stops.

Date received: 5/1/2003
Name: Karen Carnabucci, MSS, CICSW, LSW, TEP
Organization: Companies In Healing
Address: 216 Merrie Lane
Racine, WI 53405
Comments: I strongly support the extension of the Metra route from Kenosha to Racine and Milwaukee.

Date received: 5/1/2003
Name: Thomas Friedel
Organization: City of Racine
Address: 216 Merrie Lane
Racine, WI 53405
Comments: Please add my name to the list of elected officials endorsing the concept of commute rail for the Milw. - Chicago corridor.

Many years ago the need for improved transportation in the region was well documented. The preferred plan was the lake freeway. The Hoan bridge was built and went nowhere. Recently the freeway was completed up to Layton Avenue. Let’s hope it ends there. This is a better alternative. We already have a ‘freeway’. It runs from Milwaukee to Chicago on the Union Pacific right-of-way.

The testimony at your public hearing at Gateway in Racine on April 30 needs no repetition. Everyone there supported the plan. The time is right. The region is undergoing massive revitalization. This plan will add the mobility needed to make our investments in the infrastructure pay off. If you build it, they will ride. Let’s get going!

Date received: 4/30/2003
Name: Jennifer Schaap
Organization: Companions In Healing
Address: 5050 S Lake Drive
Comments: I heard about the project to extend the commuter train to Milwaukee, and I would like to voice my support, because, unfortunately, I won’t be able to attend the hearings. It is a logical extension of what already exists. I believe in public transportation over the expansion of our highways and I do believe this train would be used by many people, including myself. I would like to see more trains installed in Southeast Wisconsin. I think that many young adults are turned off from Milwaukee because it is quite large but doesn’t have the maneuverability like other big cities. It seems many young adults are moving out of Milwaukee to go to those big cities and not many are moving to Milwaukee. I think an idea like this could only help the city.

Thank you

Date received: 5/1/2003
Name: Marcy Hufendick
Organization: University of Wisconsin-Parkside
Address: PO Box 2000
Kenosha, WI 53141
Comments: To Whom It May Concern:

As a member of the UW-Parkside staff, I would like to express my support for the metra rail extension to Racine and Milwaukee county. Having this extension would provide immersurable support for our students who live in these communities as well as those students who spend social time in Milwaukee as consumers of the wonderful businesses in the Milwaukee area.

Date received: 5/1/2003
Name: DeAnn Stone
Organization: Coordinating Council of SE Wisconsin
Address: 7211 South Tifton Drive
Franklin, WI 53132
Comments: I am writing in support of the metra extension to Racine and Milwaukee. This extension is important to the vitality of the communities served and the economic growth that will be created by this extension. In addition to the economic development, businesses along the corridor will have greater access to a diverse workforce. In Racine an intermodal site is being developed around the renovation of a historic station, which will serve as the Racine Station. This station is in Racine’s central city, which has the highest unemployment rate in the state. Commuter rail will give these unemployed workers greater access to jobs along the corridor.

This project will provide safe and inexpensive mass transit to improve the quality of life in the region and help make us competitive with other areas of the county already served by commuter rail. This project will help to relieve traffic congestion on I-94 and will cost far less than the Marquette Interchange and other freeway expansions, while reducing car emissions in the area.

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With $7 million of Federal New Starts money and $400,000 in the current state budget for this project, it is time for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to take the lead and begin preliminary engineering. My last comment is that I would support the highest level of service in order to provide greater access along the corridor for jobs and cultural events.

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I would urge you to support the commuter rail option for the betterment of the facility. The remodeled train station which will initially serve our bus patrons will provide a needed link to both Chicago and Milwaukee making Racines assets available to these large markets. As importantly commuter rail will also send a psychological message that Racine is truly a part of the Chicago /Milwaukee metropolitan area making it a viable place to work,live and recreate while also having the amenities of the large city close at hand. The City of Racine is taking a very proactive stance to commuter rail by planning for the extension from the city of Kenosha to Milwaukee. As Commissioner of Public Works for the City of Racine I strongly support the extension of rail from Kenosha through Racine to Milwaukee. Commuter rail will provide an important economic boost to the entire Racine area community. Extension of commuter rail will provide a needed link to both Chicago and Milwaukee making Racines assets available to these large markets. As importantly commuter rail will also send a psychological message that Racine is truly a part of the Chicago /Milwaukee metropolitan area making it a viable place to work,live and recreate while also having the amenities of the large city close at hand.

The City of Racine is taking a very proactive stance to commuter rail by planning for and implementing a multimodal transportation center at the site of the former CNW railroad station. This project consists of construction of a Bus transfer facility, the remodeling of the historic train station and the construction of an adjacent parking facility. The remodeled train station which will initially serve our bus patrons will provide a ready depot when train service begins.

I would urge you to support the commuter rail option for the betterment of the Racine area.

Date received: 4/30/2003
Name: R Jones
Organization: 
Address: 
Comments: Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the proposed commuter rail extension from the City of Kenosha to Milwaukee.

Date received: 4/29/2003
Name: Peter A. Giersch
Organization: The Legacy Group
Address: 200 S. Executive Dr., Suite 101 Brookfield, WI 53005
Comments: To Whom It May Concern:
I was at a Rotary Club Milwaukee meeting today where we heard a presentation on the Metra extension. I simply want to say that as a businessman and as a citizen of SE WI I would love to see the Metra extension run up to Milwaukee. Frankly, I would like to see it run all the way to Bayshore. Some sort of mass transit option between the Northshore and Downtown is sorely needed.

At any rate, the current proposal would be an improvement over the dismal public transportation now available. I have lived in London and Paris and have traveled all over Europe and every single major city I visited or lived in had excellent and viable public transportation -- except Rome. But that's another story.

Good Luck!

Date received: 4/29/2003
Name: Carolyn Leaman
Organization: 
Address: 
Comments: I know this is a needed and beneficial connector rail to build. I support your efforts to get it done; it will greatly be attractive to business commuters and tourism along the south lakefront communities.

Date received: 4/29/2003
Name: Jay R. Goldberg
Organization: Director, Healthcare Technologies Management Program
Address: Room 501 Olin Engineering Center, P.O. Box 1881 Milwaukee, WI 53201-1881
Comments: To Whom it May Concern:
I was unable to attend the public meeting on April 24 regarding the extension of the Metra commuter line to Milwaukee.

I am a professor at Marquette University in Milwaukee and live in Libertyville, IL. I commute 4 to 5 times per week between Libertyville and Milwaukee (1 hour). If the Metra commuter rail line was extended to Milwaukee, I would ride the train 4 to 5 times per week between Lake Forest, IL and Milwaukee.

I support the extension of the Metra line to Milwaukee. It would make my commute much easier, more productive, and less damaging to the environment.

Thank you.

Date received: 4/29/2003
Name: Lynn Mitmoe
Organization: 
Address: 6017 65th Street
Kenosha, WI 53142
Comments: Add my voice to those in support of extending the Metra line from Kenosha to Milwaukee. I always thought it was inefficient to end it in Kenosha.

Date received: 4/29/2003
Name: Debra Starks
Organization: 
Address: 1411 Villa Street
Racine, WI 53403
Comments: I believe the money used to study and expand the service could be better utilized by subsidizing Amtrak which already has service between Chicago and Milwaukee. They could then lower fares and offer more stops and more trains. The Racine city bus already provides service between downtown Racine and the Amtrak station and if necessary there could be shuttle service. There are tracks in place and maintenance of the tracks I believe is handled by Canadian Pacific. This would also provide a service for all of Racine County, not just the city of Racine.
I have been looking forward to the possibility of this Metra extension for years! I think it would do wonders for both increasing the availability of jobs in outlying areas, as well as just for tourism. Please make this a reality soon!

Date received: 4/28/2003  
Name: Timothy L. Haas  
Address: 6017 W. Lisbon Ave.  
Milwaukee, WI 53210  
Comments:  
I am writing in support of the idea of extending the Metra commuter rail system into Milwaukee County. We have often driven down to Kenosha to hook up with the train there. The idea of having a terminal in Milwaukee sounds fantastic to me. I hate that boring, ugly drive to Chicago.

Date received: 4/28/2003  
Name: Jackie Reid Dettloff  
Address:  
Comments:  
I am in favor if it because it would be a great service to the mke community and help put our economy "back on track"!

Date received: 4/28/2003  
Name: Paul Brodwin  
Organization: University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
Address: 2208 E. Beverly Road  
Shorewood, WI 53201  
Comments:  
Dear Sir or Madam:  
I write this letter in favor of extending the Metra rail service northward from Kenosha to Racine and Milwaukee. I am a resident and tax payer in Milwaukee, Wisconsin – I have lived here for 12 years and am a professor at UW-Milwaukee. I support the Metra extension for several reasons:

1. Having a rail service to the southern suburbs of Milwaukee and to Mitchell Airport will help many of us city residents do our jobs faster and more efficiently.

2. The Metra extension will lead to lighter traffic on Interstate 94 and other roads between Milwaukee and Kenosha.

3. Rail service to Mitchell International Airport will make it a more attractive alternative to O'Hare for travellers in the Kenosha area and even northern Illinois. It will greatly ease the troubles of parking (and the high parking rates) at the airport.

4. Since the tracks and right-of-way already exist, it's a relatively cheap and quick alternative to building more highways, which usually means condemning businesses and homes, and worsening the economic health of surrounding regions.

Thank you very much for your consideration. Please allow the Metra extension to go forward, and help put our economy "back on track"!

Date received: 4/28/2003  
Name: Michael K. Stanich  
Organization: Harbor Park Investments, LLC  
Address: 708-57th Street  
Kenosha, WI 53140  
Comments:  
Dear Transitnow,  
I was unable to attend your recent meeting at Gateway in Kenosha due to a personal move. However, I was encouraged to read the press and the momentum that seems to be building for this project.

My "two cents" on the subject are the following:

1. The dynamics of rail service increase the prospects of Kenosha's Downtown revitalization effort to move beyond the "speculative & recreational marketplace" into a strategic position for habitation for citizens/employees of corporate America right here. It will give deep roots and support to redevelopment efforts. Those looking at doing business here want to be in for the long haul.

2. Ride on I-94 between Kenosha & Milwaukee any day of the week... (Having spent time in the great Los Angeles marketplace in the early 80's, I witnessed a glimpse of our future.) The more solutions to congestion that are addressed NOW, the better off we'll all be! JUST DO IT!

Date received: 4/28/2003  
Name: Hedy Pfugrad  
Organization:  
Address: 273 E. Erie Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
Comments:  
The only question I would have is this: why wouldn't the commuter train be a good idea? I certainly can recognize the advantages to having the train extend to Milwaukee. This is to show you my support for the idea.

Date received: 4/28/2003  
Name: Joseph N. Kiemen  
Organization: Citizen  
Address: 4800 Ridgeway Ave.  
Racine, WI 53406  
Comments:  
I am an avid supporter to extend Metra through Racine and Milwaukee for several reasons. First of all, my wife and I take the Metra from Kenosha to Chicago to attend the Art Institute and other sites in the Windy City. So, we make use of this type of transportation. Secondly, the extension of the Metra line will, I believe, lead to the expansion of business development along the proposed Metra corridor extension. Third, the extension of Metra will take additional automobiles off highways and thereby decrease pollution. This is a benefit to the environment. Therefore, I am a strong supporter of the extension of Metra through the Racine and Milwaukee corridor.

Date received: 4/28/2003  
Name: James B. Hayes  
Organization:  
Address: 406 N 39th St apt 5  
Milwaukee, WI 53208  
Comments:  
I support the Metra extension.

Date received: 4/27/2003  
Name: paulette risley  
Organization:  
Address: 7918 south 66 street  
franklin, wi 53132  
Comments:  
Dear Sir;  
I encourage the extension of the Metra rail to the Milwaukee area. My family and I have been using the Metra this past year to enjoy Chicago and other stops. We found the price, ease, and convenience of the Metra brings us back again and again. If it would not be for the Metra we would not have enjoyed Chicago as often and as economically. Please extend the rail, the communities and environment will benefit from it!  
Thank you,  
Paulette Risley
Date received: 4/27/2003
Name: Debi Rexhausken
Organization: 
Address: 3601 Haven Avenue
Racine, WI 53406
Comments: I'm in favor of having Metra commuter rail service extending through Racine to Milwaukee. My family and I (there are 7 of us in all) have driven to Kenosha and taken Metra into Chicago for many years now. It's a real treat for my kids to sit back and watch the scenery from the upper deck of the train car. It's nice for me not to have to drive into Chicago and try to find a parking spot. If we do get Metra service, I look forward to using it more often (easier to access) to go to Chicago and to Milwaukee. Also, I look forward to welcoming visitors to Racine - I'm excited to share the Car's Around Racine cats as well as the improvements being made to both State Street and Downtown.

Date received: 4/27/2003
Name: Andrea Nevins
Organization: 
Address: 
Comments: I love the train to Chicago from Milwaukee, it is very important that these two cities are easily linked!

Date received: 4/26/2003
Name: Ralph L. Ludwig
Organization: 
Address: 5509 Cambridge Lane #3
Racine, WI 53406
Comments: Regarding the proposed extension of the Metro through Racine to Milwaukee, I am not in favor of this. You only have to look back to what happened to the old North Shore railroad service to see what is likely to happen again if the Metro is extended. Further, I am not in favor of the total populace paying for the extension via additional taxes. With a greater percentage of the working class now driving cars to work than was the situation when the North Shore railroad was in vogue, you can only surmise what will happen. There is no way that the Metro would be able to duplicate the convenience, nor the flexible timetable, that can be had with the private automobiles that the general public is able to experience. The bottom line is -- the Metro extension would be doomed even before it would get started.

Date received: 4/26/2003
Name: Kevin Klandrud
Organization: 
Address: Brookfield, WI
Comments: There are many items that I find troubling regarding the proposed $166.2M dollar capital cost expenditure for the proposed rail/bus project in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor.
1. The highest estimate of riders is 5100 trips per day. That is about 2500 people riding the train/bus round trip on a weekly basis. Over 10 years at the highest projected ridership that equates to $12.78 per trip, or $25 per round trip per person. And that’s just the initial capital costs. Annual operating cost is projected at $18.6M per year, or $186M for 10 years. This equates to $14.30 per trip, or $28.60 per round trip. Add this to the initial cost and you end up with $53.60 per round trip ticket.
2. The projections of revenue from ticket sales is expected at $3.2M per year. This means that the taxpayer is going to subsidize the system $530M over the above 10 year period.

Date received: 4/26/2003
Name: Sarah K. Patch
Organization: 
Address: 3133 N. Marietta Ave #10
Milwaukee, WI 53211
Comments: I have two questions, rather than comments:
1. Is there any way to improve the traveling speed of the proposed rail option? Sample travel times as posted on page 4 of the spring newsletter are not all appealing. (160 minutes between Milwaukee and Chicago?!) How does the 34mph average speed for the proposed Metra extension compare with successful commuter rail programs in other cities? (I think CalTrain has got to move faster than 34mph; certainly BART travels faster than that!)
2. What are the proposed passenger fares?

Date received: 4/25/2003
Name: Todd T. Temperly
Organization: 
Address: 408 Fremont
Lake Mills, WI 53551
Comments: I work for Kraft Foods in Madison, WI. Kraft’s main headquarters is in Northfield, IL. Once or twice a year, I am required to attend meetings in Northfield. Whenever I go, I drive to Fox Lake, IL, which is 1 1/2 hours away and ride the Metra train to the Northbrook station. Kraft has an employee shuttle van from the Northbrook station to it’s campus. It is a very safe way to travel and I get to avoid the traffic congestion.

Whenever my family and I travel to downtown Chicago for recreation, we always use the Metra train from Fox Lake. www.metrarail.com has plenty of information on how to transfer to the CTA buses and trains from Union Station to the major tourist destinations. Thanks to Metra, we do not need a car to travel to downtown Chicago.

Kraft also has a training facility at the O’Hare Plaza. I am required to take a class once or twice a year. Whenever I travel there, I drive to Harvard, IL which is 1 1/4 hours away and ride the Metro train to the Park Ridge station. I ride a Pace bus(#290) to the Cumberland transit station which is only one block from O’Hare Plaza. The Cumberland transit station is right next to the Interstate which is pretty much a parking log during rush hour. By integrating bus and train service, I can move about the suburbs of Chicago without a car.

Ultimately, I would like to see commuter train service to Watertown, WI so we could visit downtown Milwaukee more often. The traffic congestion and the lack of train service to Milwaukee is the reason why we prefer to visit Chicago rather than Milwaukee.

Train service to Watertown first depends on the success of the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Metra service.

Date received: 4/25/2003
Name: CD
Organization: 
Address: 
Comments: Hello:

Saw the posting indicating that the Metra could be moving north to Milwaukee. I’d really welcome the addition. Amtrak is a bit pricey. Right now, I only do the run to Chicago, an average of once per week, primarily due to the cost.

Another plus would be the addition of an area on the Metra where commuters could put bicycles. I’d find it great to be able to put a bike on the Metra, and ride it from the Metra station to my destination in the loop.

Any chance of that happening as well?

Thanks.
As a frequent visitor to the Chicago area, I would be very much in favor of extending the Metra into the Milwaukee area. It is an affordable and pleasant experience. I hope this expansion will eventually take place.

We are resident in Racine County and have attended hearings regarding the Metra line from Chicago to Milwaukee. I believe that is a great idea considering I live in Chicago & have visited many of my friends that reside in Milwaukee. I either drive or take the Amtrak. I feel the Metra would be convenient, less traffic, & less expensive versus driving or taking the Amtrak. I’m sure there are plenty of people from Milwaukee that commute by car or Amtrak to work in Chicago. It would more convenient & less expensive for them as well. I hope this helps in your decision.

We have been hanging out. I know students from the Prairie School take the train down to do research at the college libraries in Chicago. How easy that would be for my daughter to take the metra from Racine (only taking several minutes to drop her off and pick her up from the station), rather than her driving to Kenosha (if she had a car available to leave in Kenosha all day). There are many positives about the ability to travel to Chicago for many people. I have lived in Milwaukee for 45 years and have worked in Milwaukee for over 30 years. There are very few people who even know about the Metra. If this were expanded, I’m sure people who have never utilized this wonderful mode of transportation would certainly find this worthwhile. I have always found the Metra to be clean. I have enjoyed the cafe by the Kenosha station. The owner is wonderful and makes a great breakfast. Always a must before spending a day in Chicago. I hope my comments have been helpful.

Reasonable people understand the need to support systems that make communities strong. Whether it is a park system, a zoo, or a library, user fees will never fully pay the way. It takes public support. It takes a long view of what this Racine community needs to make it strong again. Negative attitudes kill communities.

Our neighbor to the south, Kenoshia, could have rolled over and died when the Chrysler plant closed. Instead it had to evaluate its strengths, speed money, look to the future, and find new ways to survive. As industries close and talented people leave Racine, we are called to do the same. For Wisconsin, and Racine in particular, we must face the reality that people are leaving this area for much brighter futures elsewhere. If we don’t grab this chance to move into the 21st century, we will continue our pattern of a disastrous economic decline. We send our tax money to Washington. It is time to return that hard earned transportation money back to our community before it is too late.

We need METRA if Milwaukee does not move forward in implementing commuter rail it will fall behind as a city. Linking Milwaukee to Chicago and the environs between would provide a viable alternative to travel by auto at a cost people could afford. I am a college student who is frustrated with the cost and hassle of driving and having an alternative mode of transportation would be very beneficial to me. I am currently working on a Civil Engineering degree at UW-Madison and hopefully when I graduate I can work on solving South Eastern Wisconsin’s transportation problems.

We are resident in Racine County and have attended hearings regarding the Metra extension for a number of years. We fully support this transportation system, one which would connect from Kenoshia through Milwaukee by Metra rail. It is difficult to understand why this process has taken so long, while our community is suffering such economic troubles. We want our federal tax dollars to come back to this area to help improve the conditions in this hard hit corner of Wisconsin. Bringing the trains here in an efficient manner will bring us back into the mainstream of the larger urban community. By allowing passengers to live, and spend their money here, in Racine and to work and travel into the larger urban community, we will draw more residents who can afford our housing and build our property tax base. It will be beneficial in drawing more talent to this community, to work right here in our own industries, while still being connected to much larger choices in southeast Wisconsin and northern Illinois.

As a college student without a car, I see a commuter rail line such as this a convenient way to nearby cities. I find greyhound to be inefficient and, frankly, insane and barbaric idea and reality).

I enthusiastically support all three of the new rail projects for southeast Wisconsin. Rail is the most efficient, safest, and least-polluting form of transportation. This country needs a nation-wide high-speed rail, and a high-quality regular speed rail system, and to phase out routine, mass transportation by jet plane (which is an insane and barbaric idea and reality).

As a frequent visitor to the Chicago area, I would be very much in favor of extending the Metra into the Milwaukee area. It is an affordable and pleasant experience. I hope this expansion will eventually take place.

Comments:

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deteriorating. No respectable person would find bus travel to Milwaukee suitable. A commuter rail such as this provides a quick way to get right to the heart of Milwaukee. Additionally, rail is a sustainable form of transportation. I see the future of auto transportation cloudy. Increased congestion, lack of access to downtown, and gas prices cause me to question its future viability. Rail will encourage high density development and reduce sprawl. These are very valuable consequences in a growing metropolitan area.

Date received: 4/24/2003
Name: Thomas Cassidy
Organization: 
Address:  
Comments: I would like to send this e-mail in support of proposed plans to: “The extension of a commuter (METRA) rail line further north into Racine and Milwaukee. I have spent much of the last twelve years in Rome and Italy, and will soon be returning to the Milwaukee area. In my experience Europe puts our public transportation system to shame! I believe METRA can be a viable (though I doubt subsidy free) addition to the transportation mix in South East Wisconsin. It will also I believe strengthen the economic ties between South Eastern Wisconsin and Northern Illinois to the benefit of both.

Thank you

Date received: 4/24/2003
Name: Cathy Rose
Organization: 
Address: 3481 N. Lake Drive
Milwaukee, WI 53211
Comments: I firmly support extending the Metra system from Chicago to Milwaukee. This would be an asset for businesses along the route and the citizens of southeastern Wisconsin. Please support this.

Date received: 4/24/2003
Name: Mark E. Miller
Organization: 
Address: 2929 E Newton Ave
Shorewood, WI 53211
Comments: I'm in favor of the Metra extension to Milwaukee.

Thank you.

Date received: 4/24/2003
Name: Don L. Leistikow
Organization: none
Address: 
Comments: Many years ago, studies have shown that eventually a strip city will exist from South Bend, Indiana to Sheboygan, Wisconsin. It is obvious that balanced transportation must exist throughout and this includes the Milwaukee Metro Area. We are also aware of the monetary investments and capital growth everywhere a form of rail transportation exists or is implemented.

Economic growth and investment has revitalised many CBD’s across the USA since rail transit has been restored. As odd as it may seem, people just do not support bus lines as they do rail transit. Even the bus ‘Trolleys’ have not attracted the ridership that would cover their expense. That alone should tell us something. Cleveland’s expansion into additional rail transit in its CBD has found new investment and a reenchantment with business with the installation of new electric transportation. Even the noon lunch hour has attracted downtown staffers to board an LRV for a quick ride to a favorite luncheon spot, which was unheard of previously. The public is attracted to rail transportation and will support it when they will not ‘ride the bus’.

Case in point, is the Chicago - Kenosha Metra commuter line. Certainly, this should have been done long ago. Racine and the metro communities of South Milwaukee, Cudahy and Saint Francis will contribute to the ridership as will Milwaukee as origin and destination points. Unfortunately, recent roadway improvements and relocation on Milwaukee’s southside did not include bridge abutments for double tracks. This lack of foresight and long range planning will require correction as the double track should be restored between Kenosha and Milwaukee. I suspect that we have a highway oriented Department of Transportation at the State level, to thank for that oversight.

The cities that are moving forward, are those that have rail transportation both local and commuter in concept. Train travel is less expensive to build, maintain and operate, than the comparative cost of construction and maintenance of the ever demanding widening and repair of the freeway system. Billions to trillions of dollars are spent without regard, on our freeway system which now reaches far away into our northern vacation country where motor vehicle counts are far less than we endure down here. Therefore, the vehicle cost per mile of freeway constructed is far more expensive per unit than where we require it in our shrinking industrial areas in Southeastern Wisconsin. Yet, we all are paying for it.

We must diversify our transportation in our major cities and enhance them with a comprehensive network of connections which will aid the user with convenience and choice in our transportation future. Therefore, we need the extension of Metra from Kenosha into Milwaukee as soon as possible. Downtown Milwaukee is already undergoing a major overhaul and rebuilding. Business and Condominiums are attracting a transition of migration back to the CBDistrict. The growth pattern is moving back. The advantage of a local train service along the Lake Shore will find plenty of support from the public, many of whom are now driving down to Kenosha to board Metra, there.

Please approve an extension of Metra north from Kenosha into Milwaukee.

Don L. Leistikow
Industrial Traffic Manager, Retired

Date received: 4/24/2003
Name: Warren Klandrud
Organization: Taxpayer
Address: 1319 Prairie
Racine, WI 53406
Comments: As a concerned taxpayer, do the math. Spend approx. 156 million initially-18.6 million annually-fares would would only be 3.2 million annually. Just what we don’t need another white elephant. France/England and just mothballed the Concorde because they were subsidizing every ticket sold. We would be doing the same thing. People in the 25 mi. radius of Kenosha can drive down there and take the metra, as I have done. All you have to do is read the facts in The Journal Times April 23, 2003 page 9A

I do not see how any-one can support this plan.

Date received: 4/24/2003
Name: Mark Miller
Organization: 
Address: 
Comments: I'm all for the proposed extension of the Metra line to Milwaukee.

Thank you.

Date received: 4/24/2003
Name: Bill Zabriskie
Organization: 
Address: 1404 N. 121st St.
Wauwatosa, WI 53226
Comments: Yes, I support the idea of extending Metra service provided it can be done w/o too big a subsidy. It would be nice if this service could connect with Mitchell Field in some user friendly way.

Date received: 4/24/2003
Name: Sonja Rajkovich
Organization: 
Address: 
Comments: I understand that you are seeking comments concerning a new Chicago-to-Milwaukee Metra route. I am very much interested in using such a route, and would like more information about it. Would it be possible to board at stops between downtown Chicago and Milwaukee, or are you proposing a new high-speed train with no stops in between? The closest Metra station to my home is in Park Ridge, Illinois. I have also used the Metra station near Jefferson Park subway station inside Chicago. I would love to be able to travel from either of these stations to Milwaukee.

Thank you very much for considering my comments.

Date received: 4/24/2003
Name: Brian Belli
Organization: 
Address: 
Comments: 

Thank you.
Please include my vote to extend the Metra to Milwaukee. I believe this would be great for both cities.

Thank you

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<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Laura Knudson E. Knudson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization:</td>
<td>Racine resident</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>2613 Gillen Street Racine, WI 53403</td>
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| Comments:      | I am strongly in favor of extending the Metra line to Milwaukee because of the social, cultural, ecological and economic benefits the line would bring to our community. I would just like to write you a few lines of support because I will not be able to attend next Wednesday's meeting. Having lived in both Europe and South America for many years and having enjoyed excellent public transportation, I am astonished that there are groups of people in the Racine area who could be against the plan. It seems to me that it would be for the greater good in our community and it would serve both individuals and area businesses.

The line would make it easier for people to get jobs in the Chicago and Milwaukee areas. It would enable people of all socio-economic backgrounds to have access to cultural events and world-class museums in these cities without having to invest in cars and without polluting the environment.

Please count on my support for this much needed public works project.

Sincerely,
Laura Knudson |

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<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Laura L. Ricci</td>
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<td>Organization:</td>
<td>Laura L. Ricci</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>PO Box 11692 Milwaukee, WI 53211</td>
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| Comments:      | I am very excited by the prospect of commuter service from Kenosha, making the Milwaukee/Chicago line more accessible for the residents in SE Wisconsin.

After seeing the outstanding success of the California Roseville/Sacramento/San Jose commuter line, this seems to be an ideal opportunity to reduce automobile traffic and accommodate dual-career families (or simply families with the usual variety of education, entertainment and work-related travel needs).

I'm sorry I'm unable to attend the public workshop, but now that I'm on your mailing list, I'll know in advance about future opportunities to learn more and support your efforts.

Thanks,
Laura Ricci |

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<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>LeRoy F. Roberts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization:</td>
<td>Senior Citizen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>5635 College Point Court Racine, WI 53402</td>
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| Comments:      | These comments may have been made previously by me and not received because I did not click on the submit button. Racine needs the extension of the Metra to both Racine and Milwaukee because at the present time Racine has practically no public transportation link to travel out of the city by other than personal car or the bus between Milwaukee and/or Kenosha. Racine is literally isolated to those that need to commute to jobs in other adjacent cities. For people who are unable to drive automobiles, there is no simple way to travel. All to often the cost overshadows the need which restricts community growth. We don't even have the benefit of Taxi service and this is understandable because we have no rail service. Kenosha has six (6) Taxi companies because they have rail service that is actually growing.

We remember the Metra station a few year ago, it was in a run-down area, but visit it now. It is very nice and in fact surrounded by appartment and condos. Yes Racine would be very short-sighted to not push hard for the extension of Metra to Racine and Milwaukee. |

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<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Gretchen K. Romanshek (and family)</td>
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<td>Organization:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>Racine, WI 53403</td>
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<td>Comments:</td>
<td>Please pass my comments on to the Advisory committee studying rail service extension from Kenosha to Milwaukee. We are in favor of continuing rail service to Racine and Milwaukee. We must think forward and approve this for the work force in both directions. This would help bridge the gap between IL. and Wisconsin. Also we believe it will help the tax bases in Racine for property and jobs. We are not totally against funding part with our tax dollars, if we can pay for a sports field we Need to support this that will enhance all our lives. Thank you</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Nikki Jain</td>
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<td>Organization:</td>
<td>R S InfoCon, Inc</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>701 Grand Ave Racine, WI 53403</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td>Hi, I am very excited to know that there is a plan to extend metra from kenosha to Milwaukee covering racine and other close by areas. This will really bring chicago closer to us making new job opportunities. This is certainly a great step towards the economic development of Racine area. Thank You</td>
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<td>Name:</td>
<td>Robert Simmelink</td>
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<td>Organization:</td>
<td>Shorewood, WI</td>
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<td>Comments:</td>
<td>I will not be able to attend any of the meeting, however I am in favor of extending the METRA service into Milwaukee. Thank you</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Daniel Ziebel</td>
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<td>Comments:</td>
<td>Just wanted to add my two cents: as a Milwaukee downtowner I would love to see a Metra line between Milwaukee and Chicago. It's been long overdue.</td>
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<td>Name:</td>
<td>Kyle Lillis</td>
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<td>Comments:</td>
<td>I am writing to express my strong support for extending the Metra line up to Milwaukee. I live in Milwaukee and travel to Skokie 3-5 times a week for work. Many people I have worked with and I would benefit greatly from this project.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Krista Chapdelaine</td>
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<td>Comments:</td>
<td>I am in favor of the METRA extension and would use it often.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Regina, Katie, John Levek</td>
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<td>Organization:</td>
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I would prefer to take public transportation, instead of using my car. I think its a great idea.

In addition, I truly believe that many disabled and retired citizens would make use of the Metro to go to Milwaukee to enjoy the festival, the Museum, concerts, fine arts, restaurants, water front activities and other fine activities that Milwaukee has to offer if they didn’t have to drive! I myself am disabled, and did not have a chance to visit my daughter while she was attending U.W. Milwaukee as much as I would have liked. I wish I would have had the opportunity to ride the Metro.

And last but not least it would be great for commuters, cut down on air pollution which is effecting the air in Kenosha, and perhaps would bring downtown Kenosha alive again!

If there is anything that I can do to help bring about this Metro extension, you can count on me.

Dear Mr. Evenson:

I am writing you on behalf of my daughter, Katie Levek, son, John Levek, and myself to support the extension of the Metra. This is an idea that is years overdue. When I moved to Kenosha in 1988 I was traveling back and forth for classes at U.W. Milwaukee and often wished the Metro went that far. My children have had a hard time getting to and from Milwaukee because such a system does not exist. Right now any U.W. Milwaukee students, or MATC Milwaukee students and other Milwaukee colleges and university students have to have a car in order to live at home and commute to school. This would be a great savings in terms of room and board for many students who now cannot afford to live in Milwaukee and have to commute.

In addition, I truly believe that many disabled and retired citizens would make use of the Metro to go to Milwaukee to enjoy the festival, the Museum, concerts, fine arts, restaurants, water front activities and other fine activities that Milwaukee has to offer if they didn’t have to drive! I myself am disabled, and did not have a chance to visit my daughter while she was attending U.W. Milwaukee as much as I would have liked. I wish I would have had the opportunity to ride the Metro.

And last but not least it would be great for commuters, cut down on air pollution which is effecting the air in Kenosha, and perhaps would bring downtown Kenosha alive again!

If there is anything that I can do to help bring about this Metro extension, you can count on me.

Date received: 4/24/2003
Name: Michelle C. Schneider
Organization: B-68
Address: 5428 North Meadows
Racine, WI 53402
Comments: I think its a great idea. I would prefer to take public transportation, instead of using my car.

Date received: 4/24/2003
Name: Ann M. Ruffalo
Organization: Racine, WI 53405
Address: 725 Ohio St
Racine, WI 53405
Comments: I am in favor of the metra extension to Milwaukee.

Date received: 4/24/2003
Name: Diane Halligan
Organization: 2025 E. Greenwich, Unit 2
Milwaukee, WI 53211
Address: 2025 E. Greenwich, Unit 2
Milwaukee, WI 53211
Comments: I fully support the KRM Commuter Rail Metra Extension in SE Wisconsin.

1. It will provide a fast, reliable, easy and affordable alternative to congested highway travel. It uses existing right-of-way, so this is a golden opportunity to take advantage of the situation before the right-of-way is obliterated.

2. It will cut down on traffic by offering more transportation options. Studies have shown that providing more lanes of traffic on the freeway system does not solve the congestion problem.

3. Investing in trains is more economical than creating wider highways.

4. It will be an accessible and practical alternative for commuting with 362,100 jobs and 540,000 residents projected within 3 miles of the proposed stations. People will be able to commute to work or wherever without having to use automobiles.

5. It will cut air pollution.

6. It will revitalize cities, build tax base, attract jobs and talent, develop regional economy, clean our environment, and provide regional access to jobs.

This is a great opportunity to do all the things listed above. DO NOT SQUANDER IT; VOTE YES FOR IT, AND START THE PROCESS TODAY!

Date received: 4/24/2003
Name: Terrie L. Lewandowski
Organization: Meetings and Incentives
Address: 3205 Hearthland Lane
Racine, WI 53402
Comments: My comment to the State is why would you want to add additional freeway lanes when this is a perfect option to driving. There is less stress, less road rage, less accidents and congestion. By using the rail you reduce air pollution, which is a major concern. There are so many cities around the country that offer rail and can be such a convenience to so many people. You have my vote on this for sure!!

Date received: 4/24/2003
Name: Joan I. Brenner
Organization: Meetings and Incentives
Address: 10620 Seven Mile Rd
Caledonia, WI 53108
Comments: I am in favor of this project. Please include my ‘yes’ vote.

Date received: 4/24/2003
Name: John Axne
Organization: Meetings and Incentives
Address: 1430 Victoria Cir N
Elm Grove, WI 53122
Comments: Hello,

I recently moved my family and business to the Milwaukee area from downtown Chicago. I run a small graphics/web design studio and maintain my Chicago clients needs by occasionally commuting via AmTrak. However the schedules involve me having to spend the whole day in Chicago due to the few departure times of the AmTrak trains. If you miss the 5pm train from Chicago, you have to wait 3 HOURS before the LAST train at 8pm. It would be great to have a METRA line allowing more options to depart and return.

There are several people I know who would prefer to live in Milwaukee than a Chicago Suburb. It’s big city life without the big city headaches. I know it would draw businesses and residents to the Milwaukee downtown area if there was an easy way to get back and forth between the two cities.

Lastly, there are plans to start 3 years of construction on I-94, the only main artery between Milwaukee and Chicago. Having an alternative method of transportation to bypass this upcoming headache would be fantastic. Even now, it takes the same amount of time (even less during rush hour) to travel by train than it does to drive without the cost of having to park downtown Chicago ($23/day).

So, YES you can count my vote for extending the rail from Kenosha to Milwaukee.

There’s nothing wrong with some competition with AmTrak, it helps provide better services for the end customer.

Thanks for your time.

Date received: 4/24/2003
Name: Anita a. Carr
Organization: Meetings and Incentives
Address: 4817 Kingdom Ct
Racine, WI 53402
Comments: Yes, I want rail service... to Milwaukee. I live in Racine County and when I want to go downtown Chicago -- I drive to Kenosha to pick up the metra.

It would be a great time saver and money saver to use it to go downtown Milwaukee.

I would go downtown Milwaukee a lot more than I do now. I go about 2 times a week.

GET THE TRAIN GOING!
I have taken the Metra between Kenosha and Chicago. I would like to see more times for the existing Metra from Kenosha to Chicago.

In addition, I would LOVE to see it extended to Milwaukee!!!

Date received: 4/23/2003  
Name: Greg and Gail Pokora  
Organization:  
Address: Racine, WI  
Comments:  
We strongly support the establishment of the rail system extension....

Date received: 4/23/2003  
Name: Nick Waldron  
Organization:  
Address: 920 N 28th St #102  
Milwaukee, WI 53208  
Comments:  
I fully support a (long overdue) rail system in Milwaukee. Those concerned with the tax implications need to look at the big picture. Sure, expanding the interstates would solve the problem for now, but as the population of southeastern Wisconsin continues to spread, we'd only be forced to build more roads in the future. A rail system would take care of those problems all at once.

It would also do more to reduce the African-American unemployment rate than an expanded interstate since the rail system would make it easier for those without cars to get employment in areas outside of the city. Please don't reward the prejudices of those who don't want a rail system because of this.

But finally, a rail system would encourage more tourists to visit Milwaukee. One of the biggest reasons Milwaukee doesn't have more tourism is because Chicago is seen as being just like us, but bigger, with more to do and easier to get around. With the proposed rail system, many tourists who currently only visit Chicago would be encouraged to ride the Chicago transit to Kenosha and ride our rail all the way to downtown Milwaukee.

Thank you for your time.

Date received: 4/23/2003  
Name: Christina Windberg  
Organization:  
Address: 497 Sunnyview Drive #5  
Oak Creek, WI  
Comments:  
I live in Milwaukee and I would love to have the metra come all the way up here, I have a lot of friends in Chicago and this would be a great way for me to be able to visit them more often.

Date received: 4/23/2003  
Name: John C. Hess Jr.  
Organization:  
Address: 1421 North Hawley Road  
Milwaukee, WI 53208  
Comments:  
Our community needs to place more emphasis on mass transportation rather than exhausting all of our resources on more freeways.

Date received: 4/23/2003  
Name: Daniel Collins P.E.  
Organization: Director and Founder Engage Networks  
Address:  
Comments:  
To whom it may concern,

As a technology business owner and Milwaukee area resident, I find easy access from Chicago to Milwaukee to be an important service for both economic growth, and the convenience of customers and employees. The Wisconsin Technology Council has identified the Chicago-Milwaukee economic development corridor as one of the prime opportunities for high wage growth in the Wisconsin economy. Easy access is one of the most important infrastructure issues relating to this economic development corridor.

This thesis was also part of the conclusion of the Work Group on Job Creation and Economic Development, convened at Governor Doyle's request, to identify key aspects of growing the Wisconsin economy. Finally, the extension is environmentally responsible when we evaluate the quality of air and living in the great state of Wisconsin. Thank you for your consideration.

Date received: 4/23/2003  
Name: Michelle  
Organization:  
Address:  
Comments:  
I am writing to encourage support of an extension of the commuter train to Chicago which currently starts at Kenosha. It would represent an advance in the effort to reduce pollution, traffic jams and high blood pressure. I hope you are able to influence the outcome in favor of this latest attempt to extend this service.

Date received: 4/23/2003  
Name: Dan Ritter  
Organization:  
Address:  
Comments:  
We strongly support the establishment of the rail system extension......

Date received: 4/23/2003  
Name: Michelle  
Organization:  
Address:  
Comments:  
I have taken the Metra between Kenosha and Chicago. I would like to see more times for the existing Metra from Kenosha to Chicago.

In addition, I would LOVE to see it extended to Milwaukee!!!
Dear SEWRPAC:

Extending the Metra line to Milwaukee would greatly increase opportunities for those of us in southeastern Wisconsin to use public transportation. I live in Oak Creek and work at UW-Parkside in Kenosha. Currently, there is NO option for public transportation for me. The Metra extension would give me the chance to leave the car at home at least several days a week. This would save me money and it would also cut down on the emissions I generate that add to the already marginal air quality in this part of the state. My wife also attends conferences in Chicago for her job and the Metra extension would eliminate the auto trip to downtown Milwaukee of Sturtevant to catch the Amtrack train.

We would also find the Metra helpful in getting to downtown Milwaukee for shopping, theater attendance and similar activities. I think the Metra would prove especially useful with the upcoming Marquette interchange reconstruction.

Please, lets give the citizens of SE Wisconsin a decent public transportation system.

Date received: 4/23/2003
Name: Don Lintner
Organization: Instructional Technology Support
Address: 900 Wood Rd.
Kenosha, WI 53141-2000
Comments: Dear SEWRPAC:

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We would also find the Metra helpful in getting to downtown Milwaukee for shopping, theater attendance and similar activities. I think the Metra would prove especially useful with the upcoming Marquette interchange reconstruction.

Please, lets give the citizens of SE Wisconsin a decent public transportation system.
Milwaukee... We always want to go to Chicago but it's a pain to drive (and decide who's driving) and Amtrak is too expensive. If the fare is just right, we would make a lot of use of the system.

Date received: 4/23/2003
Name: Anthony D. Belli
Organization:没提供
Address:没提供
Comments:YES!
That would be very ideal. I love going to Chicago but only make it down two or three times a year because I don't want to drive all the way down, or to Kenosha and then jump on the train. That would be awesome for business and travel for both Chicago and Milwaukee.

Date received: 4/23/2003
Name: Kelly M. Gaglione
Organization:KAHLER SLATER ARCHITECTS, INC.
Address:111 West Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53202-2501
Comments:
I am writing in support of an extension to the Metra that would run from Chicago to Milwaukee. I believe that the extension would increase economic development across the entire corridor. Living in Franklin, I also might use the Metra to get to and from work in downtown Milwaukee.

I also support an express train from Milwaukee to Chicago. My husband uses the Amtrak from Milwaukee to Chicago and back at least twice per week. Driving into Chicago would be so difficult, he would surely make trips less frequently which reduces a positive impact on development.

I would be glad to expand upon this if necessary. Thank you.

Date received: 4/22/2003
Name: Dale Shidler
Organization:没提供
Address:没提供
Comments:
I would LOVE To see this train brought all the way to Milwaukee. I think it would do so many good things for Milwaukee and the environment to have this happen!

Date received: 4/22/2003
Name: Robert A. Scheidt, Ph.D.
Organization:Department of Biomedical Engineering
Address:1515 West Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53233
Comments:
Dear SEWRPC,

I live in Chicago, IL and commute to Milwaukee via AMTRAK daily. I am a Biomedical Engineering professor at Marquette University and conduct stroke rehabilitation research at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago. I am very much in support of your regional rail initiative, as it would allow me to move to the Kenosh/Racine area, while still having convenient access to both Milwaukee and Chicago. While I support AMTRAK and love the service it provides, regional (Metra) rail could offer improved access to Southeastern Wisconsin, a place I'd like to live. Unfortunately, living in Kenosha/Racine would be too inconvenient with transportation between both Milwaukee and Chicago. Your initiative will solve my dilemma.

Date received: 4/22/2003
Name: Joseph Kubisiak
Organization:没提供
Address:3148 N. Richards St.
Milwaukee, WI 53212
Comments:
Dear SEWRPC,
I would like to let you know I strongly support the use of mass transit systems and the proposed extension of Chicago Metra to downtown Milwaukee. Has the possibility of a similar line to Milwaukee suburbs or Madison along I-94 been considered?

Date received: 4/22/2003
Name: Kurt Meinke
Organization:Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design
Address:273 E. Erie Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202
Comments:
I would like to see the commuter train from Chicago extended to Milwaukee. I would use this service often. I travel to Chicago on business and pleasure often and hate the drive. I especially dislike the traffic.

Date received: 4/22/2003
Name: Diane Martin
Organization:没提供
Address:1136 E. Chambers Street
Milwaukee, WI 53212
Comments:
I support the idea of linking the Lake Michigan corridor counties with the Metra system. Anything we can do to keep more cars off the road and less CO2 in our air, the better. This air corridor is currently one of the most polluted in the country and with the spectre of 2 more coal burning power plants along the lakefront looming, it can only get worse.

Date received: 4/22/2003
Name: Roy Staab
Organization:没提供
Address:没提供
Comments:
A commuter train would be wonderful.
Milwaukee to Chicago. Please do it. again..

Date received: 4/22/2003
Name: Linda K. Draft
Organization:UW-Parkside
Address:900 Wood Road
Kenosha, WI 53141-2000
Comments:
Please accept this message as a vote of support for the METRA extension into Milwaukee. I would ride the train instead of driving to downtown Milwaukee.

Date received: 4/22/2003
Name: James L. Michel
Organization:CRB Insurance
Address:1400 Newman Rd
Racine, WI 53406
Comments:
I think the possible rail connection is an excellent idea. Many years ago, when I-94 was first constructed, I remember that the merchants and politicians felt that, if the expressway went through the city, that people would pass right by. Instead, by being so far away from the city, people pass by because it's inconvenient to drive the 20 minutes it takes to get to downtown Racine from the expressway. Hindsight is 20/20.

We have an opportunity to make it more convenient to get to Racine. It would eliminate the pollution created by people driving to Racine as well as help generate interest in stopping without being inconvenient.

In addition, people who can't find jobs in Racine may have a better opportunity of finding one in one of the other major cities on the route without moving out of their homes here. It may help attract businesses by increasing their base of employees to choose from.

I think it's time to make Racine more convenient for people to get to. It would have a positive effect on business opportunities both from the employer and employee standpoint. In addition, we have a number of people in the Chicago area mourning...
their boats in Racine. The convenience of riding the rail into town would generate even more activity in the vicinity of the downtown area.

I am writing to support the extension of the commuter train all the way to Milwaukee. I am excited for southeastern Wisconsin! I support the Metra extension and look forward to service beyond Milwaukee into Sheboygan, Green Bay and beyond. This is an excellent opportunity for the region and the state. You certainly have my endorsement!

Dear Sirs;

My wife and I are in favor of extending Metra service from Kenosha north to Milwaukee because AMTRAK service frequently has been unreliable. We have a daughter in Milwaukee, and a daughter in Chicago. As we get older, and the traffic on I-94 gets worse, we will be using Metra instead of driving to Chicago.

I received an email about your study, and the possibility of connecting to the Metra from Milwaukee. As a driver that travels between Milwaukee & Chicago 5-6 times a month, I would support this 100%. I would love to park my car & use this service (I occasionally use Amtrak, but often can’t afford to shell out $40 bucks for the round trip ride). Again, I’m in full support of this, as i’m sure my Chicago friends will as well...

To Whom It May Concern,

I am very much in support of extending a commuter rail from Kenosha to Milwaukee. My wife and I are in favor of extending Metra service from Kenosha north to Milwaukee because AMTRAK service frequently has been unreliable. We have a daughter in Milwaukee, and a daughter in Chicago. As we get older, and the traffic on I-94 gets worse, we will be using Metra instead of driving to Chicago.

Extending the Metra System to Milwaukee would be such a boon for Milwaukee; its environment and economy and would increase the quality of life in Milwaukee by adding another option for traveling outside of the city.

I support the commuter train.

Yes, I would like to see it continued to Milwaukee!

I commute between Chicago and Milwaukee on a semi regular basis but would do it more if it were more affordable and the schedule was better. Milwaukee and Chicago compliment each other nicely and deserve to be more connected.

I support the commuter train.

I am writing to support the extension of the Metra line to Racine and Milwaukee. With all the cars in southeast Wisconsin and the problems they create, the train would be a welcome alternative. My family would certainly use it. Thank you.

I commute between Chicago and Milwaukee on a semi regular basis but would do it more if it were more affordable and the schedule was better. Milwaukee and Chicago compliment each other nicely and deserve to be more connected.

I support the commuter train.

Please extend the commuter train from Kenosha to Milwaukee. I often travel from Milwaukee to Chicago and would love to take advantage of public transportation.

Yes!

I commute between Chicago and Milwaukee on a semi regular basis but would do it more if it were more affordable and the schedule was better. Milwaukee and Chicago compliment each other nicely and deserve to be more connected.

I support the commuter train.
Date received: 4/21/2003  
Name: Scott D. Stearns  
Organization:  
Address: 939 E Homer St, #9  
Milwaukee, WI 53207  
Comments:  
I'm in favor of the Metra extension to downtown Milwaukee. Having an affordable rail connection to downtown Chicago could do wonders for commuters as well as tourists going to Chicago and for visitors to Milwaukee.

I don't think it would be seen as a competitor to Amtrak since that is a regional form of ground transportation. It's not practical for the regular commuter to pay the fares Amtrak charges.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Date received: 4/21/2003  
Name: David P. Dauchy  
Organizations:  
Address: 5223 Willowview Road  
Racine, WI 53402  
Comments:  
Wisene Project Group,  
Although it will cost more, option #1 of having a dedicated rail service between Milwaukee and Chicago with stops in between will really help SE Wisconsin gain reliable access to the bigger markets. Kenosha can get its access to Milwaukee back as many commute from there by car and Racine can finally get access to both markets, besides having to use I-94.

Racine stands to benefit the most as many could use the time on the train to read and/or relax before and after work. More workers in both major metropolitan areas could chose to live in Racine, since it is affordable and would have good access to both big cities. Property Values can only go up as Milwaukee is only a short train rid away. I really hope that this project becomes a reality.

Good Luck,
Dear sir/madam,

Thank you for your attention.

I am writing to express my favorable opinion and support of the development of a commuter rail line extension. As a business owner and a resident of SE Wisconsin I want transportation options for myself and my employees. I hope by providing this train line we may increase the quality of life in SE Wisconsin and be able to be a more desirable place to live for young and older employees and employers. My tax dollars should be going towards projects like the KRM line extension.

I travel on busines at least once per month to Chicago on Amtrak from Ohio. Many customers are within easy walking distance in Chicago from Metra and CTA; but any expansion of service would help.

David Shreiner

Date received: 4/21/2003
Name: David R. McCoy
Organization: Gordon R. McCoy
Address: 1642 E. 56th St., #1205
Chicago, IL 60637
Comments: I am writing to express my favorable opinion and support of the development of a commuter rail line in southeast Wisconsin.

The proposed line would provide seamless, convenient, safe, and environmentally clean public transportation linking the metropolitan areas and suburbs of southeast Wisconsin with one another and with the Chicago metropolitan area in Illinois.

The proposed line would be a big step in providing for a more balanced transportation system. Alternatives to driving are especially needed in times of severe traffic congestion on I-94 and road construction.

If the proposed commuter line could be ready for initial operation by the onset of the rebuilding of I-94 later in this decade, that would be a huge plus and should enable the project to garner additional federal funding as well.

I travel to southeast Wisconsin and especially Milwaukee frequently, both for pleasure and in my role with a religious group, in which I am called to visit churches in Wisconsin. It would be a pleasure to be able to visit all the churches via train travel.

Thank you for attention.

Gordon R. McCoy

Date received: 4/21/2003
Name: Jonathan Helstad
Organization: Gordon R. McCoy
Address: 6851 Mariner Dr. #2
Racine, WI 53406
Comments: To whom it may concern:

I have lived in Racine, WI all of my life and have worked at Abbott Laboratories in North Chicago, IL for the last 13 years. It is about a one hour drive each way for me to get from home to work. A Metra route that goes from Milwaukee to Chicago would be perfect for me. I would use it every day to get to work, as the North Chicago station is adjacent to the North Chicago Abbott site. I have used Metra for travel to Chicago many times and have enjoyed the experience, and with a station in Racine, would use Metra more frequently for trips to Milwaukee and Chicago. Please feel free to contact me if I can offer you any more information.

Date received: 4/21/2003
Name: Ricky Heldt
Organization: Gordon R. McCoy
Address: 348 E. Oklahoma #8
Milwaukee, WI 53207
Comments: Please extend the Metra to Milwaukee. I would use it to go to Chicago. It would be great all the way around!
Thank you for this opportunity to express my opinion. Congestion or we'll miss the start of the play! I would be pleased to use Metra driving time. Even at allowing two hours, I hope we do not encounter any traffic from 75 minutes to 120 minutes, even though Saturday afternoon is far from a peak time. Shortly after I send this email, my wife and I will drive to a play in Chicago. I have been making this trip for many years, and have seen my average drive time increase between Racine and Chicago has been the deciding factor against her moving back to Racine. Our daughter has lived and worked in Chicago for 11 years. She has considered moving to Racine and commuting to her job in Chicago, but the lack of train service between Racine and Chicago has been the deciding factor against her moving back to Racine. I strongly urge Racine to move forward with commuter train service that links the city to both Milwaukee and Chicago. It is important that we have commuter train service in order for Racine to continue to grow as a vibrant, economically strong community. Please, let's not have Racine make the same mistake it did 30 years ago when the proposed Metra line. I do have a couple of concerns however.

1. Would the implementation of a commuter rail service through this corridor jeopardize the relevance and therefore the future of heavy rail North out of Chicago? This is a concern because, of course, should Amtrak survive it's current woes, Milwaukee needs to stay relevant to Northwest rail travel by staying in the Chicago-Minneapolis corridor.

2. Whether the Hiawatha stays or goes with the building of the Metra line, the knee-jerk reaction would be to merely run the train a few times a day, making practical use of the system for day-trippers and shoppers unlikely. One would rather spend an hour and a half in the car and deal with parking than spend the same amount of time on a train plus an hour or two waiting before hand in each direction. To make the Metra truly functional, the SEWPRC has to stand up to political pressure to limit the number of daily runs due to cost projections and recommend frequent daily trains to encourage casual traffic. Furthermore the trains have to run well after bar time at least on the weekends to make nightlife traffic accessible. This only helps Milwaukee by encouraging Chicagoans and others to come here, spend their money and acquaint themselves with our city while discouraging drunk driving on Wisconsin freeways.

Thank you very much for your time.

Date received: 4/20/2003
Name: FRED AND MARGARET WHITE
Organization: 
Address: 
Comments: WE ARE IN FAVOR OF THE METRA EXTENSION INTO MILWAUKEE. WE WOULD USE THE EXTENSION INTO MILWAUKEE MORE FREQUENTLY THAN THE EXTENSION THAT GOES INTO CHICAGO. WE LIVE IN THE KENOSHA AREA.

Date received: 4/20/2003
Name: Ronald and Marilyn Jacob
Organization:  
Address: 5215 Kinzie Ave. Racine, WI 53406
Comments: Dear Mr. Yunker:

We strongly support the development of a Metra commuter rail service between Racine and Milwaukee, with connecting service to Chicago. It is vital that Racine has a commuter rail link to Chicago in order to attract more businesses and residents to the city. The Amtrak service is not adequate. Although it is fast, it is extremely expensive, as well as unreliable. It is no substitute for reliable, cheap commuter train service to Milwaukee and Chicago.

Our daughter has lived and worked in Chicago for 11 years. She has considered moving to Racine and commuting to her job in Chicago, but the lack of train service between Racine and Chicago has been the deciding factor against her moving back to Racine. I strongly urge Racine to move forward with commuter train service that links the city to both Milwaukee and Chicago. It is important that we have commuter train service in order for Racine to continue to grow as a vibrant, economically strong community. Please, let's not have Racine make the same mistake it did 30 years ago when the North Shore commuter train service was discontinued.

Thank you.

Date received: 4/19/2003
Name: F C. Seitz
Organization: Kenosha, WI
Address: 
Comments: Since we will not be able to attend the meetings on this matter, we are interested in going on record that we do support such a project. . . . We agree that it will be an important addition to all of the localities involved and will provide many benefits and conveniences for many in the future. . . . We know from past experience the convenience this form of transportation supplied and we are confident it would fill a vital need for this area in the future years. . . .

Date received: 4/19/2003
Name: Michael B. Thompson
Organization: Family Foot Clinics of Wisconsin, S.C
Address: 201 - 68th Place Kenosha, WI 53143
Comments: As a citizen of Kenosha who occasionally uses Metra to Chicago, I support the extension, as long as it can be done at a reasonable cost. I recognize that "reasonable cost" may have many different interpretations. However, as long as the cost would not noticeably affect my income, property, or sales tax payments, I favor it.

I see many benefits, particularly lower highway maintenance costs, environmental improvement, and increased convenience for the several million of us living in this corridor.

Shortly after I send this email, my wife and I will drive to a play in Chicago. I have been making this trip for many years, and have seen my average drive time increase from 75 minutes to 120 minutes, even though Saturday afternoon is far from a peak driving time. Even at allowing two hours, I hope we do not encounter any traffic congestion or we'll miss the start of the play! I would be pleased to use Metra instead if there were enough week-end trains to match my schedule conveniently.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my opinion.

Date received: 4/19/2003
Name: Benjamin A. Budde
Organization:  
Address: 1932 East Kenilworth Pl Milwaukee, WI 53202
Comments: I am a regular Amtrak commuter to Chicago and beyond and I am in full support of the proposed Metra line. I do have a couple of concerns however.

1. Would the implementation of a commuter rail service through this corridor jeopardize the relevance and therefore the future of heavy rail North out of Chicago? This is a concern because, of course, should Amtrak survive it’s current woes, Milwaukee needs to stay relevant to Northwest rail travel by staying in the Chicago-Minneapolis corridor.

2. Whether the Hiawatha stays or goes with the building of the Metra line, the knee-jerk reaction would be to merely run the train a few times a day, making practical use of the system for day-trippers and shoppers unlikely. One would rather spend an hour and a half in the car and deal with parking than spend the same amount of time on a train plus an hour or two waiting before hand in each direction. To make the Metra truly functional, the SEWPRC has to stand up to political pressure to limit the number of daily runs due to cost projections and recommend frequent daily trains to encourage casual traffic. Furthermore the trains have to run well after bar time at least on the weekends to make nightlife traffic accessible. This only helps Milwaukee by encouraging Chicagoans and others to come here, spend their money and acquaint themselves with our city while discouraging drunk driving on Wisconsin freeways.

Thank you very much for your time.

Date received: 4/18/2003
Name: Larry Govin-Matzat
Organization:  
Address: 
Comments: Of course metra should be extended to Milwaukee and beyond. I wish some accommodation could also be made to allow transport of dogs and other pets, perhaps a special car.

Date received: 4/17/2003
Name: Brian J. Peters
Organization: IndependenceFirst
Address: 600 W Virginia Street Milwaukee, WI 53204
Comments: As a former resident of Northern Illinois and a current resident of Oak Creek, I believe that a Metra extension would be highly desirable. From comments made by many people in Milwaukee area in the past, driving to Chicago area is often perceived as stressful and something to be avoided. A Metra ride from various Wisconsin communities into Chicago could connect both metropolitan areas more closely.

Date received: 4/16/2003
Name: Janna Smith
Organization:  
Address: 
Comments: Please, oh please... make this happen! I am one WFB woman who would use this a lot if it were coordinated. I currently use Amtrak but would enjoy another option.

Good luck!

Date received: 4/16/2003
Name: Karen Underwood
Organization:  
Address: 
Comments: I ride public transportation on a consistent basis within the city limits. I truly appreciate having the option of traveling that way as opposed to wrestling with traffic. Just recently, I took some friends with me from Milwaukee to Chicago for a shopping excursion in February. We thoroughly enjoyed our trip; however, it would have been more convenient to have picked up the train right from here as opposed to going down to Kenosha to catch it. I am unable to come to the public hearing but I wanted to take time to express my interest in this idea. Thank you for your consideration.
Greetings! My name is Pastor Jettie L. Cornett of Greater Grace Temple Church. I would like to say that I think it is a wonderful idea to have a commuter rail that extends from Milwaukee to Chicago. I like to travel to Chicago and the new rail would save a lot of time and gas for me personally. I would really like to see this Commuter Rail happen. On behalf of Greater Grace Temple Church, I wish everyone who works on this project success! Have a blessed day!
In Chicago, the Metra has stops close to the loop...not just at the adjacent suburb. Historically, the former Milwaukee Road and Northwestern had south side stops. One stop was at National Ave. and one was at Lincoln Ave. - a Bay View site would be ideal as a south side Metra stop. Enough old industrial area is near the train lines to offer a parking/train stop site.

Date received: 2/19/2003
Name: Peter Baumbach
Organization: 
Address: 3585 S. Riverside Dr. Apt 2
Greenfield, WI 53228

Comments: I firmly support a Milwaukee-Racine-Kenosha-Chicago (via Metra) rail link. As our traffic levels in the Milwaukee area are approaching that of Chicago, we need ways to keep traffic flowing. This would take pressure off the freeway, benefit low-income people who need access to jobs, and those who prefer public transit to driving hassles. (Even though I have a car and easy access to parking, I usually take the U-bus from Greenfield to UWM.) Also, I visit Chicago quite a bit, and I would much rather take a comparably priced rail ride down than the Greyhound or driving. I think there are a lot of people who would take public transit if they knew of the benefits.

One of the biggest problems I think with Milwaukee public transit is that the routes are confusing and it’s not advertised very well. Better route maps and an ad campaign that touts how hassle-free, environmentally-friendly, and patriotic (I don’t think people rejoice as much as they used to over filling their tanks with Saudi oil) public transit is, would go a long way.

Also, I would advocate putting toll-booths up on the borders of our state or around south-east Wisconsin. As strong as our knee-jerk against tolls are, it doesn’t make a whole lot of sense that Wisconsin subsidizes interstate traffic. It’s not like Illinoisans are going to stop driving up north over a 75 cent toll, and trucks aren’t going to avoid Wisconsin over a couple of bucks. This money could be used to fund a better state rail system, which could stave off further freeway expansion. In the long run, rail could save the state money, reduce air pollution, and maybe even revive a little bit of Wisconsin’s progressive tradition. Thank you for hearing me out.

Sincerely,  
~Peter Baumbach~
This past summer, I took the weekend METRA service out of Waukegan, because of a limited schedule to Kenosha, to Chicago twice. I found the trips very affordable and convenient. Upon learning about the "contenting" CTA trains, I was able to get to my destination with only a short walk. If people in Racine are educated about the train service to Chicago along with easy connections to the "sights" in the city, they will realize that driving and parking are no longer an option. Volunteer guides may even be an option.

Date received: 12/12/2002
Name: Steven Rabinowe, M.D.
Organization: 
Address: 4077 Lighthouse Dr.
Racine, WI 53402
Comments: Commuter rail should include Racine and Caledonia. This is a developing corridor between Milwaukee and Chicago and rail service is definitely needed! The sooner the better! It is overdue.
SEWRPC
e/o Sierra Club
222 S. Hamilton, #1
Madison, WI 53703

Dear SE Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission:
I support the KRM Commuter Rail Metra Extension in SE Wisconsin. We need this train because it will:
• Provide a fast, reliable, easy and affordable alternative to congested highway travel. It uses existing right-of-way, and is less subject to weather and construction delays.
• Be accessible and a practical alternative for commuting with 362,100 jobs and 540,000 residents projected within 3 miles of the proposed stations. Three out of Wisconsin’s five largest cities are on the KRM route.
• Cut down on traffic by offering more transportation options. Studies have shown that providing more lanes of traffic does not solve the congestion problem.
• Cut air pollution. Most rail-ridership will be diverted from auto, which cause 75% of our hazardous air pollution.
• Reduce sprawl by directing future development to existing communities around transit stops.
• Investing in trains is more economical than creating wider highways. Public investment in rail infrastructure provides support to roadways, airports and ports. Why not rail?

Sincerely,
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Name: David A. Bjorklund  
Address (see reverse side)
Email (please)  
Phone  

Dear SE Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission:
I support the KRM Commuter Rail Metra Extension in SE Wisconsin. We need this train because it will:
• Provide a fast, reliable, easy and affordable alternative to congested highway travel. It uses existing right-of-way and is less subject to weather and construction delays.
• Be accessible and a practical alternative for commuting with 362,100 jobs and 540,000 residents projected within 3 miles of the proposed stations. Three out of Wisconsin’s five largest cities are on the KRM route.
• Cut down on traffic by offering more transportation options. Studies have shown that providing more lanes of traffic does not solve the congestion problem.
• Cut air pollution. Most rail-ridership will be diverted from autos, which cause 75% of our hazardous air pollution.
• Reduce sprawl by directing future development to existing communities around transit stops.
• Investing in trains is more economical than creating wider highways. Public investment in rail infrastructure provides support to roadways, airports and ports.

Why not rail?
Sincerely,  
David A. Bjorklund

-----

Name: Carol Dahke  
Address (see reverse side)
Email (please)  
Phone  

Dear SE Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission:
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• Investing in trains is more economical than creating wider highways. Public investment in rail infrastructure provides support to roadways, airports and ports.

Why not rail?
Sincerely,  
Carol Dahke

P.S. I’ve used the Metra from St. Louis, Chicago...
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- Cut air pollution. Most rail-ridership will be diverted from autos, which cause 75% of our hazardous air pollutants.

Why not rail? We need help.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Carolyn Keith

---

Dear SE Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission:

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Why not rail?

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Sharon Lerner

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Dear SE Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission:

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- Be accessible and a practical alternative for commuting with 362,100 jobs and 540,000 residents projected within 3 miles of the proposed stations. Three out of Wisconsin’s five largest cities are on the KRM route.
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- Cut air pollution. Most rail-ridership will be diverted from autos, which cause 75% of our hazardous air pollutants.

Why not rail?

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Michael Ginker
Dear SE Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission:

I support the KRM Commuter Rail Metra Extension in SE Wisconsin. We need this train because it will:

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- Be accessible and a practical alternative for commuting with 362,100 jobs and 540,000 residents projected within miles of the proposed stations. Three out of Wisconsin's five largest cities are on the KRM route.
- Cut down on traffic by offering more transportation options. Studies have shown that providing more lanes of traffic does not solve the congestion problem.
- Cut air pollution. Most rail-ridership will be diverted from autos, which cause 73% of our hazardous air pollution.
- Reduce sprawl by directing future development to existing communities around transit stops.
- Investing in trains is more economical than creating wider highways. Public investment in rail infrastructure provides support to roadways, airports, and ports.

Why not rail? Sounds good but I wonder about things like drug traffic...

Sincerely,
Mr. Kenneth Yunker  
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission  
PO Box 1607  
Waukesha, WI 53187-1607

Subject: Please move forward on KRM Metra Extension

Dear Mr. Kenneth Yunker:

I support the KRM Commuter Rail Metra Extension in Southeast Wisconsin. We need this train because it will:

* Provide a fast, reliable, easy and affordable alternative to congested highway travel. It uses existing right-of-way and is less subject to weather and construction delays.

* Be an accessible and practical alternative for commuting with 362,100 jobs and 540,000 residents projected within three miles of the proposed stations. Three out of Wisconsin's five largest cities are on the KRM route.

* Cut down on traffic by offering more transportation options. Studies have shown that providing more lanes of traffic does not solve the congestion problem.

* Reduce air pollution. Most rail-ridership will be diverted from autos, which cause 75 percent of our hazardous air pollution.

* Reduce sprawl by directing future development to existing communities around transit stops.

Investing in trains is more economical than creating wider highways. Public investment in rail infrastructure provides support to roadways, airports and ports. Why not rail? Please include my comments in the public record on KRM Metra Extension.

Sincerely,
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As a Caledonia resident who works in Milwaukee, I am frustrated with the construction and congestion that are a regular part of my daily commute. I also hate the pall of vehicle-generated smog that hangs over the greater metro area, and the damage we’re doing to the atmosphere and environment at-large. Both I and my husband – who travels daily to northern Illinois – are potential users of a commuter rail system.

I have long been a supporter of public transportation systems. While attending the University of Wisconsin Parkside I used the Kenosha transit bus system, at a cost of $15.00 per month it couldn’t be beat. Plus I always arrived to class on time and didn’t have to search for a parking space. I believe that public transportation systems are the only logical solution we have to decrease road congestion, auto emission pollution and the developer biased land use problem of urban sprawl.

I love the idea of being able to get on the train and go to places rather than putting up with so much traffic and hassle. I believe many people would take advantage of a rail route between Chicago and Milwaukee rather than driving the interstates.

I support the KRM Commuter Rail Metra Extension in southeast Wisconsin. I live in Racine and now have to go to Kenosha in order to take the train. I have driven to Chicago in the past, and it was not an experience I would like to repeat. I think the train extension would be a great convenience and would allow so many more tourists and commuters to easily travel to Chicago and the suburbs of northern Illinois. It is also an environmentally sound choice for your constituents.

Give disabled persons an easier way to see other cities, get to appointments at major health centers, etc.

I personally have been waiting for this rail service for many years and look forward to it at last.

Now is the time to support rail!

I am all for mass transit. Please consider this new rail extension.

As a Wisconsin parent deeply worried for the future of our state’s environment, I strongly support the KRM Commuter Rail Metra Extension in southeast Wisconsin.
Appendix C

OPINION/EDITORAL PIECES AND NEWS ARTICLES CONCERNING
THE KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY
Rail transit plan lacks needed flexibility

BY DANIEL BLOCH

COMMENTARY

Various groups have studied public transportation options connecting Racine to Chicago and Milwaukee. Stated laudable objectives include: high quality transportation, economic development, and economical investment in public transportation.

Brochures developed by these groups are impressive and professionally done, but only stress the most positive potential outcomes. These groups are recommending commuter rail (KRM), an extension of the Metra line from Kenosha to Milwaukee. With an investment of the size proposed, we need to look critically at the information being disseminated.

As a Racine-Milwaukee commuter for 10 years, I strongly support developing a cost-efficient mass transit system. Any system that is proposed must be as user friendly as possible because it will be competing with the convenience of auto commuting. Rail is not the only option. A few reasons are given below.

Existing service for metro Racine residents consists of high-speed train (Amtrak) service between Chicago and Milwaukee (via Sturtevant) and bus service (Coach USA/WI Coach) between Milwaukee and the Metra station in Kenosha. The proposed KRM route significantly duplicates existing bus service and offers one less daily roundtrip (7 versus 8).

Train service would be a fixed route, not the best way to optimize ridership. A system is needed that can be modified to accommodate changing ridership needs. Caledonia's experience confirms this by going from a fixed (BUS) route to a more flexible Share-a-Ride system. Both Caledonia and Kenosha officials have stated that new business development will be westward toward FAS. A flexible bus system would allow routes in the eastern and western parts of the county.

Train advocates claim shorter commuting times. Brochures estimate a travel time of 33 minutes from the proposed Caledonia station at 4 Mile Road to Milwaukee.

On a typical day, the current bus service makes this trip in 35 minutes (longer times in heavy snow or fog), discharging passengers along Michigan Ave. The train would have only one stop, and walking from the train station to one's downtown destination would likely make total commute time greater than for the bus. The current Coach USA bus stops at Mitchell Field terminals. The train proposal requires passengers to detrain in St. Francis and use another form of transportation to get to the airport.

The proposed train option has a limited number of stops at stations (to be built) requiring riders to get transportation to designated stops if they do not live within a few blocks of these stations. The Coach USA bus route follows Sheridan Road and Douglas Avenue, stopping for passengers anywhere along this route.

The estimated capital cost of the medium-level train proposal is $1.52 billion. Annual operating costs of $10 million not covered by fares would need to come from a regional tax. The existing Coach USA bus service requires no additional funds (it currently receives support) unless it is expanded.

Published brochures project weekday train or bus ridership to reach 4,106 by 2020. This number is much more cost-efficient on a per rider basis.

Ten years ago one might have predicted a significant increase in bus ridership by 2003. Ridership on the Coach USA line has not increased significantly, if at all, during this period.

Only a few issues are mentioned here due to space limitations. A more comprehensive report is available upon request. If you feel the train proposal is not the most efficient, cost-effective mass transit option for Racine, inform your elected officials.

Inaction can result in paying for a mass transit system that does not best meet commuter needs.

Daniel Bloch is a Racine resident, daily commuter and professor at Marquette University.
Commuter rail may not get rolling

Few people find fault with the proposed commuter rail line that would connect Milwaukee and Racine with Kenosha.

Business and political leaders who endorse the plan are: "Who's Who of southeastern Wisconsin, and they're doing their best to lobby friends in Madison on the virtues of commuter rail as critical to economic development.

"The commuter rail is the perfect opportunity to tie our regional economy to Chicago's," says Kerry Thomas, a spokesman for the Southeast Wisconsin Coalition for Transit Now.

But the pricing for the commuter rail line is steep, especially when state legislators are struggling with a $3.2 billion deficit for the 2003-2005 budget.

"Any new transportation project is a tough sell in Madison today because of tight budgets," says Bob Cook, executive director of the Transportation Development Association of Wisconsin.

The plan for the commuter rail proposal is that state and local governments have to pay a minimum of $30 million upfront to cover the capital cost of setting up the 33-mile rail service.

Beyond that, state and local governments will be responsible for an estimated $1.1 million a year to cover operating costs.

Local government officials likely will argue the rail line should be viewed as a highway, with the state covering all capital and operational expenses.

Legislators, who have never debated a commuter rail line before, are expected to rely on local governments to fund a portion of the project, says a transportation industry lobbyist.

Local governments would have to rely on property tax revenues to fund their portion of the commuter rail. The state would cover its costs from the Department of Transportation general fund.

It is estimated that between 1.1 million and 1.5 million people would use the commuter rail service in southeastern Wisconsin. Estimates of revenue to be garnered from passengers are under study by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

NEW STATIONS PLANNED

The Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Commuter Rail project would extend Chicago's Metra rail service that currently runs north from Chicago to Kenosha. The line would use an existing Union Pacific freight rail corridor and would need speeds of 59 miles per hour, taking 42 minutes to travel from Milwaukee to Racine.

New passenger stations would be built in Oak Creek, South Milwaukee, Goshen, St. Francis and in Milwaukee at the Amtrak station.

Federal transportation money is expected to cover 80 percent of the capital cost of the $1.1 billion commuter rail line — an outlay of $1.12 billion. The U.S. Department of Transportation also would pay about $35 million per year for operating expenses.

"Any new transportation project is a tough sell in Madison today because of tight budgets," says Bob Cook, executive director of the Transportation Development Association of Wisconsin.

Although local elected officials haven't yet committed cash to the commuter rail line, more than two dozen officials endorse the plan, including Mayor John Norquist, Milwaukee; Gary Beck, Racine; Joe Antaramian, Kenosha; and Ray Giwontki, Goshen.

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker and Racine County Executive William Maysels have also endorsed the plan.

"That's an indication the governor thinks the project has merit," says Cook.

In operation by 2010

The proposed implementation schedule for the initial level of service for commuter rail has the design work being completed in 2005, construction getting underway in 2007, vehicle procurement in 2009 and service beginning in 2010.

Business leaders lining up behind the proposed project include more than 50 small business owners plus heavy hitters like William Perez, president and chief executive officer of S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc., Racine; Jean Pierre Rosso, chairman of CVE, Racine; Richard Abdo, chairman of Wisconsin Energy Corp., Milwaukee; and Jim Parth, vice president of Enemies of Twin Disc Inc., Racine.

"This will give all businesses access to a major talent pool north and south of Racine," says Mark Sommer, president of Gorman Inc., a Racine manufacturer with 65 employees. "The commuter rail will allow more people to live in our community and work in the city," says Sommer.

One major selling point is that it will help communities promote land development around stations.

The Racine Economic Development Corp.'s strategic economic development plan places a high priority on the commuter rail between Milwaukee and Racine, especially given the market demand for economic growth and population growth along the corridor, says Sommer.

While business and political leaders are letting state lawmakers know how important the line will be for future economic growth, the governor's budget message accompanying the $400,000 was equally clear, says Cook.

"The state is willing to be a partner in the commuter rail project, but local government will be expected to shoulder some of the financial responsibility," he points out.
Support for commuter trains still runs strong

Benefits of Metra expansion touted at public hearing

By ANDY TURNER
Special to the Journal Sentinel

Last Updated: May 3, 2003

Racine - Marilyn Nemeth wants commuter trains linking Racine to Milwaukee and Chicago to become a reality before she's too old to drive anymore.

The 70-year-old Racine woman was one of more than 30 people at a public hearing last week at Gateway Technical College's Racine campus who spoke in support of a proposal to extend Chicago's Metra passenger service from Kenosha to Milwaukee.

The service, which would cost $152 million to start, would also stop in Somers, Racine, Calumet, Oak Creek, South Milwaukee and Cudahy. More than 170 residents attended the hearing, which was the third of four meetings conducted by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to provide information and gather input from the public.

Nemeth and other residents, along with city and business leaders, offered a long list of reasons why commuter trains would benefit Racine. None of the speakers was against the passenger service.

For Nemeth, commuter trains would give senior citizens in the city a dependable and safe method of transportation.

"Many times we are not able to drive because of health problems. We're more comfortable with having some other kind of transportation," she said. "Most of us grew up in a time when we had rapid transit or buses, and now we don't have those things."

"And now when we really could use it, there's a promise of it. I hope I live long enough to really see it."

Better access

She said commuter trains also would provide seniors with better access to health care and cultural events and allow them to travel in larger groups.

To accommodate the service, the City of Racine plans to renovate its train station on State St. This would help bring people downtown who might not otherwise come, according to Mark Eckholt, a former alderman and host of a weekly radio show.

"One of the hardest things about getting people to come off the expressway is the trip into Racine. That's eight miles," Eckholt said. "With the rail service stopping right over here on State St., that would eliminate that problem."

"We have two new museums opening up in the near future. We have ferry service here, and we have a beautiful lakefront area. We have an ideal location between Milwaukee and Chicago, and our rates for hotels and entertainment and dinner and things like that are slightly lower than those areas."

Smart growth

Susan Spring, a member of the Racine chapter of 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, an organization that studies land use and planning in the state, said the service would help to encourage smart growth in Racine and bring people back to downtown from suburban areas.

"What you are seeing is an old urban area with very little new development surrounded by a kind of sprawling area," Spring said. "The areas that are created are developing rapidly, without infrastructure, and they're very expensive to maintain."

"What a lot of places have found, if you can get investment in these core areas, you can attract people back to cities. You can get newer housing and use infrastructure you already have already so you're not wasting tax money on building new roads and services."

David Guran said he supported the proposal, but he thought there were ways the service could be enhanced. He suggested improvements to safety and use of newer technology like locomotives that use 25% less fuel than current locomotives.

Longer ride?

The prospect of a long ride might also turn off some people, and faster express trains should be considered, Guran said.

"The Kenosha to Chicago route takes, I think, about an hour and 45 minutes with about 15 stops," he said. "This plan adds seven more stops between Milwaukee and Kenosha, which would probably add about an hour."

If the extension is implemented, Guran added, preference in hiring should be given to people in areas of Racine and Kenosha counties where the unemployment levels are highest.
Proposal to extend Metra rail lines has strong support

From the Journal Sentinel

Last Updated: May 2, 2003

Cudahy - A proposal to extend Chicago's Metra commuter trains from Kenosha to Milwaukee, Racine and the southern suburbs drew strong support - but also scattered opposition - at the last of four public hearings Thursday.

Of about 65 people at Cudahy City Hall, 13 of 15 speakers backed the $152 million plan endorsed by a Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission study committee. Together, the four hearings drew more than 400 people, and all but a few of the 88 speakers supported the plan, the study panel's chairman, Fred Patrie, said.

Rosemary Potter, executive director of the Southeastern Wisconsin Coalition for Transit Now, called the commuter rail plan a rare example of regional cooperation, drawing together diverse elements such as the Sierra Club and developers.

The hearings also showed a split among light rail opponents. Jeff Marker, president of Against Light Electric Rail Transit, argued against commuter rail on the same grounds as light rail, saying it would cost too much money and draw too few riders.

But Kevin Walker, vice president of Marker's group, said running full-sized trains on existing tracks is a better use of tax money than building new light rail or guided electric bus systems. Walker said he is leading another organization, the Working Group on Transportation, that supports commuter rail lines throughout the Milwaukee area.

Setting up a commuter rail system would require approval from elected officials, and, if they agree, actual service is probably still about four years off, Patrie said.

Racine News Briefs

From the Journal Sentinel

Last Updated: April 19, 2003

Comments sought on extended Metra route

Public hearings start Wednesday on extending Chicago's Metra commuter trains from Kenosha to Racine and downtown Milwaukee.

A Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission study committee has recommended the 33-mile extension, at a cost of $152 million. Trains would run seven round trips daily, mainly in rush hours, with additional stops at the Town of Somers, Town of Caledonia, Oak Creek, South Milwaukee and Cudahy.

All meetings will begin with an open house from 4 to 6 p.m., followed by a 6 p.m. presentation and a hearing at 6:30 p.m. The meetings will be held at:

- **Kenosha** - Wednesday in the Madrigano Room of Gateway Technical College, 3520 30th Ave.
- **Milwaukee** - Thursday in the Harbor Lights Room of the Downtown Transit Center, 900 E. Michigan St.
- **Racine** - April 30 in the Great Lakes Room of the Racine Building of Gateway Technical College, 901 Pershing Drive.
- **South Shore communities** - May 1 in Council Chamber of Cudahy City Hall, 5050 S. Lakeshore Drive.
Most support Metra expansion

Final hearing finds more backing for commuter rail

KENOSHA NEWS
May 2, 2003
Milwaukee Insight: Discussion Over Proposed
Metra Expansion a Step in the Right Direction

By Gregg Hoffman

MILWAUKEE - One of the casualties who spoke at last week's informational hearing on a proposed extension of the Metra system to Milwaukee from Chicago called the event a "momentous, historic occasion."

"Not just because of the system being proposed, but because it is something that both Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker and Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist agree on," said Michael Comer of Shorewood.

Indeed, the vast majority of the more than 100 people at the meeting did support the $152 million proposal, which would add 33 miles to the Metro Union Pacific North line that currently runs from Chicago suburbs in Kane County. The new service would operate on a guided, elevated track that would run from Little Village and end at Milwaukee's Amtrak station. It would include stops in Waukesha, Sussex, Racine, Caledonia, Oak Creek, South Milwaukee and Cudahy-St. Francis. It is projected to provide 1.1 to 1.3 million trips per year.

Ken Yakle of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and a special study committee has looked at the rail system, operation of the bus system and a hybrid of rail and bus, and deemed the rail system - while not the cheapest option - to have the most potential for better linking the communities involved, better serving communities and providing opportunities for economic development.

The list of those endorsing the plan includes most major elected officials in southeastern Wisconsin, including Walker and Norquist, as well as business leaders, representatives of economic development organizations, two "third-party" groups and other organizations ranging from the Historic Third Ward Association to the Milwaukee Area Green Party.

Add this columnist to the list. The Metra extension makes sense for several reasons. First, it will relieve auto traffic in a corridor that is fast becoming over crowded with it, leading to positive impacts on the environment.

Second, it will link Milwaukee to Chicago, and include most communities in between. For Milwaukee to continue to flourish on remaining a suburb from the Chicago area is suited to the interests of the community. We should embrace any links we can to connect to such a large market. It need not mean that we simply become a northern suburb of Chicago.

Similar systems around the country have worked. In fact, their ridership has exceeded expectations in several places. Elsewhere in the world, such rail systems have become integral to the overall transportation system. This writer and his wife lived several months in Sydney, Australia, in 2000 and rented a car only once. We were able to travel around the more areas and to neighboring communities via rail.

Of course there will be critics. Some will point to the role the ridership on the Amtrak trains that run between Chicago and Milwaukee. But riders on those trains are about $40 roundtrip. The Metra fares will be about half that.

Others will say rail has never worked in the Milwaukee area, but they need a course in history. A good electric railway system once did quite well here. One ride a day along many bike paths today, it is likely where the trains once ran.

Others will say there should be more investment into buses, because they are more flexible in where they can go. This is a valid argument when discussing intra-metro area transportation. If riders had been held in Milwaukee a couple decades ago, they might not have had them leading to the Third Ward or Park East Corridor area. Yet there are, or will be, thriving areas of the city. So, buses might make more sense within the confines of the city.

Last, the Metra is inter-city transportation. All those communities along the route will be there for a very long time. Planners even have discussed using bus solutions from the Metra stations to other destinations in each city.

One "semi-criticism" at last Thursday's hearing was the idea that the Metra expansion, which is being called WISPIcato, be combined with an overall SmartGrowth strategy for land use. This is a good suggestion.

Perhaps the biggest threat to the Metra expansion could be the state budget crisis. Planners call for the state to be the implementing body for the system, even though federal funding could end up paying for much of its costs.

Some startup money was included in the Doyle budget, but as Rosemary Potter, former legislator and executive director of the Southeastern Wisconsin Coalition for Transit Now, said, "The challenge now will be to keep it in the budget."

An all Metra expansion also would have to be marketed well to Milwaukeeans, who have never been too quick to use any form of mass transit. Some education about the advantages of riding the Metra will be needed.

But, the discussion over the Metra last week was much more productive than the contentious debates have been over expansion of the freeway system. And, Metra would cut a lot less than those freeways.

To go back to the one editor's quote, "how much can be wrong with a plan that has been endorsed by both Walker and Norquist?"

Hearings on the Metra expansion have been scheduled for Wednesday, April 30, at Rockford Gateway Technical College (Great Lakes Room in Gateway building, 9717 Pershing Dr., Rockford) and Thursday, May 1, at the Cudahy City Hall Council Chambers, 915 S. Lake Dr., Cudahy. An open house will be held each night from 4-6 p.m., followed by a presentation at 6 p.m. and the open hearing at 8 p.m.
Tooling around
Congressman uses tool sales van to go mobile
Ryan weighs in on gasoline, war, commuter rail

By DENNIS A. SHOOK - GM Today Staff
April 25, 2003

WAUKESHA - Paul Ryan took some time to seek it to the opponents of U.S. policy in Iraq, bring the hammer down on aid for commuter rail and try to wrench some changes from the federal government on reformulated gasoline.

Maybe that is because the Republican congressman was traveling throughout Waukesha County in a former Snap-On Tools sales van that he has retrofitted as a mobile office.

Ryan said he converted the vehicle as a way to get around to the many new municipalities in Waukesha County that are part of his district since the census-driven redistricting of 2000.

But another mode of transportation has been on his mind as public information hearings continue throughout the region on a possible commuter rail link that would link Milwaukee to Chicago.

"This is not high speed or light rail - it's commuter rail," Ryan said of the project to connect Chicago to Milwaukee using the Metra rail system from Illinois. "We already have $7.5 million sitting in an account waiting to be used. Now we are asking for a commitment in an upcoming authorization bill to see this thing through.

"We don't expect to get the entire $121 million we seek but we are just trying to get this project up and running," he said. "It's an economic development tool. And it's relatively affordable because it's not new rail."

Iraq won't be easy

Ryan said he would not truck with critics of the Bush policy in Iraq and he said many of those critics have been reporters looking for controversial stories.

"If you look at the majority of the Iraqis in Iraq, they are thankful they are liberated and they know we are their liberators," he said.

Ryan said it was dangerous that Iranian Shites were sending clerics into Iraq to try to further destabilize the country and establish a fundamentalist Islamic state in Iraq.

"But the bigger problem for the tyrannical leaders in Iran is that millions of their brothers are newly liberated and about to get democracy. That is the volatility there," he said. "That's a big wake up call to the dictatorships surrounding Iraq and they don't want to see that happen. It's going to be bumpy; it's going to be ugly."

The congressman also credited "sabre rattling" - or threatening war - with recent decisions by Syria to cooperate more fully with U.S. efforts to close off the Iraqi-Syrian border and track down fleeing leaders of the Iraqi leadership.

Ryan said he has no problem with GOP-supporting companies like Bechtel and Halliburton handling so much of the rebuilding contracts.

"We need experienced companies who know how to fix this infrastructure," he said. "If we don't get the Iraqi oil infrastructure up and running, we're going to pay for rebuilding the infrastructure of Iraq, as taxpayers."

RFQ plan

On another oil-related matter, a problem that could become even more serious in the next year involves gasoline but not necessarily because of fuel shortages related to war.

"With the new ozone rules coming into place, we are going to - by the year 2004 - have twice as many areas in America having to use reformulated gas. That would lead to a tripling of the boutique blends of gas out there, which would exacerbate this problem."

The congressman said the problem occurs every year when Wisconsin changes from a more conventional winter blend of gasoline, to "a very unique blend of reformulated gasoline in the summer ... a gas which is not used anywhere else - outside this region - in the world."

The solution Ryan is pushing for is an amendment he had added to the comprehensive energy legislation passed by the U.S. House of Representatives last week. It would limit that number to "a federally approved menu of three fuels that localities could choose from," he said.

"Once this policy is fully implemented, this will help combat gas price spikes in southern Wisconsin and around the country, as more areas use the same fuel blends," he said. "While this legislation will not consolidate boutique fuels overnight, it sets up a process for the EPA and the states to move toward standardization. This is a crucial step in fixing our gasoline supply problems and keeping gas prices more stable over the long-term."
Support for expanding Metra dominates public hearing

Strong support for extending Chicago's Metra commuter train from Kenosha to Racine, downtown Milwaukee and the southern suburbs surfaced at a public hearing Thursday.

Of the more than 100 people at the Milwaukee hearing, all 16 speakers backed the $1.5 billion plan recommended by a Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission study committee. Several said they hoped to eventually reach the northern and western suburbs.

"What is there to not like about this?" asked Sandy Polaron, a Milwaukee business owner and mayoral candidate. "It's fiscally responsible. It's environmentally friendly. It serves business and the work force alike."

Several speakers pointedly noted the train line would cost much less than the $5.25 billion reconstruction and expansion of freeways recommended by another planning commission study panel.

Support was also strong at a Wednesday hearing in Kenosha, rail study panel Chairman Fred Patrici said.

Two more hearings are planned, at Gateway Technical College's Racine campus Wednesday and at Cudahy City Hall on Thursday. Each session will start with an open house at 4 p.m., followed by a presentation at 6 and public comments at 6:30 p.m.

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Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
April 25, 2003

Public on board for rail extension

by Ed Brooks

KENOSHA NEWS

Lisa Ruggi lives in Kenosha, but works in downtown Milwaukee. She takes a Wisconsin Counch Line bus to and from work every day, and she hates it.

Huggins would gladly give it up to ride Metra each day, and said as much at a public hearing about the planned $1.5 billion commuter rail line extension from Kenosha to Milwaukee.

"It's inevitable," she said afterward. "You have to do it. Cars are not the answer anymore."

Huggins was not alone at the Gateway Technical College hearing, where more than 60 area residents showed up to learn more about the preliminary rail recommendation from a Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission committee. Nineteen people spoke — all in favor of the project.

It's that kind of support that has backers of the plan optimistic that it is not a matter of if. Trains will one day roll between Milwaukee and Kenosha, but when.

"Support is growing," said Fred Patrici, Kenosha County's public works director and chairman of the regional planning commission's Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study Advisory Committee, which hopes to make a final recommendation on the commuter rail extension this summer.

"I think you are going to hear that (tonight) in Milwaukee. I think we're going to have it very loudly in Racine next Wednesday. It's going to be more emphatic in Cudahy (May 1)."

All those cities host hearings. They all begin with an open house at 4 p.m. followed by a presentation at 6 and the formal hearing at 6:30.

Today's hearing in Milwaukee is in the Harbor Lights Room of the Downtown Transit Center, 900 E. Michigan Ave. Wednesday's hearing in Racine is in the Great Lakes Room of the Racine Building at Gateway Technical College, 501 Parsons Drive. May 1 hearing in Cudahy is in the council chambers of City Hall, 500 S. Lake Drive.

Among the reasons for Patrici's sunny outlook:

- Lawmakers have already secured $7.5 million in federal transportation funds for the project and have asked for another $211.7 million — enough to almost pay for the line's entire startup cost.

- Wisconsin politicians have shown increasing support, including Gov. Jim Doyle's $800,000 budget request in the fiscal year 2005 for engineering money for the rail line.

- Local political, business, and education leaders have expressed strong support. All three groups were represented at Wednesday night's hearing.

"Community support is building," Patrici said. "I believe this is going to happen."

Patrici, citing a planning study into the project, said trains could be running in three to four years.

Chip Brown, director of government relations for Racine's SC Johnson, a big supporter of the plan, said the Metra extension will happen, eventually. Community support is strong, he said.

"It shows there has been some good education done," Brown said. "People are understanding what this is all about and the benefits. I think they relate to it."

"They understand it increases their ability to get to jobs. It is going to increase economic vitality. It is going to increase quality of life. It is going to provide access to other communities. People get it."

The most recent group to throw its support behind the commuter rail extension was the Wisconsin Alliance of Cities, which voted last month to endorse the $1.5 billion plan.

Speaking at the hearing, Ed Horn, executive director of the group, said the economic development boost of rail over simply building and expanding freeways, something the planning commission is also considering recommending.

"It has the same pull it had when we moved rail for the first time across the United States," he said after his short speech. "All the development took place around rail. That dynamic still exists."

Hurdles, however, remain.

Following the three additional public hearings and final approval by the planning commission later this year, local governments must also consider the measure before it heads to whatever governmental body will be in charge of operating the extension. It is likely that will be the state Department of Transportation.

Who will pay for it will be the biggest question.

"They have a lot of work to do," said Kenosha Mayor John Antaramian, who spoke at the hearing. "They have to put together a lot of different issues that have to be addressed."
All aboard: People line up to endorse extended train service

By DENNIS A. SHOOK
Senior Staff Writer

KENOSHA — If Milwaukee and Chicago are not soon connected by commuter rail, don’t blame people in Kenosha and Racine.

More than 50 people attended a public information meeting on creating just such a link Wednesday at the Gateway Technical College Kenosha campus.

The opportunity to go to Mitchell (International Airport) and downtown Milwaukee are important to us,” said Kenosha Mayor John Ahrens in remarks before the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Advisory Committee.

The committee was formed by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in order to evaluate the interest in commuter rail and/or bus services.

The report prepared by the committee recommends a medium level of commuter rail service as the best possible alternative. That would mean seven trains daily in each direction on weekdays and weekends, with ancillary bus services from train stations to likely destinations, such as downtown Milwaukee.

The recommendation received a boost with the announcement that U.S. Reps. Paul Ryan and James Sensenbrenner, both Wisconsin Republicans whose districts take in Kenosha County are asking for $212.7 million in federal transportation funds to extend the Metra train system.

Another $7.5 million has already been set aside as part of a $1.9 million project, estimated to cost about $132 million.

But there is no guarantee that the federal funds would be forthcoming.

Along with those capital costs, largely dedicated to equipment rather than track remediation, would be annual operating costs. That is estimated by SEWRPC to be about $15.4 million and would be supplemented by an estimated $3.2 million in farebox revenues.

Two-way approach

Most of the speakers acknowledged that the service is even more important to people living north of Kenosha and Racine, such as in Milwaukee and suburbs.

Kenosha is now the northern terminus of the Metra system, which provides train service to Chicago at a cost typically lower than Amtrak. From Chicago, Metra provides service to the rest of the nation.

That parking lot next to our downtown train station was absolutely packed today,” Assistant Superintendent Jon Maples told the committee.

“We are here to ask for a link up, with service to Chicago, but we want to be able to go to Milwaukee as well,” said the former state legislator, acknowledging the understanding that people in Wisconsin need a rail service to Chicago.

And that Amtrak service that links Milwaukee to Chicago, with a stop in Racine County, has been running for years.

There is already Amtrak service that links Milwaukee to Chicago, with a stop in Racine County. But Ken Yunker, SEWRPO assistant director, said the service is inadequate, offering only one trip per day between the cities.

He said there are no suburban stops in Illinois or Wisconsin for large numbers of potential passengers who may want to stop at points in between.

“The majority of (possible) trips in that corridor simply aren’t served by that very limited Amtrak service,” Yunker said.

Wisconsin Alliance of Cities Executive Director Ed Hauk said the eight-city area is fully behind the plan.

“Seven weekday round trips from the Milwaukee area through the Racine and Kenosha area will rejuvenate the cities along the railroad,” Hauk said. “Commuter rail will be Wisconsin more closely to Chicago. The great city of Chicago is a major financial center.”

But Kenosha Area Business Alliance Executive Director John Bechler said increased Metra service should not come on the backs of local property taxpayers.

“There should be no increase in the property tax or income tax,” Bechler said in expressing the opinion of his business group. “If there is any local share, it should come from the state tax.”

Bechler also voiced a recurring theme in the public comments that expensive, frequent bus services must be provided to link people getting off of trains with final destinations.

Eager to ride

One former commuter, Harlan Draeger, who rode the former Chicago and Northwestern and "Northshore" commuter trains from Kenosha to Chicago said: “It was great.”

He discussed how he would arrive in Chicago free of delays and driving stress, having read the morning newspaper and defying any weather challenges placed in his way.

“When I tried to commute on the Metra Expressway from Chicago, the traffic was so bad once we had to stop and turn off our cars,” Draeger said. “Just got out of the car, walked over to a grassy knoll, and fell asleep for about 15 minutes.”

Fred London, a resident of Highland Park, Ill., said people in his state are as anxious to connect to Milwaukee as Wisconsin residents are to link to Chicago. But he said Wisconsin support would grow once people realized the train service could attend all of the city's activities like the Revival Music Festival or attend Northwestern University.

Railroad advocate Lou Rucani, Kenosha, said the system could be a regional economic engine.

“We could start out with a shelter and a gravel parking lot in some places,” he said. “We don’t have to be so extravagant.”

Representatives from the University of Wisconsin-Oggs and S.C. Johnson Inc. said such a rail service would be a major factor in growing universities and companies alike.

People should not look for the increased service in the next year or so, even with the committee recommendation, Yunker said.

This could take anywhere from a few years to several years, depending on how quickly DOT and the state push the implementation and whether they accept that it should be fully funded with state and federal funds, with little — if any — local funds, Yunker said.

Seeking support

The process for soliciting support for commuter rail is already underway. It includes:

• three public information meetings, including one starting at 4 p.m. today in Milwaukee at the Downtown Milwaukee Transit Center, Harbor Lights Room, 936 E. Michigan Ave.

• seeking recommendation of support for the service from the municipal and county governments in the designated corridor.

• making a recommendation to the state Department of Transportation.

• seeking the required state and federal funding.

Source: Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
Hearing on light rail slated for next week

By Mark Dudzik
STAFF WRITER

A series of public hearings will be held on the proposed extension of the Metra line into Racine County.

An advisory committee formed by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) has recommended that a medium-duty light rail line be extended from the Chicago area into three counties in southeastern Wisconsin, including Racine, Kenosha and Milwaukee.

Costs associated with a light rail line which would provide a medium level of service have been estimated at $152 million.

Ridership alone will not cover the expense of the rail service, according to the findings of the advisory committee.

As a result, that committee has recommended that a combination of state and federal funds be utilized to help make up the difference.

The only possible local financial contribution to the project would be funds for the construction and maintenance of the light rail stations which would be needed to serve the line.

Under the current proposal, those stations would be located in Somers, Racine, Caledonia, Oak Creek, South Milwaukee, Cudahy-St. Francis and Milwaukee.

The first of several public hearings on the proposed line took place last night in Kenosha.

Racine County residents looking to contribute their two cents toward the proposal will have the opportunity to do so on Wednesday, April 30. Preceding the public hearing will be an open house from 4 to 6 p.m., followed by a formal presentation at 6 p.m. and a public hearing commencing at 6:30 p.m.

Gateway Technical College, 901 Pershing Drive, has been selected as the site for next week's hearing.

More information about the rail line can be gleaned by visiting www.transitnow.org.

Burlington, STANDARD PRESS
April 24, 2003
Extension for Metra is on track

KENOSHA NEWS
April 23, 2003

BY EDDIE BROOKS
KENOSHA NEWS

Two Wisconsin congressmen are asking for $121.7 million in federal transportation funds to extend the Metra commuter rail line from Kenosha to Milwaukee.

If approved, the money—combined with $75 million already earmarked at the federal government level for the project and a required local and state match—could more than pay for the planned 32-mile extension.

Securing all the money is unlikely. But Rep. Paul Ryan, a Janesville Republican, told the Kenosha News Tuesday he was happy to ask members of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for the funds in a March letter. He and Rep. Jerry Kleczka, a Milwaukee Democrat, did so at the request of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, signaling strengthening state support for the plan.

"I have no expectations of getting this amount," said Ryan, who met with new DOT Secretary Frank Buescher about the project in Washington, D.C., recently. "I have no specific expectations, only that we advance the concept."

"We want to get this thing up and running as quickly as possible."

For now, the project remains before a Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission committee that in December preliminarily approved a plan to extend Metra through Somers and Racine into downtown Milwaukee.

Seven trains would run each way during weekdays. Three trains would run on Saturdays and Sundays.

The start-up cost of the project approved by the planning commission's Transit Study Advisory Committee is $162.1 million. Annual operating costs would run $10.5 million, $15.4 million minus farebox revenues.

The plan will be the subject of public hearings starting tonight in Kenosha, where it has the blessing of the mayor, county executive, and County Board. Other hearings are planned for Racine, Milwaukee and Dubuque.

Following those, the committee will make a final recommendation on the project and send it to the full regional planning commission for its vote. With that, work could begin, depending on which state or local governmental agency takes the lead on funding and operating the extension.

The former has been a major issue in the project, which has been discussed for more than a decade.

Planners have called for a mix of federal, state and perhaps local dollars in getting the trains running. Ryan already has helped secure $75 million in federal transportation assistance since 1996, although previous requests were for much less than the current $121.7 million. In 2002, for example, Ryan and other federal lawmakers asked for $4 million in federal transportation money. They received half that.

This time, Ryan said he would be more than happy with that amount.

Whatever federal funds he secures would require a 20 percent state or local match, or $24.3 million if the full amount of federal funding were approved. However, Phil Bresnan, executive director of the regional planning commission, said often the required local and state match approaches 40 to 50 percent.

"I can understand why the congressmen would ask for only the full share," he said. "I am sure there will be a lot of requests for earmarking that go into the budget. What survives remains to be seen."

The federal Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century bill will be debated this summer and fall.

Local governmental leaders have been opposed to paying anything for start-up costs, but some have not ruled out picking up some of the annual operating budget. Ryan said local funding may have to total one-third of the final cost.

State funding seems more likely. Faced with a $3.2 billion budget deficit, Gov. Jim Doyle still found $420,000 in the DOT budget for the project, money that still remains as the Legislature hammers out the details of Doyle's plan.

"It's still in play," Alice Morehouse, DOT budget director, said Tuesday.

"Our experience with these sorts of transactions is you ask for a larger number and get less," she said. "But that is significant, and it would be good to find federal funding at that level."
Metra riders seek extension to Racine, but at what cost?

BY DAVID STEINKRAUS

THE JOURNALTIMES

KENOSHA — It’s 6:25 a.m. in the middle of the week in the middle of April. Even though Daylight Saving Time is already in effect, streetlights are still glowing, and motorists have their headlights on.

The sky promises a damp and chilly day as people with steaming coffee cups climb the concrete steps into a wind howling across the train platform from Lake Michigan just a few blocks away. They’re bound south to work in Illinois.

It’s a scene which proponents of commuter rail service want to repeat in Mount Pleasant, Racine, Caledonia, Oakley—all the way to Milwaukee.

The provider of this service would be Metra, the regional rail authority that operates commuter trains throughout metropolitan Chicago. Proponents of rail service say it would bring visitors to Kenosha, stimulate development, and provide an avenue for workers to come into the area or to live here and work elsewhere.

It’s a job that has drawn people to the Metra station on this April morning. On any given weekday, based on a survey that Metra took last fall, 32 people ride the five trains that leave Kenosha between 5:45 a.m. and 7:45 a.m.

Lillian Kidde, who lives in northern Caledonia, was on her way to Chicago for work. Caledonia has proposed a station at 4 Mile Road near her home, she said. “You won’t have to sit in a car and fight the traffic all the way down there.”

Commuters on this day often mentioned traffic as a primary reason for taking the train.

“Then take the train, probably, then it takes the train, and parking is too expensive,” said Connie Librante. She’s a computer specialist for the Immigration and Naturalization Service and works three days a week in Chicago, two in Milwaukee.

Krista Vachslawiecz of Kenosha said she has no choice. She was headed to work in Racine, III. She said she and her husband have no car, which they drive. “I have to find a way to get to the train,” she said.

She said she would not only ride a train toward Milwaukee but would prefer it. “When we moved up here five years ago from Chicago, we were told — well, we were under the impression, through the Kenosha rumor mill, that it was going to be up north within the next couple of years. But as long as it happens eventually we’re happy.”

The Journal Times

April 23, 2003

TERRENCE McELWEE, who lives in Mount Pleasant, is an intellectual property lawyer for the University of Illinois-Chicago. There were few job opportunities in his field in Wisconsin, he said, and by living in Mount Pleasant he and his wife can have a house that would be beyond their means if it was measured by Illinois real estate prices.

“I drive once or twice a month, at the most, usually because I need to be on campus for a very early or very late meeting,” he said. “The rest of the time it’s on the train. The deal I have with them (the university) is I work one day at home,” McElwee said. “I got a laptop. I work on the train. That’s how I get that extra day off, because I’m productive for an extra two hours a day.”

More support

Certainly some government officials see a benefit in Metra trains. “I just believe to have Racine realize some of its potential as a metro area, that’s one of the things we need,” said Racine Mayor Gary Becker. He said he will do everything within his power to accomplish this. “In other words, we’re not going to sit back and hope,” Becker said.

County Executive William McDonald said he, too, favors the service under certain conditions. “It’s a no-brainer if we don’t have to put any local monies in it,” he said.

Qualified support

County Supervisor Robin Vos opposes the Metra service not because of what it is but because of what it would cost taxpayers.

“The concept of a Metra extension might make sense depending on the economics,” Vos said. “But even under the most optimistic scenario it still requires a $12 million subsidy.” That equates to thousands of dollars of benefit for each person who would ride the train, he said. Highways are funded by user fees in the form of gasoline taxes, and the few hundred cars removed from the road by the existence of a train are an infinitesimal fraction of total highway traffic, he said.

The whole issue really comes down to how train service will be funded, Vos said. If the people of eastern Rock County, who will be the beneficiaries, would vote themselves into a special taxing district to support train service, that’s fine, he said. But attempting to fund train service with general government revenue and holding public hearings that will probably attract only train supporters — implies that citizen support isn’t there, he said.
KRM commuter rail is a must for many reasons

By Roger Caron

The Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee (KRM) commuter rail extension is a rare and extraordinary opportunity to help us become a winning city in a winning region. Here's why the Metra extension is a "must-have" for Racine.

Commuter rail will improve the value of our community. It only takes a quick look to the south to see how property values increase in communities served by Metra. Economic activity and capital investments increase when people and businesses are attracted to the convenience and accessibility that a train station offers. Improved property values, and new jobs grow the tax base—something we desperately need.

Commuter rail will help attract businesses and jobs to Racine. Today's businesses require modern, convenient and reliable regional access to a diverse and high quality workforce. Having transportation choices and lifestyle amenities like commuter rail provides this essential access and will help keep our college graduates here and attract the bright young talent that is our economic future. Young talent prefers jobs in locations that provide rail transportation for commuting. Demographic projections show that within the next decade, a declining national workforce population will mean that finding and keeping talent will be the most critical issue facing businesses in the United States. Racine must develop the transportation amenities that attract and retain talent and businesses if we expect our economy to thrive. And, we certainly need to assist our existing employers with good access to labor so that they can stay in Racine.

Three of Wisconsin's largest cities will be served by the Metra extension and the entire corridor will be better connected to one of our nation's premier cities—Chicago. The educational, cultural and economic opportunities that are aligned along the Milwaukee-Racine-Chicago route are enviable, to say the least.

Developing this incredible potential is a key part of the Racine County Economic Development Plan. The economic plan prioritizes commuter rail as a catalyst in developing this economic corridor. We must begin to function as a corridor to realize our full range of economic opportunity. This is not just true for the cities with planned stops on the train route. When cities are strong, suburbs benefit. The entire corridor will become healthier from the improved labor force, tax base and regional competitiveness that commuter rail can assist in building.

In our densely populated and highly developed corridor, we have few opportunities to significantly improve mobility. Racine is very fortunate to have an existing right-of-way available for use in its front yard now. Trying to obtain a new right-of-way for commuter rail would be virtually impossible. Costs associated with assembling such a land package would be exorbitant. By using existing right-of-way, KRM Commuter Rail can provide convenient and reliable mobility in a corridor that hasn't any other viable options for increasing mobility to the densest populations of workers, employers and residents. This right-of-way is an incredibly valuable asset that could easily disappear if not used. We've already lost one rail right-of-way that can never be regained.

Over 50,000 jobs and 540,000 in population are projected within three miles of the planned Wisconsin train stations alone. This represents a considerable opportunity to communities on the corridor that have ongoing unemployment issues. The very people who cannot afford automobile transportation or do not have a license to drive would have access to a regional job market that is currently unavailable to them. The Sixth Street neighborhood where the Racine train station is planned is one of many areas that will certainly benefit from improved access to jobs and education as well as the economic benefits that the rail service will provide.

Commuter rail should be a priority for Racine. If we do not seize this opportunity today, we will certainly regret our short-sightedness in the years to come as our city and region struggle to be economically competitive. KRM commuter rail is a small investment in growth that will leverage huge returns for our community.

I urge employers and their employees, citizens, organizations and elected officials alike to attend the public hearing, send an e-mail or write to the Southeast Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. Join the dialog about commuter rail. It is not likely that we will see a rare and winning opportunity like this again.

The Racine County public hearing for KRM Commuter Rail Metra Extension is on April 30 at Gateway Technical College, Great Lakes Room, 9950 Westward Drive (park and enter on the lake side). Open house is from 4 to 6 p.m., presentation is at 6 p.m. and public hearing in a town hall format will begin at 6:30 p.m.

Your feedback can also be given by e-mail before May 18 to wisride@sewrcp.org or by mail to Kenneth Yunker, SEWRPC, P.O. Box 1907, Waukesha, WI 53187-1907.

For more information, please go to www.wisride.com

Roger Caron is president of the Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce.
W illy Matra make it to the finish line?

Laying the Tracks to Chicago

by Rob Kennedy

While southeastern Wisconsin wrangles noisily over the future shape of its freeway system, another way of traveling over much the same territory, commuter rail, has so far stirred up little opposition or controversy. Railroads, environmentalists, business groups, the NAACP, mayors, county executives, you name them, have all endorsed it.

Scheduled for hearings later this month, the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Study's preliminary recommendation is to build a "medium level of service" rail alternative that would essentially extend Chicago Metra to Milwaukee with three to four trains each way during morning and evening rush hours and with one train at mid-day. Eventually, more service would be provided between rush hours and in the evenings. Unlike current Amtrak service, commuter rail from Chicago and Kenosha to Milwaukee would make more stops and run right through the heart of many southeastern Wisconsin urban centers. The proposal includes shuttle buses to Mitchell Airport as well as between

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Amtrak and downtown Milwaukee.

How much will commuter rail cost? The price tag for building the proposed service is $152.1 million. Not that high, perhaps, when seen in the context of a $6.2 billion bill for rebuilding the region's freeways, but high enough when stacked up against the $39.4 million cost of a bus alternative. Why then, would the corridor study's Advisory Committee recommend rail? According to Ken Yunker, assistant director for the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), the answer is simple: "Land and economic development, something the bus alternative could not provide." The development case for rail is especially compelling in Racine, now suffering from a 10.1% unemployment rate. The hope is that commuter rail will bring Racine and other struggling urban areas into the larger economic orbits of Chicago and Milwaukee.

Staying Competitive

For Racine's premier business, S.C. Johnson, commuter rail is a key part of staying "competitive." Brian Anderson, the firm's link to nearby communities, is convinced that rail would help its would headquarters "attract and keep a talented and diverse workforce," including management positions. At the present time, Johnson employs about 3,000 people in Racine, with about 2,000 more employed nearby at other Johnson facilities. Anderson notes that the city would use its own local transit service to connect a multimodal downtown station to important locations, including Johnson company facilities. Just as important to S.C. Johnson is helping Racine with its own community and economic development goals. Anderson notes that many of Racine's unemployed live close to a proposed rail station. He also speaks glowingly of the impetus that Metra's Kenosha station gives to a new downtown trolley and the new residential and business development in Harbor Park on the trolley line.

Just as excited about the economic development potential of commuter rail is the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce (MMAC). Association spokesperson Peter Delaitre, observes that the project could mean more business for Milwaukee's Super Steel Corporation. Super Steel already has a contract to build 300 new Metra coaches over the next three years and Delaitre would love to see more trains added to the company's job order. More importantly, he says, "Hundreds of thousands of jobs and the densest population centers in the area are all gathered in this rail corridor." To Delaitre, the existence of an underutilized track connecting southeastern Wisconsin's major cities is an "opportunity too good to miss." In fact, the corridor study projects an increase of 127,200 jobs within walking distance of the rail stations.

All of this sounds mighty good to Tim Hall, an attorney who works in downtown Milwaukee and lives just north of Racine in Wind Point. His daily commute takes him up Highway 32 and lasts about 35 minutes. In a snowstorm, he says, that trip can turn "miserable." According to SEWRPC, Hall's daily ride to work on a train would take 42 minutes, snowstorm or not. "Right now," Hall says, "I'm wasting almost two hours just driving. With commuter rail I could catch up on work or even take a nap." On the other hand, Hall's daily trip would turn into an hour with the bus alternative. And, a bus ride from the station at Cudahy/St. Francis to Kenosha would take even longer: 71 minutes versus only 43 minutes for the train. In fact, since buses are stuck in the same traffic as cars and trucks, a bus trip generally takes more time in the case of inclement weather, an accident, or just because every year there's more roadway congestion.

Encouraging Tourism

For Hall's wife, commuter rail means more fun. She looks forward to more trips to Milwaukee to visit him and to short stays in Chicago, one of her favorite cities. In fact, the couple chose Racine as their home because it is midway between Chicago and Milwaukee. Notably, the bus alternative does not go directly to Chicago and would force the Halls to transfer to Metra at the Kenosha station. Milwaukee developer, Gary Granau, meanwhile, sees it the other way around—more tourists coming from Illinois to downtown Milwaukee. He notes that about 25% of the people visiting the city's Discovery World Museum are from Illinois. A prominent supporter of the Connector, an electric tram proposed for downtown Milwaukee, Granau envisions tourists using commuter rail or Amtrak and then riding the Connector to attractions in other parts of the city.

A faster and easier connection up and down the corridor from Milwaukee to Chicago is also the main reason Rosemary Potter supports commuter rail. Potter is the director of Transit Now. "We need to start thinking more like a regional economy," she says, "and invest in things that will connect our local economies together and attract the next generation of younger, high-talent workers." Commuter rail, she believes, "can be the new link in that economy." Noting local concerns over a
Continued from page 15

regional brain drain, she cites Next Generation Consulting and Rebecca Ritter, whose work with Gen-Kers supports her observation that younger professionals are attracted by the amenities offered by cities. Potter also notes that Milwaukee stations typically boost property values by 6 to 7%, and that Kenosha saw its Harbor Park revenues jump from zero to $600,000 almost overnight, an amount that is expected to double when new plans are fulfilled.

Milwaukee's NAACP is supporting commuter rail over buses in part because time and the quality of travel matters a lot to minority workers who use transit-dependent Jerry Hamilton, president of Milwaukee's NAACP, notes that minority workers spend a disproportionate amount of their time traveling on buses. She observes that too many working African Americans in southeastern Wisconsin get to work "tired and lethargic after long bus rides that often start early in the morning before daycare centers open." In fact, minorities are in an especially good position to utilize rail. According to SEWRPC, 36% of those living within a half mile of the proposed rail stations are minorities and over 16% of those live below the poverty line. By significantly expanding the area they can access by transit, commuter rail would make tens of thousands of new jobs available to them for the first time.

Walk to Work

It is the land development impact that most excites the Sierra Club's Rosemary Wayne. She points to a recently released national poll indicating that 55% of Americans would choose to walk more if given the choice. According to Wayne, commuter rail would stimulate investment in more walkable neighborhoods and employment centers around rail stations. She cites poll results, moreover, showing that 66% of the U.S. population supports transit improvements as the best answer to traffic congestion. "People want a choice," she notes, "and commuter rail would start to give it to them."

Poll results indicate even more support for transit, including commuter rail, here in southeastern Wisconsin. A poll conducted for the Greater Milwaukee Association of Realtors discovered that 71% of Milwaukee County's residents want local officials to encourage commuter rail service. Perhaps most surprising, although 89% of African Americans who tend to be more transit-dependent support rail, it is not a liberal issue. Sixty percent of local Republicans support the project, including 51% of those describing themselves as "very conservative." Indeed, endorsements for rail run from one side of the political aisle to the other, from Republican Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker to Democratic Mayor John Norquist.

At the initial, mainly rush-hour service level proposed, commuter rail would carry 4,000 riders per day. The MMA's Beltz expects this to increase steadily as word spreads about the commodious new coaches. Increased service during mid-Day and in the evening along with transit-oriented residential and business development around the stations is expected to drive ridership even higher.

Along with advocates for laptop computers, each of the proposed eight commuter rail cars will be equipped with wheelchair lifts, and Diana Sullivan, a disability rights specialist with Independence First, predicts that commuter rail will significantly boost mobility for persons with disabilities. She notes that this is particularly important for intercity trips since most long-range buses still don't have wheelchair lifts, and lift-equipped vans typically cost $50,000 or more. Nor can Amtrak fill this gap. It's more expensive and stops in only a few southeastern Wisconsin's urban centers.

How much difference would this make for 1-34 traffic? About 60% of commuter rail's riders are expected to come from the ranks of today's motorists. The reduction in traffic is not insignificant, according to SEWRPC's Ken Yunker. During the morning rush hour, traffic in the primary commuting direction would drop 4% in Milwaukee County, 9% in Racine, and 12% in Kenosha. An additional benefit would come when the state starts reconfiguring the highway between Milwaukee and the Illinois border, between 2008 and 2020. Commuter rail could provide a reliable, congestion-proof travel option for many commuters and other travelers when traffic lanes are closed on the interstate.

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Safety is an aspect of commuter rail that intrigues Transit Now’s Kerry Thomas. Although accidents occasionally kill motorists and pedestrians caught on the tracks, especially suicides, commuter rail operations typically experience no passenger deaths in a given year. On the other hand, Thomas says, “driving kills almost 3 people for every 100 million passenger miles traveled.” If commuter rail provided 30 million passenger miles of service per year as expected, it could save almost 30 lives over a period of 10 years.

Counting the Cost

Despite all of the endorsements and compelling reasons for commuter rail, what's the hitch?

Finding the $152.1 million to pay for something like commuter rail, of course, is never simple. And, operating costs would run about $81.2 million a year. If this were a highway, it could simply be “enumerated” by the state Legislature as one of the half dozen or so projects the state typically authorizes every two years. But it is not. Even so, the corridor study’s Advisory Committee has a plan that it thinks would work and keep local costs low. First, regional officials hope to get 50% of the needed capital funding from the federal “New Start” program. Another 25% would come from other federal funds designated for congestion mitigation, air quality improvement and multimodal purposes. That leaves 25%, or $30.4 million, which local officials hope would come from the state.

Part of the reasoning behind asking the state to pay the non-federal share of the commuter rail project is that, like a state trunk or interstate highway, its function is not local. Rather, it would provide transportation between cities and to another state. For that reason, the sympathetic Committee also suggests that the rail service be managed primarily by the state, which has valuable experience operating with Amtrak for its Hiawatha service. Moreover, compared to the $240 million outlay the state makes for its major highway projects program each year, $30 million for commuter rail spread over several years does not seem extravagant.

On the other hand, as Governor Doyle has hammered home to everyone, the state is facing unprecedented deficits, which affect everything. Although transportation programs have their own “segregated” funds primarily from gas taxes, the governor has proposed using $200 million of the transportation fund for general purposes making the prospects for new highway projects dim. Moreover, the state does not yet have the funding it needs to rebuild the Marquette Interchange and the rest of the I-94 system. If the state does balk at covering the non-federal share for commuter rail—or perhaps does not want to manage it—the $30 million cost might be split evenly between the state and a local multi-governmental entity.

In the operating side of the ledger, fares would cover most of the annual cost of running commuter rail than the bus alternative and bring annual net costs down to $15.4 million. And, if the cost of the service within northern Illinois were to be allocated to Metra, Wisconsin’s share would drop further. About 3% of the overall cost would be covered with federal funds. Depending on whether or not the state or the local governments manage the operation, all or most of the rest of the cost would then presumably be eligible for the state’s regular transit assistance. In the case the state doesn’t manage the operation, the study report shows the remaining local share, about $2 million, could be split among participating local governments.

Getting Started?

Will it happen? So far Governor Doyle’s budget includes $40,000 for preliminary engineering or half of the non-federal share. Despite Republican and Democratic support in the Legislature, it’s too early to say that the item will survive budgetary knives and, regardless, another $40,000 still needs to be found. Beyond that, planners hope that the state emerges from its budget crisis by 2005 when the project is scheduled for construction.

Aside from getting the Legislature and the governor to pay the relatively small bill for preliminary engineering, state and local congressional leaders need to get a federal earmark for the $76 million needed from the New Start program to construct the project. Luckily, the six-year federal transportation act, TEA-21, is up for reauthorization this year and probably into the next. Looking a bit like a “Christmas tree” by the time it reaches the president’s desk, this bill is traditionally festooned with many local earmarks.

Thus it appears that Wisconsin has reached a watershed moment in its transportation history. Assuming that hearings go well later this month, three rail transit proposals will have survived the rigorous federal “alternatives analysis” and local public approval process to stand ready for funding. Along with southeastern Wisconsin’s commuter rail project, Milwaukee is ready to build its “new-tech” Connector and Dane County and Madison are ready to go with a combination bus and rail transit system. Lack, politics, timing and the ability of local and congressional leaders to push their favorite project to the front of the line will determine which project or projects win. Commuter rail in southeastern Wisconsin, many are now betting, might just have what it takes to make it to the finish line.
Rail would be bargain compared to highway costs

BY NANCY DUERSTEN

The regional planning commission's (SEWRPC) plan for a commuter rail should be hailed by the taxpayer as a welcome addition to the transportation mix.

The proposal to extend the Chicago Metra from Kenosha to Racine and Milwaukee (KRM), with stops in between, will give us a safer and less expensive alternative to the freeway. Interstate 94 already plagued by huge trucks and traffic will get exponentially worse by adding more lanes in a self-defeating attempt to conquer time with pavement.

Freeways are already the highest cost component of the transportation system and there is no end in sight.

Commuter rail is a bargain compared to highways. Consider that the 38 mile KRM connection between Kenosha and Milwaukee will cost $152 million (90 percent of that to be paid with federal funds). Compare this to the Hoan Bridge extension in Milwaukee at $160 million for just three miles of roadway. It will cost about $1 billion to rebuild the Marquette interchange in Milwaukee, and about $65 billion to reconstruct the area’s 127 mile freeway system. The Legislature is already talking about increasing our taxes to pay for it. Commuter rail will need subsidies but highways require huge subsidies to resurface, repair, rebuild, police, plow, landscape and salt the equivalent passenger miles of highway.

SEWRPC estimates that in about 15 years the KRM will carry more than 1.1 million passengers each year, thereby reducing traffic on Interstate 94 by 12 percent during rush hours. Think what a 33 mile highway to carry 1.1 million people a year would cost. Widening highways and adding lanes always encourages more driving, and in three years can double traffic thus producing a perpetual demand for more highways. Commuter rail on the other hand can easily accommodate more passengers by simply running more frequently or hitching on more cars at a fraction of the cost.

KRM has countless advantages for Racine County. It would produce economic activity, mobility for workers, shoppers, tourists, create a convenient and inexpensive vehicle for the disabled, the young and the old, people without driver’s licenses and those who don’t attempt to drive on the freeways. 20 percent of the population does not drive at all. Rail takes us through snow, storms, fog and rain. It offers a respite while going to work where one can relax, read the paper, work on a laptop instead of coping with heavy traffic. It will conveniently connect people to the Milwaukee airport.

By breathing life into downtown Racine, KRM can help reduce the sprawl of suburban housing tracts out across our farmland and the excessive taxes needed for the infrastructure to support the sprawl.

With the highway accident toll in Wisconsin reaching alarming rates and the aging of our population, the safety the rail provides is another advantage. A large spike in oil prices in the future could leave Racine more isolated than we already are. Commuter rail would help contain air pollution in our area already rated at non-attainment levels for air quality and we all can breathe healthier. And last but not least, we’ll be serving our national interest by helping lessen America’s dependence on oil from the Middle East.

For the public good there is every reason to move forward on commuter rail.

Nancy Duersten is a retired freelance artist and lives in Racine. She is active in several community organizations.
Commuter rail service needs to go north, too

KENOSHA NEWS
April 2, 2003

When we consider what southeastern Wisconsin will be like in 10 years, one of the items that seems likely to make a big difference is the development of commuter rail service from Kenosha to Milwaukee. Rail service north of Kenosha could have a significant economic benefit. Failure to develop that type of service would be a hindrance to developing new types of industries and high-paying jobs.

For several years, extending the Metra commuter rail service from Kenosha to Racine to Milwaukee has been under study by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. In 1998, SEWRPC concluded that the service would be both financially and technically feasible. The plans have moved forward since then, and in December an advisory committee voted to bring a plan to the public at a series of hearings. The plan under discussion is for commuter trains to use existing freight rail lines and to stop in Somers, Racine, Caledonia, Oak Creek, South Milwaukee, Cudahy-St. Francis (near Mitchell Field) and Milwaukee.

The public hearings begin this month, and the first of them will be in Kenosha on Wednesday, April 23, at the Madrigano Room at Gateway Technical College. Other hearings will be held in Milwaukee, Racine and Cudahy. Each hearing will begin at 6:30 p.m. and be preceded by an open house from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. and a presentation at 6 p.m.

Of course the plan is expensive. The projected cost to develop the service is $152 million. It is expected to cost another $10.4 million a year to operate.

It is interesting to note that at the same time the rail service is under study, a major expansion of the interstate highway system is also under consideration. The Freeway Reconstruction Study Advisory Committee will vote today on a plan to upgrade and add lanes to 127 miles of the interstate system, including the 12 miles of I-94 through Kenosha County. The cost of that plan is expected to be more than $6 billion.

With that as a comparison, the rail service doesn’t seem so expensive. However, the two items aren’t mutually exclusive. The region needs both an efficient interstate highway system and an efficient commuter rail system going both north and south from Kenosha.

The benefits of the rail system to businesses and to workers could be immense. It will open up new opportunities for workers and new labor pools for employers. There are environmental and other benefits as well.

One of Kenosha’s great advantages is its location between Chicago and Milwaukee. Extending commuter rail service north of Kenosha would enhance that advantage. Failure to develop the rail service would detract significantly from the advantage of the location. It doesn’t do much good to be close to two cities if it’s not easy to travel between them.

Development of Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter rail service will help all the communities between Kenosha and Milwaukee, but it will be of particular significance for Kenosha. This city wouldn’t be at the end of the line any longer. It would be in the middle of a much bigger network, with easier-than-ever airport connections. It would be good for Kenosha’s economy, and it would be good for Kenosha’s quality of life.
Metra makeover receives boost

KENOSHA NEWS
March 29, 2003

KENOSHA NEWS STAFF

Kenosha's Metra's Metra makeover is coming, and because of it Carol Schaufel can better see her beloved Cubs.

Metra, the Illinois commuter rail line that stops in Kenosha, has agreed to provide 20 percent of the funding for nearly $1.5 million in handicapped accessibility and other upgrades to its aging Kenosha platform, a city official said. The city, through funds it procured over the last decade from the state and federal governments, will provide the rest.

For Schaufel, the improvements will mean accessibility to a station that has been up until now impassable. Taking a train to Wrigley Field — with a transfer to the subway's Red Line — will be a possibility.

"That would be exciting," said Schaufel, who uses a motorized wheelchair as a result of muscular dystrophy. "I love Cubs games, and to find a driver and all that kind of stuff is sometimes difficult. It would be a lot less hassle."

The improvements will also help disabled workers get to jobs in northern Illinois, according to Schaufel, who should know: She is a rehabilitation counselor for the state's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in Kenosha.

"If there was more accessibility I would probably use it," Schaufel said. "I do use the bus system and the trolley.

The Metra platform plan includes upgrades designed to bring the station in line with Americans with Disabilities Act standards, a project first discussed a decade ago following a 1993 study into the lack of station accessibility.

They include:
- Reconstructing the second-story platform.
- Replacing the platform canopy.
- Adding an elevator to the south side of the platform.
- Rehabilitating the south stairwell and pedestrian tunnel.
- Improving lighting and other site upgrades, including installing a textured tile to aid blind users.

Elevator installation is key, officials said. As it stands, the only access to the second-story boarding area is up a flight of stairs. Plus, the crossing between the cement platform and the train is not seamless.

"This is part of standard ADA compliance," Metra spokeswoman Audrey Renteria said.

Renteria stressed that the agreement calls for the commuter rail line to pay for all of the project's "professional services" like engineering, project management and inspections up to 20 percent of the total project cost. City development specialist Zohrab Khaligian said Metra's agreement with the city guarantees it will pay the full 20 percent.

The project will cost $1,465,660. The city's share is $1,171,723. Metra's share is $292,932.

In early February, city officials had criticized Metra for failing to guarantee its share of the money, three years after the city and commuter rail line first formally agreed to make improvements to the station.

"We're hoping this is the last snag," Khaligian said.

The City Council's Finance Committee will review the Metra agreement at its meeting next Wednesday. It would then go before the full council April 7.

The proposal is an amendment to the 2000 agreement between the two parties that now includes money for the elevator — not included in the original deal — and eliminates construction of an overflow parking lot. The measure also mandates that the city will try its best to keep the project within budget.

Construction likely will not start until next winter at the earliest, as Metra has said it will take six to eight months to complete final design work for the improvements.

The project does not include work on the station itself. Improvements to it could come down the road.

Khaligian said the station's boarding and access areas could use some sprucing up. The potential expansion of Metra to Milwaukee — a long-talked-about proposal that currently sits before the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission — only increases the need for improvements to the platform.

"It's not a problem where something is going to fall over," Khaligian said. "It's just not well-maintained."
4 hearings set on Metra rail line extension

By LARRY SADLER
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Four public hearings have been set for late April and early May on a proposal to extend Chicago’s Metra commuter trains from Kenosha to Racine and downtown Milwaukee, with stops throughout the South Shore suburbs.

A Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission study committee has recommended the rail line, which would cost $182 million to start.

Stop would include Cudahy, South Milwaukee, Oak Creek, the Town of Galesville and the Town of Somers, with shuttle buses linking the Cudahy station to Mitchell International Airport.

Trains would run seven round trips each weekday and three round trips on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. Planners estimate the trains would carry 1.1 million riders a year by 2030.

The study panel is recommending that the state Department of Transportation oversee the train line and that state and federal money be used to cover both construction costs and the $185.4 million in annual operating costs not covered by fares.

Hearings are set for April 23 at Gateway Technical College’s Kenosha campus, 3520 30th Ave.; April 24 at Milwaukee’s Downtown Transit Center, 900 E. Michigan St.; April 30 at Gateway’s Racine campus, 901 Pierling Drive; and May 1 at Galesville City Hall, 9060 S. Lake Drive.

Each session will consist of an open-house question-and-answer session from 4 to 6 p.m., a formal presentation at 6 p.m. and public testimony at 6:30 p.m.

After the hearings, the study panel will send its recommendations to elected state and local officials for action.

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
March 26, 2003

Progress of Metra extension crawls along

KENOSHA NEWS
February 28, 2003

There is no schedule for this train. Rather, progress in the long-talked about Metra extension to Milwaukee is measured in baby steps.

So consider Gov. Jim Doyle’s recent comments regarding the project a crawl.

Doyle addressed the issue in a recent interview with the Kenosha News. He was asked about two key issues surrounding the commuter rail extension: Who will pay for it, and who will run the show?

The former, given the $155 million in start-up costs just to get a full complement of trains rolling north, will almost certainly become a political firestorm. It seems local money—dollars not from the state or federal governments—will have to be involved, but county boards and city councils will likely fight any such contribution all the way. Budgets are already tight all over, and taxes are high.

Doyle’s thoughts? It’s too early in the process to talk about it.

“It’s a very important project,” he said. “It’s a very important part of the overall transportation picture. It’s one of these issues where there isn’t any money to make any significant capital investment in it now—and I think everybody understands that—but to just cut it off, cut the planning off, cut the development off, would put us back years and years. Hopefully we find ourselves in a position in a few years where we are in a better financial situation and we can move forward.”

For now, $400,000—the amount of money Doyle included for the project’s preliminary engineering in his recent budget proposal—will have to do.

It may also buy the governor some time as another related battle rolls. While of less controversy than the funding issue, the question of who will take the lead in the project is a vital one.

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission has recommended that the Wisconsin Department of Transportation implement the project.

Doyle would not commit to that last week. At least not yet.

“It’s a little too early to say whether the state can be the lead player in this or not,” he said.

That Doyle did with the $400,000. In fact, that he included any money in his budget proposal amid the state’s massive budget deficit perhaps indicated a willingness to have the DOT oversee the project.

The key word there, however, is “perhaps.” Indeed, nothing is certain on this train route.
Budgets keeping railway passengers on track

Still on agenda: Airport station, Amtrak funding

By LARRY SANDLER
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Despite all the state and federal budget cuts, officials have found enough money to keep Wisconsin passenger trains running, build a new Amtrak station at Mitchell International Airport and plan future commuter rail service.

Still, obstacles remain ahead on the tracks, both for Amtrak and for proposed commuter rail lines in southeastern Wisconsin and Dane County.

Under the 2003-'04 state budget announced last week by Gov. Jim Doyle and the federal appropriations bill approved by Congress on Feb. 18:

Airport depot: The state will build a long-discussed station at the airport for Amtrak’s Milwaukee-to-Chicago Hiawatha line. By adding that station to the current stops in downtown Milwaukee, downtown Chicago, Sturtevant and Glenview, Ill., state officials hope to draw more Illinois passengers to Mitchell.

Sen. Herb Kohl (D-Wis.) announced that he had helped obtain $4 million in federal funding for the airport station, on top of the $2.5 million previously appropriated. State officials expect the station to open in 2007, said Randy Romanski, executive assistant to state Transportation Secretary Frank Busalacchi.

Last year, the Hiawatha boosted service from six to seven round trips daily, partly in anticipation of the new stop.

Amtrak lines: Both of Wisconsin’s Amtrak lines, the Hiawatha and the long-distance Empire Builder, appear to be safe for the immediate future, as does Amtrak itself.

Congress appropriated $1.05 billion for Amtrak in the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, less than the $1.2 billion that railroad managers sought but enough to keep the national passenger railroad operating, Amtrak officials said.

Doyle’s budget, meanwhile, recommends boosting the state’s share of Hiawatha costs from $3.2 million in the fiscal year ending June 30 to $13.3 million in the 2003-'04 fiscal year and $4.9 million in 2004-'05. President Bush is pushing states to pay more for medium-range train routes.

The federal appropriations bill places new spending restrictions on long-range trains, which don’t get any state money. However, Amtrak and the National Association of Railroad Passengers say they don’t expect those restrictions to kill any routes.

In any event, the Empire Builder, which stops in Milwaukee and other Wisconsin cities on its daily trip from Chicago to the Pacific Northwest, is not among the long-distance routes whose financial viability has been most criticized by the White House.

Even as the federal budget struggle was resolved for this year, however, another battle started shaping up for the fiscal year starting Oct. 1, with Amtrak seeking $1.8 billion, or double the $800 million recommended by Bush. And Doyle’s budget remains to be approved by the Legislature.

Commuter rail: Doyle recommended spending $400,000 in 2004-'05 to help extend Chicago’s Metra commuter trains from Kenosha to Racine and downtown Milwaukee, with stops throughout the southeastern suburbs.

A Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission study committee has recommended the service, which would cost $152 million to establish. Public hearings are planned for spring, before elected officials decide whether to move forward.

The state money would be used to match previous federal appropriations to start engineering and designing the line, Romanski said.

And although the state budget doesn’t recommend any money for Dane County commuter rail, Busalacchi plans to lobby Wisconsin’s congressional delegation to obtain money for that project, Romanski said.

The Madison Common Council and the Dane County Board have voted to start preliminary engineering on a $168 million commuter rail line from Middleton to Madison’s East Towne Mall, backed by a $53 million countywide express bus network.

But both the Madison and Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter rail lines have a long way to go before they win final approval.

And three pro-rail mayors — Madison Mayor Sue Dlouhy, Racine Mayor Jim Smith and Oak Creek Mayor Dale Richards — were defeated in primaries last week, although rail service did not appear to be a major issue in any of the campaigns.

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
February 25, 2003
Metra fund pledge may be big step

KENOSHA NEWS STAFF

In the scheme of things, $400,000 for a $1.52 million project isn't much. But for the planned Metra extension to Milwaukee, the money pledged for the commuter rail line by Gov. Jim Doyle could be a big step.

"Absolutely, it's a positive," said Fred Patrie, Kenosha County's public works director who is chairing the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission committee studying the plan. "You can't use fiscal difficulties as an excuse for not evaluating long-term investments."

Money for engineering

If approved by the Legislature, the $400,000 will make up at least part of the project's $4 million to $5 million preliminary engineering cost, the next step in the much-discussed 32-mile commuter rail line.

Already, $7 million in federal funding has been earmarked for the design work, but the money is essentially worthless without a required 20 percent match on the local or state level. The state money would comprise at best 10 percent of the engineering total, leaving future state money or local money to make up the difference.

Some local leaders have left the door open for funding, but only for operating the 32-mile rail extension, not designing or building it. That could leave future state earmarks as a more likely scenario.

"Preliminary engineering is going to be a multi-year project anyway," Patrie said.

Transportation cuts

At least the Metra project got money in Doyle's biennial budget proposal, as the governor presented his share of transportation cuts Tuesday needed to help fix the state's $1.52 billion budget deficit. Doyle's proposal called for an 8.1 percent cut in transportation spending for fiscal year 2004, including the elimination of 141.5 full-time equivalent jobs in the next year.

Doyle also shifted $500 million in transportation funds to pay for federal governments and schools, to help make up for federal reallocation through more spending for road projects. Some prosecutors, however, are concerned the funding shift will slow highway work. Exactly what projects will be affected are unknown.

Local highway projects

Several state highway projects are on the drawing board in Kenosha County, including the rebuilding of Highway 32 between Sturtevant and the Highway 50-Interstate 94 interchange and two stretches of Highway 83 in western Kenosha County. Highway 142 is also scheduled for resurfacing.

The Highway 32 project is slated for 2006 and 2007. The Highway 50 work is scheduled for 2006, while work on Highway 83, done in stretches, should run from 2004 to 2005.

"We may very well have a project or two delayed," Rep. Jim Kreuser, R-Kenosha, said Wednesday. "I don't think we're talking about not paving or maintaining the roads. We're talking about rescheduling it down for a couple of years to take care of our fiscal house."

The Transportation Development Association, an interest group, said the $500 million cut would "devastate Wisconsin's highway program" by setting a lower baseline for future Department of Transportation budgets.

"His proposal will eliminate and delay necessary projects and pit the southeast freeway reconstruction against other projects in the state," said Bob Cook, executive director of the TDA.

Doyle did find $34 million in his budget proposal to renovate downtown Milwaukee's Marquette Interchange, the aging meeting point of Interstates 94, 43 and 794. The project would be completed in 2006, a year later than previously projected, under Doyle's plan. Estimates have put the cost of the project at $940 million.

Some county funds intact

Of more importance locally, the governor pledged to keep 2003 funding in place and increase funding by 2.5 percent in both 2004 and 2005 for general transportation aid and the state's local road improvement program.

Both are a major source of funds for Kenosha County's highway budget.

The state pledged more than $2.1 million in general transportation aid to Kenosha County for fiscal year 2003, and the state promised the county another $231,358 in local road improvement program dollars for 2002-03, officials said.

"It's better than a cut," Gary Sipsma, director of the county's Division of Highways, said of Doyle's modest pledge to increase funds. "But as to how it would specifically affect our budget, it's way too early to know."

In the last several years, state transportation funds have gone toward reconstructing the intersection of Highways F and W, repaving work on Highway G, and other county highway improvements.

Such state funds require a 50 percent local match.

KENOSHA NEWS
February 20, 2003
State hopes to maintain commuter rail expansion funding

KENOSHA NEWS STAFF

Despite a massive state budget deficit, Wisconsin's secretary of administration hopes to maintain some funding in the transportation budget for a planned expansion of commuter rail service.

A plan to extend Metra commuter rail service from Kenosha north to Racine and Milwaukee was discussed for years, and was recommended last year by an advisory committee of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Committee.

The committee recommended that the state pay 20 percent of the estimated $115 million price tag for the capital improvements to start up the 32-mile commuter line, with the federal government picking up the remaining 80 percent. But the recommendation comes at a time when Gov. Jim Doyle is grappling with a state budget deficit that is expected to reach $2.2 billion by 2005.

Doyle has hinted that he plans to announce a series of budget cuts next week, and Wednesday Secretary of Administration Mark Murotta said he hopes to maintain some money in the transportation budget to begin planning for the project.

"We're going to find a way to put some money in the transportation budget for that, for planning, to keep the project going," Murotta said. "We wouldn't want to put the breaks on that."

Doyle had in December expressed doubts that there would be money available for the commuter line.

According to estimates by SEWRPC, the total cost for design work for the project would be $90 million over the next three years. The federal government has already earmarked $7 million for preliminary engineering costs.

State transportation officials said this week that they will not know what funding will be available for projects until Doyle submits his 2004-06 budget to the Legislature next month. A draft version of the department budget had included $400,000 for preliminary engineering of the commuter rail line, but that money was removed from a revised budget.

OURVIEW

Railroad growth may lack funding fuel

One of the key projects that could be derailed by the present state budget deficit is the growth of a viable commuter rail system in southeastern Wisconsin.

A meeting of a group of area political leaders in Racine on Monday indicated a lack of steam for the local funding side of extending the Metra commuter rail line north from Kenosha to Milwaukee and points beyond.

Without that extension, attempts to develop a commuter rail service between Waukesha and Milwaukee or even Madison and Milwaukee appear doomed to be sidetracked.

Leaders from several southeastern Wisconsin communities expressed concern over the possibility that they will have to provide local funds for startup costs for such an extension. Current proposals by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission call for an 80 percent federal share of the estimated $115 million start-up costs, with the other 20 percent coming from state and local sources — or about $23 million.

Kenosha Mayor John Antaramian made it clear that from his perspective, that means state funding and not funds from local municipalities. Resistance to local funding could grow even stronger after Gov. Jim Doyle's budget speech Tuesday. Most observers believe Doyle will have to cut state-shared revenues to local municipalities as he searches for ways to cut the projected $2.2 billion deficit.

That will leave local governments very little room for funding rail extension.

With the state facing tough fiscal times for at least the next biennium, it is unclear whether it can provide the entire amount of local funding needed for the extension, not even including an estimated $0.4 million annually in operating costs for the 32-mile route.

For progress on rail expansion, Waukesha leaders look west to Dane County. Recent talks sponsored by Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk are exploring the possibility of a commuter rail line between Madison and its western suburb of Middleton.

But that is a far cry from the regional rail system championed by then-Gov. Tommy Thompson. The lack of fiscal muscle for a rail system would make even the most ardent supporter of rail as a replacement for auto traffic reconsider the viability of such an option.

And with the nation about to pursue what could prove to be an expensive war, the federal government will be in no position to pour money into a project that has only tepid local support.

Waukesha Freeman
February 13, 2003
TRACING COMMUTER RAIL

Officials discuss whether project would speed up redevelopment

By Jennifer Pfaff and Matt Hronick
Staff Writers

A proposed commuter rail line to connect Milwaukee and Chicago could bring desired economic redevelopment to a key area in South Milwaukee, but the cost could easily outweigh the benefits, said Mayor David Kieck.

An advisory committee from the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor has been studying the possibility of running commuter rail on current Union Pacific Railroad freight tracks from the existing Kenosha Metra Rail station to downtown Milwaukee. The proposal includes stops in the town of Somers, the town of Caledonia, Oak Creek, South Milwaukee, Cudahy and Milwaukee.

Amtrak’s service from Milwaukee to Chicago is faster, but has fewer stops along the way and runs fewer times per day than the committee is recommending for this commuter line, said Ken Yunker, assistant director for the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

While the committee and rail proponents say that development could boom around the South Milwaukee stop, bringing valuable tax base, Kieck said he worries about the projected $152 million start-up cost and $15 to $18 million annual operating cost.

"It could have a positive impact on our community, especially as we work toward redevelopment in our downtown area," Kieck said. "Of course, the big factor here is the cost. For example, in the city of South Milwaukee, we may be able to work at a site where the train would stop, but to put dollars into actually running the program — Continued on page 26

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Rail

Continued from page 25

there's no way to feasibility allocate funds to do that.*

The advisory committee, made up of representatives of the communities along the proposed lakeshore route, county officials, transportation planners and Metro Rail personnel, issued a preliminary recommendation that commuter rail be used in the area.

It is wrapping up a more detailed study about the costs and benefits of commuter rail, compared to bus service. The study also explores funding options for starting up such a system and descriptions of the how the service could be operated and managed.

A series of public information meetings and public hearings will be held this spring so SEWRPC officials can learn about community and resident interest in the idea of commuter rail before pursuing more formal actions to implement any plan, Yunker said.

Cost vs. benefit

The cost of running a commuter rail system depends on the frequency of runs, because that determines the number of trains that need to be purchased and maintained. The study projects the capital costs — which includes the train purchases and initial track improvements — for the rail line to be $152 million if seven round trips were offered a day, and $225 million if 15 Round trips were offered daily. Operating costs not covered by fares are estimated at $15.4 million annually.

Kleck said he believes the rail line could be beneficial, if a workable funding formula can be found.

The advisory committee has said federal and state government should pay for the rail line, but neither federal nor state officials have formally discussed the matter.

The commuter line would offer a new way for South Milwaukee residents who work in Racine or Kenosha to travel to their jobs, Kleck said.

County Mayor Raymond Glowacki said state officials need to give serious thought to the benefits that such a line could reap for southeastern Wisconsin.

"With the change of administration in the governor's office and the legislature, it is a matter that the advocates of commuter rail must go and discuss what the commuter rail could mean for the southeastern portion of the state," he said.

While the cost could be high for taxpayers, he pointed out road maintenance and building is also taxpayer funded. Using the burden on the state's roadways could reduce those costs, while reducing pollution from single passenger vehicle traffic and preparing for the future.

"We're hooked on gas," he said, commenting on the rising cost of gasoline. "It can't last forever. What are the alternatives?"

Redevelopment could boom

Rail advocates suggest running commuter service through the South Shore could reinvigorate struggling downtowns.

A draft of the study being completed by the advisory committee estimates that between 4,100 and 5,100 people would use the commuter rail line on a weekday, depending on how many runs were offered.

"The committee recognized that commuter rail, compared to a bus alternative, would have much more substantial capital costs, but it would have the potential to have land development and redevelopment impacts along the line and particularly at the stations along the line," Yunker said.

South Milwaukee's comprehensive plan, which looks at potential future land use, includes the possibility of commuter rail running through the center of the plan suggests a station could be located to the east of the existing, privately-owned depot, 1111 Milwaukee Ave.

"If it goes forward, we would like to do some enhancements to go with the stop, such as condominiums in the downtown area so people could be within walking distance," said city engineer Kyle Vandeceer.

While South Milwaukee supports the idea of commuter rail, Vandeceer stressed it is not a magic solution for all redevelopment hopes.

While a local station could draw people into the central business district, bringing more potential customers to restaurants and shops, there are many other factors that contribute to downtown development, he said.

The proposed stop falls in the center of an area South Milwaukee has targeted for redevelopment through the implementation of a tax increment finance district. The program has resulted in construction of affordable apartment housing for seniors and a concentration on bringing viable businesses to the downtown area.

Rail forum speakers urge residents to become involved

BY DAVID STEINKRAUS

Journal Times

RACINE — Now is the time for residents to push for commuter rail, said speakers at a forum on Monday night.

More than 100 people attended a meeting at Gateway Technical College where several people talked about the advantages of commuter rail.

A commuter rail proposal, which will be the subject of public hearings in late April, calls for an extension of the Metra service that now connects Kenosha to Chicago. The extension recommended by a state advisory committee would bring trains north through Racine and to Milwaukee, including stops in intermediate municipalities such as Caledonia and Cudahy.

Such connections are critical to the future of southeastern Wisconsin, speakers said.

"The corridor from Milwaukee to Chicago is the corridor right now for our economy," said Roger Carus, president of Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce.

This area of the state has been changing for decades as manufacturers closed or left town, he said. And technology has changed everything, said Gordy Kneule, executive director of the Racine County Economic Development Corp.

No longer can companies find the skills they need in a restricted area; they must recruit regionally, he said.

It's not only companies that would benefit from commuter rail, speakers said.

Workers would gain access to jobs in metropolitan Milwaukee and metropolitan Chicago.

"You could go to Summerfest. You could go to the circus parade," said Susan Sprig, one of the forum's organizers.

Even though Racine County is a good place to live, realistically not everyone who works here can live here, said Chip Brewer, director of governmental affairs for SC Johnson. Some people want to live in downtown Chicago; others must live in a certain place because there are two wage-earners who commute in different directions, he said. Commuter rail would help his company, Brewer said. "As an employer, we know our employees like this concept."

Several speakers urged residents to voice their support for commuter rail in order to push it up the priority list of the state and federal governments. Under most funding scenarios, those two entities would bear the largest share of the cost for building and operating a commuter rail system in southeastern Wisconsin.

Public hearings on the rail proposal are scheduled for April 23 at the Gateway Technical College campus in Kenosha, April 24 at the Downtown Transit Center in Milwaukee, April 30 at the Gateway campus in Racine, and May 1 at Cudahy City Hall.

The Journal Times
February 11, 2003
Commuter rail needs funding source

Mayor says state has to do its share

KENOSHA NEWS STAFF

RACINE — Plans for extending Metra to Milwaukee will likely have to include some sort of local funding — but only for operating the 32-mile route, not starting it, Kenosha Mayor John Antaramian said.

“There will have to be some amount,” Antaramian said after a public hearing of primarily commuter rail supporters Monday night at Gateway Technical College. “I am not sure what that extent will be.”

“My hope is the state will do it,” added the mayor, a supporter of the project. “It’s the state responsibility. I think, though, that as these projects move forward, it’s not going to end up that way.”

Early proposals regarding the extension from the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission have called for an 80 percent/20 percent split of the $152 million in capital costs between federal and state governments, with a more liberal share of the $10.8 million in annual operating costs (as much as 68 percent) being paid by the state.

But a preliminary recommendation from SEWRPC’s Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study Advisory Committee in December was clear: No local funding would be used.

Antaramian said he would not support local funding for the project’s capital costs.

“All that has to come from the state, or it won’t happen,” he said.

Mayor James Smith of Racine agreed, but also left the door open for some local funding for operating the line.

“We have to be open to anything,” he told the roughly 150 people gathered at Gateway.

Antaramian said he expected any local share of operating costs to be small.

He also said the local funding portion will probably be shared by four governments in Milwaukee, Racine and Kenosha counties, where the commuter rail line will run. When asked if he would support funding from the city of Kenosha, Antaramian said, “Everything depends on what is brought together and how it’s done.”

A SEWRPC plan laid out one strategy that involved local dollars for operating the Metra extension — with 22 percent of operating costs coming from the federal government ($8 million), 55 percent coming from the state ($3.4 million), and 13 percent coming from local governments through a regional transit authority or other coop.

**The major issue is going to be whether the state is going to step in and determine: are we going to have a rail system in this state that will allow commuter transportation?**

Mayor John Antaramian on commuter rail proposal

Not for Antaramian.

“The major issue is going to be whether the state is going to step in and determine: are we going to have a rail system in this state that will allow commuter transportation?” he said.

“That’s the issue. The other stuff is secondary, and it can be worked out. The state has to step forward.

“They have to make a determination: Do they really believe in this or not?”

The funding issue need not be answered immediately, officials said.

With public hearings on the extension likely pushed back to April, a final recommendation from SEWRPC’s advisory committee is unlikely before late spring.

Then comes the hard part — getting local governments on board. Each must approve the project before preliminary engineering could begin, and the selection process alone for the engineers could take months. By then, it could be 2004, said Ken Yunkor, assistant director of SEWRPC.

“You can move too quickly,” he said. “It can still proceed, but it can take time.”

Such a regional transit authority was voted down by the Kenosha County Board and other county governments in 1983. Officials then argued against the sales or gas tax that was necessary for the authority to operate.

Seven million dollars in federal transportation money has already been earmarked for the Metra extension project in the last four years. That money, however, requires an 80 percent local match, and planners have called for the state to make up the funding difference.

Given the state of the state budget — and its estimated $3.2 billion deficit over the next two fiscal years, including a $2 million shortfall in 2003 — that appears unlikely in the short term.

Department of Transportation officials said official word on funding for projects has been “out of the question” until Feb. 18, when Gov. James Doyle submits his 2003-05 budget proposal to the Legislature.

“At that point, we’ll have a better understanding of what his plans are,” DOT spokesman Randy Romanski said Monday.

“It’s too early to speculate. But these are tough fiscal times.”

An early version of the transportation budget did include $200,000 to help fund the Metra extension, or 10 percent of the expected $4 million cost for preliminary engineering, the next step of the project that includes design work. That money was removed from a revised department budget.

“Obviously, the federal money is there,” said Kenneth Leonard, director of the DOT’s Bureau of Planning. “One option is if the locals would match all of it. That is certainly an option.”
Madison officials act to move commuter rail system closer to reality

By LARRY SANDLER
lsandler@journalsentinel.com

By delaying key funding decisions, the Madison area has moved a step closer than the Milwaukee area toward starting a commuter rail system that would operate somewhat like a light rail system.

Although final approval is still far off, the Madison Common Council and Dane County Board each voted last month to begin preliminary engineering on the $198 million rail line.

In southeastern Wisconsin, no elected bodies have voted yet on a $152 million plan to extend Chicago's Metra commuter trains from Kenosha to Racine and downtown Milwaukee, with additional stops at Cudahy, South Milwaukee, Oak Creek, the Town of Caledonia and the Town of Somers. A study committee will hold public hearings on that plan this spring.

One major reason the Madison-area plan moved forward faster than Milwaukee-area rail plans, Madison transportation planner Dave Trowbridge says, is that state Highway and Transportation Planning Commission study committee has recommended that the state Department of Transportation run the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter rail line and pay all costs not covered by the federal government.

That strategy sidesteps concerns about setting up a regional transportation authority and levying a new local tax. But it risks running into spending cuts forced by the state's $3.2 billion deficit.

Gov. Jim Doyle said he's not likely to invest in any big capital projects right now. But he added that he doesn't want to stop planning for rail projects in the future, when more money may be available.

Most spending on the Dane County and southeastern Wisconsin rail plans would be well in the future, with several years of engineering ahead before final approval and construction, supporters of both plans say.

Like a light rail system, the Dane County system would run frequent trains between stations spaced relatively close together. Commuter railroads usually link a major city to its distant suburbs, mainly in rush hours.

But this wouldn't be light rail. Commuter railroads generally run diesel trains on existing freight railroad tracks, something Madison has in abundance. By contrast, modern light rail systems run electric vehicles, powered by overhead wires, on new tracks, usually laid in streets.

Nationwide, a total of 19 commuter rail systems operate in the Chicago, New York City, Los Angeles, Washington-Baltimore, San Francisco-San Jose, Philadelphia, Boston, Dallas-Fort Worth, Miami-Port Lauderdale, San Diego and Burlington, VT., areas.

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
February 4, 2003

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Number of commuter rail systems nationwide

By KEN KENNEDY

February 4, 2003

KENOSHA NEWS
February 10, 2003

A public forum on the possibility of commuter rail connecting Kenosha, Racine and Milwaukee will take place today in Racine.

The forum will be 6:30 p.m. at Gateway Technical College, 1001 S. Main St. It will be in the Great Lakes Room of the Racine Building at the college.

Several speakers will discuss the proposed commuter rail service, which was endorsed recently by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, and what the $152 million investment will mean for southeastern Wisconsin.

A panel of community leaders representing Racine, Cudahy and Kenosha will participate in a question-answer session following the presentations.

The forum is sponsored by the Racine chapter of 1000 Friends of Wisconsin and Sustainable Racine Inc.

For more information, contact Norman Siler at 956-6136 or e-mail at kennri@xcent.com.

By KEN KENNEDY

February 4, 2003

KENOSHA NEWS
February 10, 2003

A public forum on the possibility of commuter rail connecting Kenosha, Racine and Milwaukee will take place today in Racine.

The forum will be 6:30 p.m. at Gateway Technical College, 1001 S. Main St. It will be in the Great Lakes Room of the Racine Building at the college.

Several speakers will discuss the proposed commuter rail service, which was endorsed recently by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, and what the $152 million investment will mean for southeastern Wisconsin.

A panel of community leaders representing Racine, Cudahy and Kenosha will participate in a question-answer session following the presentations.

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Hearings planned on Metra extension

Rail service sought from Milwaukee to Kenosha

By LARRY Sandler
landler@journalsentinel.com

Public hearings will be held this spring in Milwaukee, Cudahy, Racine and Kenosha on a $152.1 million plan to extend Chicago’s Metra commuter trains from Kenosha to Racine and downtown Milwaukee, a regional study panel has decided.

Exact dates and locations for the four hearings have not been set, but they likely will be in March or in April, said Ken Yunker, assistant director of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

Each session would consist of a 4 p.m. open house, a 6 p.m. presentation and a 8:30 p.m. hearing, he said.

Separately, Sustainable Racine and 1,000 Friends of Wisconsin will hold a forum on the commuter rail issue at 6 p.m. Feb. 10 at Gateway Technical College, 601 Perashag Drive, Racine.

Business leaders and transit advocates will discuss the plan and answer questions from the audience.

A planning commission advisory committee has recommended the line, which would offer seven round trips daily, with additional stops at Cudahy, South Milwaukee, Oak Creek, the Town of Caledonia and the Town of Somers.

The panel says federal and state governments should pay both the capital costs of the rail line and the $15.4 million in annual operating costs not covered by fares.

This would be one of several commuter rail lines nationwide that cross state lines and metropolitan area boundaries, serving shoppers and tourists as well as a variety of suburban-to-city, city-to-suburb and suburb-to-suburban commuters.

Typically, commuter trains connect a major city with its most distant suburbs, mainly during rush hours.

But as metropolitan areas have grown across state lines and merged into each other, commuter railroads have followed.

Commuter trains link Baltimore to Washington, D.C; Boston to Providence, R.I.; Dallas to Fort Worth, Texas; Miami to Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; and San Francisco to San Jose, Calif.

In addition to connecting Massachusetts to Rhode Island, commuter trains cross from New York into New Jersey and Connecticut, from Pennsylvania into New Jersey and Delaware, and from the District of Columbia into Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia.

Nationwide, 19 commuter rail systems operate in the Chicago, New York City, Los Angeles, Washington-Baltimore, San Francisco-San Jose, Philadelphia, Boston, Dallas-Fort Worth, Miami-Fort Lauderdale, San Diego and Burlington, Vt. areas.

In Chicago’s Metra system, the Union Pacific North Line — the one that could be extended to Milwaukee and Racine — already crosses from Illinois into Wisconsin to reach Kenosha, while the system’s South Shore Line serves northwestern Indiana.

A special taxing district finances Metra’s Indiana operations. Metra, which is otherwise funded by Illinois taxpayers, has said it would need backing from Wisconsin state or local taxpayers to expand north of Kenosha.

But Wisconsin taxpayers are not paying for service to Kenosha, because Metra officials found that it would be more expensive to stop the trains at the border and build a new facility for turning them around than to keep running to Kenosha.
Public input sought on commuter rail plan

BY DAVID STEINKRAUS

Journal Times

IVES GROVE — A regional advisory committee studying commuter transportation in southeastern Wisconsin tentatively approved a set of public hearings on Wednesday, and it also briefly faced the recurring question of who will pay for commuter rail.

In December the committee made a preliminary recommendation for an extension of the Metra train service north from Kenosha through Racine and to Milwaukee. There would be seven trains per day in each direction. Establishing the service would cost about $132 million, and the annual operating cost would be about $18.5 million, according to a consultant’s analysis. The alternatives rejected by the committee were more frequent train service and a bus service.

It’s the committee’s recommendation that will be the topic of hearings in a couple of months, perhaps the last week of March and the first week of April. Sites for the hearings haven’t been finalized, but they will be in Kenosha, Racine, Cudahy and Milwaukee.

One of the concerns on Wednesday for John Bechler, who sits on the advisory committee and is president of the Kenosha Area Business Alliance, was the cost of the rail service. He suggested the hearings be publicized as a countywide matter — not just as a benefit for communities along Lake Michigan — in case future taxation is needed to support the service. And he wanted an assurance that the advisory committee will ask the state and federal governments to pay.

After the meeting he said his group supports commuter rail but doesn’t want property taxes to pay for it. Part of Kenosha County, outside the city of Kenosha, already pays for bus service, he said. “If you were to apply that same formula to commuter rail, you would be taxing people who might not have as much access to it.”

There’s also suspicion that establishing commuter rail may lead to a regional transit authority which would operate trains and buses connecting the rail service to Kenosha’s corporate parks along Interstate 94, he said. Such an authority was proposed several years ago, and area counties voted it down.

There are few regions of the state where rail should be or could be developed, and this is one, said Roger Caron, president of Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce and a member of the advisory committee. He also has served on state rail commissions.

“The point I come from is, hey, our state has been delinquent in its duties of developing a rail plan for the state,” Caron said.

Hearings to weigh rail plans

KENOSHA NEWS STAFF

STURTEVANT — The public will have a chance to weigh in on plans to extend Metra rail service from Kenosha to Milwaukee at four upcoming public hearings.

One will be held in Kenosha, the others in Racine and Milwaukee County.

Exact times and dates are yet to be determined, members of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission’s Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study Committee said at a meeting Wednesday.

“Public comment is very important,” said John Bechler, president of the Kenosha Area Business Alliance and a member of the transit study committee.

Bechler said focus groups should also have a say in the project, given what he said is a tendency for public hearings to include only viewpoints from both ends of the spectrum.

SEWRPC’s Web site will also provide a forum for debate, as will a SEWRPC newsletter, which will detail the transit plans.

The more input the better, said Fred Patric, Kenosha County public works director and chairman of the SEWRPC committee that is studying the transit options.

“There hasn’t been enough,” he said. “It is an essential public policy decision that has to be addressed. It may in fact be the last opportunity we have as a metropolitan area to address the issue of commuter rail.”
Federal dollars fuel hopes for commuter rail expansion

KENOSHA NEWS STAFF

STURTEVANT — Seven million dollars in federal funding has already been earmarked to help pay for a plan that would extend commuter rail service from Kenosha to Milwaukee, officials said Wednesday.

The money, appropriated in federal transportation budgets over the last four years, is for preliminary engineering of the Metra extension project, which continues to be debated at the regional planning level. The funding includes $1 million set aside in fiscal year 2003, $4 million set aside in 2004 and $2 million set aside in 2005.

"It's not a cheap proposition, so it's going to take help from the state and local governments to make it happen," said U.S. Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., who helped gain the rail funding. "There is a finite amount of resources from which to draw federally. Owing said that, we have to keep trying." Fundings is the key issue in the debate to extend Metra's Union Pacific North line north from Kenosha.

The project as recommended by a Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission advisory committee would cost $125.1 million to build and $65.4 million annually to run under a "medium level of service" option, which would have seven trains running in each direction on weekdays and three on weekends.

'This is NOT like going to the moon and back... We're just talking about extending this nine miles to Racine and then another 20 miles to Milwaukee. We can do this.'

Chip Brower
director of governmental affairs for SC Johnson

A high level of rail service as well as bus-only and bus-rail combination plans were also considered before the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study Advisory Committee decided on the rail plan last month.

At a meeting Wednesday at the Five Grove Office Complex, the committee decided to hold four public meetings in March or April to allow further discussion of the transit options. Following public input, the transit alternatives will go back before the SEWRPC committee, which would then make its final recommendation at a meeting perhaps in late May. From there, the plan will go before local governments for approval as the state Department of Transportation seeks specific ways to fund it.

The federal dollars already appropriated for the project could make rail extension more feasible despite tough economic times, said Chip Brower, director of governmental affairs for Racine's SC Johnson.

"If this goes forward, the money is there," said Brower, who worked with congressional leaders like Ryan and Sens. Herb Kohl and Russ Feingold to obtain the funding. "The support in Washington has been extraordinary and effective.

"The federal piece has fallen into place nicely." The SEWRPC proposed calling for a mix of 30 percent federal and 20 percent state funding, although newly elected Gov. James Doyle said last month that Wisconsin's multi-billion dollar budget shortfall would prevent the state from putting up any money in the short term. Doyle, however, did not slam the door on future funding.

The state's share of the $125.1 million in capital costs would be $37.6 million. It would pick up $10.4 million of the $25.4 million in annual operating costs under the SEWRPC committee's recommended plan.

No local funds would be used to pay for the rail expansion under the SEWRPC recommendation, but Ryan said the federal government can't go it alone in funding the project. And the money won't be there forever.

"We will keep removing it until we use it," Ryan said. "There is not a hard timeline, but if in a few years this project is just put on the shelf, then this money will not just sit in a bank account. It will go back to the federal government."

Thus, keeping the rail expansion project moving along is important, said Fred Patric, Kenosha County public works director and chairman of the SEWRPC transit study committee.

"The implementation agencies look for movement," Patric said. "They report to their district offices and their federal offices, and they say, 'Are they doing anything in Kenosha?'"

In all, $71.8 million has been appropriated for the rail extension since fiscal year 1999, but $50,000 of that money was spent on studies into the Metra extension. Another $1 million earmarked in 2000 could disappear without passage of a bill this year to extend the appropriation, Ryan said he hopes that will happen this winter.

Under the 80:20 funding plan, the $7 million in federal funds would be the federal government's share of the funding for preliminary engineering. It would likely not cover the entire cost of the work, and under the recommended funding formula the state would also be responsible for $1.175 million.

"We need the state to make this a priority," Ryan said. "This money helps show the federal commitment. We need the state to come on board as a full partner."

Preliminary engineering includes work on the details of the concept plan if and when it is approved by local governments, from architectural drawings to serious negotiations with Metra on how the extension will work.

Brower said the presence of the federal money for that phase of the project could speed it up. Trains could be running by 2005, according to the SEWRPC report.

"This is not like going to the moon and back," Brower said. "The track is there. Metra already goes to Kenosha. We're just talking about extending this nine miles to Racine and then another 20 miles to Milwaukee. We can do this."

According to an estimated implementation schedule contained in the SEWRPC committee's study report, the commuter rail plan would require $61 million in design work over the next three years.

In 2006 and 2007, construction costs would amount to a combined $77 million, including facility construction and improvement and equipment purchases. Capital needs would decrease to $16 million in 2006 and $17 million in 2007.

Annual operating costs would be $10.6 million under the medium-level rail plan, although $3.2 million of that would be recovered from farebox revenues, according to the SEWRPC report.

KENOSHA NEWS
January 16, 2003
Commuter line would be one of several
to serve multiple metro areas

They’re called commuter trains, but they travel farther than commuters usually do.

The commuter rail line under study for the Milwaukee area would be one of several
nationwide that cross state lines and metropolitan area boundaries, serving shoppers
and tourists as well as a variety of suburb-to-city, city-to-
suburb and suburb-to-suburb commuters.

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most distant suburbs, mainly during rush hours. But as met-
ropolitan areas have grown across state lines and merged
into each other, commuter railroads have followed.

Commuter trains link Baltimore to Washington, D.C.; Bos-
ton to Providence, R.I.; Dallas to Fort Worth, Texas; Miami to
Fort Lauderdale, Fl.; and San Francisco to San Jose, Calif.

In addition to connecting Massachusetts to Rhode Is-
land, commuter trains cross from New York into New Jer-
sey and Connecticut, from Pennsylvania into New Jersey
and Delaware, and from the District of Columbia into
Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia.

Nationwide, a total of 19
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Los Angeles, Washington-Balt-
timore, San Francisco-San
Jose, Philadelphia, Boston,
Dallas-Fort Worth, Miami-Fort
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Dulington, Vt., areas.

In Chicago’s Metra system,
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Elsewhere in Wisconsin:

■ The Dane County Board
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million rail line, and the Mad-
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uled to take up the issue Tues-
day. A study committee recom-
ended the line from Middleton through the isth-
us to the East Towne shopping center, backed by a $53.4
million countywide express bus network.

■ A feasibility study has
found it would be cost-effective
to extend Metra from Harvard,
Ill., to Clinton, in Rock County,
and Sharon, in Walworth County,
for $16.8 million. State Sen. Judy Robson (D-Del"oit) is
seeking state and Rock County
Board support for a detailed
study of that project.

■ Two other attempts to ex-
tend Metra into Wisconsin
failed in 2001, when feasibility
studies found they wouldn’t be
cost-effective. One line would
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Dulington and Silver Lake,
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from Fox Lake, Ill., to the vil-
ages of Walworth and Zenda,
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— Larry Sandler
Hearings set on Metra extension

Some decide cost; others tout development benefits

By LARRY SOMMER
lsommer@journalsentinel.com

It's a train that could carry its passengers to prosperity or just bail cash out of the bank.

Those are likely to be two sides of the debate over a recommendation to extend Chicago's Metra commuter-train lines from Kenosha to Racine and downtown Milwaukee, with additional stops at Cudahy, South Milwaukee, Oak Creek, the Town of Caledonia and the Town of Somers.

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission study committee that recommended the $261 million plan will meet today in West Allis to discuss its draft report. The committee will schedule a series of public hearings on the idea in Milwaukee, Kenosha and Racine counties.

Under the plan, trains would run seven round trips on the Union Pacific tracks each weekday — three each way in morning rush hours, three each way in afternoon rush hours and one each way in the middle of the day — with three round trips on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

Planners project that those trains would provide 4,400 rides each weekday, or 1.1 million a year.

Based on current Metra one-way rates, a trip from Oak Creek to the Amtrak station in downtown Milwaukee would take 25 minutes and cost $3.60, while a trip from Cudahy to Racine would take 27 minutes and cost $3.00. From Milwaukee, riders could reach Racine in 23 minutes for $3.40, or Kenosha in 85 minutes for $3.90. Regular riders could buy discounted passes.

Those forces would cover 18% to 17% of the line's operating costs, leaving $15.4 million a year for taxpayers to pick up. The study panel says the federal government would pay 60% of construction costs and $25 million a year for operating costs, and it recommends the state pay the remaining $8.4 million in capital costs and $10.4 million a year in operating costs.

Backers tout its benefits, particularly in economic development near the stations and in avoiding traffic jams during traffic reconstructions. Opponents focus on its costs, particularly in light of a 2002-03 state deficit estimated at $3.6 billion to $3.7 billion.

Commuter rail can provide transportation options to a variety of workers, from those working in Racine County, who commute to the Chicago region; to those without jobs or cars to two-collar areas where one spouse works in Milwaukee and the other works in Racine, said Peter Bethel, vice president of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce.

Based on other communities' experiences, authorities expect new shops and restaurants to spring up around stations, said Roger Carnon, president of Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce.

In Cudahy, officials believe a station at Kingman and Bernard avenues could help their plans to redevelop their downtown with office and retail development, said Jack Vacca, Cudahy economic development coordinator. That station also could be linked to Mitchell International Airport by shuttle buses, planners say.

In Oak Creek, a train station near the intersection of state Highways 23 and 1100 "would be the icing on the cake" for the Lakeshore Village plan to redevelop the Carrolls Park neighborhood near Donaut Park, Mayor Dale Richards said.

South Milwaukee officials also expect downtown businesses to benefit from a station near Milwaukee Ave. and Highway 32, Mayor David Rieck said.

Kenosha's HarborPark lakefront development — linked to the Metra station by a streetcar line — was built to attract commuters. And Racine is renovating an old train station into a transit center into a new train center that officials hope will aid downtown redevelopment.

But costs are a major issue for Gov. Jim Doyle and his nominee for transportation secretary, Frank Bielefeldt, who have voiced concern about spending money on rail service when they're trying to balance the state budget without new taxes or fees.

Rieck and Rieck said they share those concerns, even though they support commuter rail.

"Christmas is over with," Richards said. "People have got to wake up and realize the state has some major fiscal problems here."

However, Bethel and Vacca said major investments won't be needed for the next several years, by which time the state's financial condition may have improved.

Vacca urged residents and elected officials to take a further look:

"They tried to stop Columbus from going across the ocean, too, but he went," Vacca said.

Commuter rail facts

Here are answers to some frequently asked questions about the Metra extension.

Q. Who would run it?
A. The study committee has recommended that the state Department of Transportation oversee the rail line and hire Metra to run it.

Other options would be to set up a regional transportation authority with its own taxing power, or to establish a joint venture between Milwaukee, Racine and Kenosha counties without creating a new agency.

Q. Doesn't Amtrak provide the same service?
A. Not exactly. Amtrak runs seven daily round trips between Milwaukee and Chicago on its Milwaukee line, with additional stops at Sturtevant and at Glenview, Ill.

However, Ken Yunker, assistant director of Amtrak's planning commission, has said Amtrak and Metra would serve different markets.

Amtrak appeals to travelers looking for a quick trip from one downtown to the other while the Metra extension would serve people traveling from suburb to city or suburb to suburb, he said.

A one-way trip from Milwaukee to Chicago costs $28 and takes 4 hours on Amtrak, compared with $32 and 26 hours on the proposed Metra line.

Q. Would this be light rail?
A. No. Commuter railroads generally run diesel trains on existing freight railroad tracks, typically connecting a major city and its distant suburbs, primarily during rush hours.

Although the tracks often need to be upgraded, using existing tracks for commuter rail is less expensive per mile than building new tracks for light rail or heavy rail systems.

By contrast, modern light rail systems run electric vehicles, powered by overhead wires, all day on new tracks, usually laid in streets in the heart of a metropolitan area.

A third type of rail transit is heavy rail, such as Chicago's elevated and subway lines, which run fast electric trains powered by an electrified third rail on their own tracks.
Proposed commuter line would be one of several crossing boundaries

They’re called commuter trains, but they travel farther than commuters usually do.

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Elsewhere in Wisconsin:

- The Dane County Board voted Thursday to start preliminary engineering on a $188.6 million rail line, and the Madison Common Council is scheduled to take up the issue Jan. 21. A study committee recommended the 11-mile line from Middleton through the isthmus to the East Towne shopping center, backed by a $53.4 million countywide express bus network.
- A feasibility study has found it would be cost-effective to extend Metra from Harvard, Ill., to Clinton, in Rock County, and Sharon, in Walworth County, for $18.8 million. State Sen. Judy Robson (D-Beloit) is seeking state and Rock County Board support for a detailed study of that project.
- Two other attempts to extend Metra into Wisconsin failed in 2001, when feasibility studies found they wouldn’t be cost-effective. One line would have run from Antioch, Ill., to Burlington and Silver Lake, and the other would have run from Fox Lake, Ill., to the villages of Walworth and Zenda, both in Walworth County.

- Larry Sandler
Recapturing past of a historic hub

Anticipating commuter rail, Racine OKs plan to restore old depot

By JENNIE TUNKIECZ     
jtunkiecz@journalsentinel.com

Last Updated: Jan. 11, 2003

Racine - Boarded up and a bit battered, the old Chicago and North Western train depot here is closer to regaining its former glory as an important cornerstone for the near north side neighborhood and as a transportation center for Racine.

If the planned commuter rail extension from Chicago to Milwaukee becomes a reality, the depot will again be a key part of the regional transportation system.

The Racine Common Council on Tuesday gave Mayor James Smith authority to sign a $183,436 contract with Isthmus Architecture of Madison to develop the plans to restore the 1902 train depot.

The contract proposal goes to Gov. Jim Doyle’s office for final approval because state money is involved in the plan.

The actual renovation is expected to cost about $1.6 million, most of which will come from state and federal grants. The renovated depot could be open as early as summer 2004.

Renovating the depot is one of several phases in a project to create a transit hub for Racine. The plan includes:

- Developing a transit center in the 1400 block of State St. at a cost of about $3 million. The center would have canopy-covered bays for 20 buses and pleated glass screens to protect waiting passengers from the weather.

Space could be available for other transportation services, such as Wisconsin Coach Lines.

- Landscaping the area at a cost of about $700,000.
- Creating a parking area for about 130 vehicles for $205,000.

Michael Glasheen, the city’s transit planner, said Racine has been in need of a centralized location for inter-city bus connections, and this location is well suited for that purpose.

“When commuter rail becomes a reality, this will be just a fantastic connection for all residents of the city of Racine and across the area,” Glasheen said. “People can get to the city on a bus and get on a train to go wherever they need to go.”

Even if the Chicago-to-Milwaukee commuter rail expansion project is not approved, renovating the depot will provide a valuable service for people waiting for buses, Glasheen said.

Glasheen said the depot will have restrooms and space for vendors, and perhaps amenities like a coffee shop or other services for travelers.

The city is working with Ron Haarsma to purchase the depot. Haarsma, a Racine businessman, and his late father, James, purchased the depot about 20 years ago. The depot was officially closed in 1971.

“I think it’s great what the city wants to do with it,” Haarsma said of the renovation plan.

The Haarsma family had saved the depot from the wrecking ball after neighbors had complained that it had become a hangout for criminals, Haarsma said. There had been a groundswell of support from people to save the building, and Preservation Racine had secured the depot recognized by the National Register of Historic Places.

“My dad and I were antique buffs, so we decided to save it in hopes that somewhere down the line someone would be able to use it,” Haarsma said. “It’s nice that we were able to do this for the city. I really feel good about that. It’s one of a kind.”

Keith Kohlmann of Racine, who is with the Chicago and North Western Historical Society, said the Racine depot is historically significant. It was designed by Frost and Granger Architects of Chicago as one of a series of depots built along the C&NW line as gateways to communities, Kohlmann said.

Continued on page 36
"What is significant about it is it is the only one that has survived in its original state," he said.

Kohlmann said the depot was slated to be demolished several times over the years. That it has survived in such good condition is a testimony to the good works of Chicago and North Western employees, Preservation Racine and other supporters of historic buildings and the Hausman family, he said.

"It's also a testimony to how well it was built that it was essentially left to the elements for 25 years and does not even have any cracks in the bricks," Kohlmann said.

Charlie Quaglia, senior preservation architect for Latham Architecture, which will be doing the restoration planning, said that out of the eight or nine train depots the firm has worked on, this is one of the largest. This depot was designed at a transitional time when depots were going from small, wood-frame structures to ones of size and grandeur.

"There aren't many of these left, the Titanic, luxury version of train depots," Quaglia said.

It is also unusual for a former train depot to be used as a train depot again, Quaglia said. Most renovated depots become restaurants or office space, he said.

"I think the great thing about this project, and what interests me the most, is that we will be returning it to its past to an active use," he said.

Quaglia said that if the state moves quickly to approve the contract, the firm could begin its active planning in mid-February.

Renovating the depot and creating the bus transit center is also part of a larger effort to revitalize the near north side neighborhood, an effort being led by the City Development Department and the Racine Housing and Neighborhood Partnership Inc.

The city has purchased other buildings surrounding the depot site that are slated for demolition, said Brian O'Connell, city development director.

"We really expect to see a big difference in the next few years at the western end of Sante St. and the railroad tracks," O'Connell said.

A Save-a-Lot grocery store and a McDonald's Restaurant are slated to open near the depot in the fall, O'Connell said.

O'Connell pointed to other developments in the area - renovation of the former Western Publishing site for Next Generation Now, a day care center, and the 21st Century Preparatory School, and the renovated Garfield Elementary School, which will open in the fall.

The transit hub provides a great accompaniment for the other development in the area, he said.

"I think it's a great gateway for people in the area and for Racine as a whole," O'Connell said.

As the Racine Housing and Neighborhood Partnership moves its revitalization efforts from the W. 6th St. area to the near north side neighborhood, renovation of the train depot is an exciting prospect, said Mary Beth Addich, program director.

"From an organizational perspective, it's really exciting, not only for the message it sends to the neighborhood as people see that kind of renovation of the depot, but also for the economic opportunity to come if commuter rail becomes a reality," she said.
Give commuter rail a look

True visionaries resist the temptation to see only what's in front of them and force themselves instead to squint hard and try to peer into the future. Advocates of commuter rail have been doing exactly that. They realize that in the near future, people in densely populated areas will likely need to rely on both roads and rail to get around efficiently.

As a result, they're wisely advocating an extension of Chicago's Metra commuter trains from Kenosha to Racine and Milwaukee. Fortunately, the idea was supported last month by an advisory committee of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

Specifically, the SEWRPC panel recommended a medium-level commuter rail service at a cost of $152.1 million. The feds would pay for 80% of construction costs and about $5 million of the annual $15.4 million in net operating costs. The state would pay for $10.4 million in operating expenses.

Fares would contribute another 15% to 17% in revenue.

The service would provide about 4,100 weekday rides each week or about 1.1 million trips a year from Kenosha to Milwaukee with stops in Cudahy, South Milwaukee, Oak Creek, the Town of Caledonia and the Town of Somers. (Commuter rail relies on full-size trains running on existing freight rail tracks between a major city and its distant suburbs.)

Many rail cynics routinely argue that no matter what form it takes, rail will never work here. They need a remedial history course. It wasn't all that long ago when commuter rail played a big role in interurban transportation in southeastern Wisconsin. But we also understand, as a recent poll by the National Association of Realtors confirmed, that in order to attract riders, modern commuter rail must be convenient, safe and accessible.

One of the continuing myths about rail is that the people who embrace it are free-spending dreamers. Not true. Among the many companies solidly behind this project are S.C. Johnson & Son Inc., Miller Brewing Co., We Energies, CNH Global and Super Steel Corp. What they and area business organizations — including the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, the Greater Milwaukee Association of Realtors and the Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce, realize is that commuter rail will stimulate economic development by making it easier for workers to get to their jobs and for visitors and other patrons to get to their destinations.

The advisory committee suggests the state take a lead role in this endeavor. That's appropriate since this state spends only $15 per resident on transit for every $100 spent on highways, far less than Illinois. But there is a hitch — money; the state doesn't have nearly enough right now, for transportation or anything else. But state officials must not use that as an excuse to crawl into a fiscal bunker and forget about the future. Being a visionary, after all, also means thinking boldly.

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
January 6, 2003
With Doyle as conductor, trains may get less push

 Incoming administration has shown mild support for Amtrak, commuter rail

By LARRY SANDLER
lsandler@journalsentinel.com

If you think passenger trains are a liberal idea, consider this: The outlook for passenger rail seemed far brighter under former Republican Gov. Tommy G. Thompson than under Democratic Governor-elect Jim Doyle.

Where Thompson was a tireless cheerleader for Amtrak, Doyle and his nominee for transportation secretary, Frank Busalacchi, have been lukewarm in their support for maintaining and expanding Amtrak service and adding commuter rail lines.

In reality, support for Amtrak and commuter rail has long crossed party and ideological lines. And the differences between the Thompson and Doyle administrations have less to do with political philosophy than with financial realities and personal preferences.

Thompson loves trains. He served two stints on the Amtrak board and clung to his chairmanship for four months after being named U.S. health and human services secretary, until yielding to White House pressure to give up his seat to Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta.

Under Thompson, the state boosted its aid to Amtrak’s Milwaukee-to-Chicago Hiawatha line, bought the downtown Milwaukee train station, led the drive for a Midwestern high-speed rail system, started planning a second Milwaukee depot at Mitchell International Airport and temporarily extended Amtrak service to the western suburbs as a test of demand for commuter rail.

(Former Democratic Gov.) Tony Earl was no friend of the rail passenger service. . . .

Tommy Thompson was probably our biggest champion,” said Dave Rasmussen, spokesman for the Wisconsin Association of Railroad Passengers and a Democrat.

Doyle and Thompson’s GOP successor, outgoing Gov. Scott McCallum, have said they support passenger rail, but without Thompson’s passion. And after Doyle nominated Busalacchi, Milwaukee Mayor John O. Norquist and the Sierra Club denounced them for backing bigger freeways over expanding public transit.

But Doyle has stressed that his top priority is plunging a 2003-05 state deficit of $2.5 billion to $4.3 billion without breaking his campaign promise not to raise taxes. Adding new programs — and perhaps even keeping current service — may not fit into that goal.

“Trains are a good idea, but where is the money going to come from?” Busalacchi said shortly after his nomination.

However, Pete Beitzel, vice president of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, and Dave Trowbridge, a Madison transportation planner, point out that commuter rail projects in southeastern Wisconsin and Dane County won’t need major state investments for several years. By then, Beitzel said, the state should be in better shape.

Funding already is in place to remodel the downtown Milwaukee depot and replace Amtrak’s Sturtevant depot, and supporters hope to win federal money for the airport station as well, said Randy Wade, a state rail planner.

Rasmussen, Wade and commuter rail backers said they hoped Doyle and Busalacchi would change their minds as they learn more about the benefits of passenger rail in easing traffic and stimulating development.

Nationally, Amtrak faces an uncertain fate. Congress is debating whether it should be restructured. A leading Amtrak critic, Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), will play a major role in that debate as Senate Commerce Committee chairman. And Mineta and President Bush are asking states to pick up some costs now paid by the federal government.

WISCONSIN RAIL PROJECTS

AMTRAK SERVICE

Current lines: Outgoing state Department of Transportation officials have proposed a 2003-05 budget that would freeze Wisconsin’s Hiawatha contribution at $4 million a year. It’s not clear if that would reduce or kill Hiawatha service.

Wisconsin’s other Amtrak route, the Empire Builder, from Chicago to the Pacific Northwest, receives no state support.

Airport station: Congress has appropriated $2.5 million to build an Amtrak station at Mitchell International Airport, and Sen. Herb Kohl (D-Wis.) has won committee support for another $5 million. If the rest of Congress agrees, construction could start in 2003, and the depot could open in 2004, said Randy Wade, a state rail planner.

Downtown station: Work is to begin in 2003 on remodelling the downtown Amtrak station, with $2.5 million in state and federal money and $1.4 million in private money, Wade said. After the first phase ends in 2004, the depot could handle existing Amtrak and intercity bus service, plus any future high-speed or commuter trains.

Sturtevant station: Wade said he expects work to start in 2003 on replacing the aging Sturtevant station. Issues raised by Canadian Pacific Railway, which owns the tracks, have delayed the project and boosted its cost from $1.3 million to $2.1 million in federal and village money.

High-speed rail: Former Gov. Tommy G. Thompson had hoped a 110-mph Amtrak line from Milwaukee to Madison would open in 2003. But that $176 million project has stalled as state officials seek federal aid for most of the costs. Also on hold is the rest of the $4.1 billion Midwest Regional Rail Initiative, a nine-state system of fast, frequent trains.

COMMUTER RAIL STUDIES

Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee: Public hearings are likely early in 2003 on extending Chicago’s Metra commuter trains from Kenosha to Racine and Milwaukee, at a cost of $152.1 million. A study committee recommended the 33-mile line, with additional stops at Cudahy, South Milwaukee, Oak Creek, the Town of Caledonia and the Town of Somers.

Dane County: The Madison Common Council and the Dane County Board could vote next month on whether to start preliminary engineering on a $198.6 million commuter rail line. A study committee recommended the 11-mile line from Middleton through the isthmus to the East Towne shopping center, backed by a $63.4 million countywide express bus network.

Rock County: State Sen. Judy Robson (D-Beitola) is seeking state and Rock County support for a detailed study of extending Metra from Harvard, Ill., to Clinton, in Rock County, and Sharon, in Walworth County. A preliminary study found that it would be feasible to extend the line for $18.9 million.
Commuter rail makes sense for Milwaukee

On the subject of whether the Metra commuter rail line should be extended from Kenosha into Milwaukee, let us point out that this proposal is not light rail. It's also not some liberal, namby-pamby "green" effort to steal Wisconsinites' personal vehicles from our motorists' clenched grips.

Taking the train would be purely voluntary, and building the infrastructure relatively inexpensive. The concept has the support of business groups, including the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, the Greater Milwaukee Association of Realtors and Racine Area Manufacturers & Commerce. Major employers including Miller Brewing, CNH, We Energies, GE Medical Systems and S.C. Johnson are on board. It's also backed by Republican Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker.

So, yes, we join that chorus to support the concept of commuter rail.

It would provide the Milwaukee area with a more direct transportation link to our big economic brother to the south, Chicago, and several points in between. It would spur development in Racine County and southern Milwaukee County. It would add another element to the "transportation hub" at the planned upgrade of the Milwaukee Amtrak station. It would give employers another bargaining chip in recruiting professional-level staff to the Milwaukee area because spouses of those professionals could work anywhere with access to the Metra line.

The commuter rail issue is merging into the public's consciousness because an advisory committee to the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission issued its recommendations in mid-December. The committee proposes seeking federal funding to cover 80 percent of the estimated $152 million cost to improve the Union Pacific freight tracks and build enough trains to carry seven round trips per weekday. The next step will be public hearings on the study and final recommendations.

Then comes the difficult part: determining local and state funding sources and amounts. After accounting for income from fares, the Kenosha-to-Milwaukee extension will cost an estimated $1.5 million per year to run.

It's a small price to pay for the benefits derived, and the state of Wisconsin, financially strapped as it is, should view this as a project with regional — not just local — benefits.

Did we mention it's not light rail?
Panel endorses $152 million plan to extend rail service through area

By Mark Dudzik
STAFF WRITER

Some $152 million should be spent by the federal and state government to bring commuter train service from Chicago through Racine County and into Milwaukee, according to an advisory panel.

Meeting last week at the Racine County complex in Ives Grove, the panel endorsed an extension of the Metra rail service into the southeastern Wisconsin area.

The $152 million needed to extend the service north from the City of Kenosha will, according to the panel, buy the area a medium level of service.

The public is expected to get a chance to weigh into on the proposal in February, when public hearings will be scheduled to discuss the panel's recommendation.

Under the proposal, ridership fares will cover only 17 percent of the total cost of the Metra line, which is projected at $15.4 million a year.

Of the remaining balance, the Federal government is expected to cover around $5 million of that cost with the state picking up the additional charges not covered by the ridership.

County Executive Jean Jacobson, who has been following the issue but has not had a chance to view the recent recommendation, views the proposed commuter rail system as beneficial to the county.

"It's one of those issues that there's no doubt that it would be good for the community," she said. "Most of the benefits — certainly without a doubt — would be to the eastern end of the county.

"But it would provide an opportunity to I-94 and it would provide an opportunity to people to come to Racine County to work and for residents of our county to work in other counties."

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) estimates that under the medium level system recommended, a total of around 1.1 million trips annually would be made on the route from Chicago to the three-county area.

Passengers would be able to catch the train at a total of five stops, with the Town of Caledonia being the closest depot for western Racine County residents.

While the theory of a high-speed rail system sounds feasible on paper, the challenge proponents of the system face is acquiring the necessary endorsement from state officials needed to approve the expenditure.

Given the impending billion-dollar budget crunch which the state will be forced to confront next year, allocating funds for a service which would be used for only a minority of Wisconsin residents who live here but work in Illinois could prove to be a tough sell.

Rather than requiring the construction of new rail lines, the Metra system currently operates on existing freight rails.

Burlington, Standard Press
December 19, 2002
Our Perspective

Keep churning ahead on commuter rail plan

The proposal to extend commuter rail service to link Chicago, Racine and Milwaukee took an important step last week when it won the formal endorsement of an advisory panel of elected officials, businesspeople and municipal government staff.

But the very next day Governor-elect Jim Doyle, who was in town to solicit ideas for cutting the state's expenditures and trying to balance a budget weighted heavily with a $2.6 billion deficit, was a little less receptive to the notion of state help.

"Let's just be very practical right now," said Doyle. "In the next four or five months I've got to balance a budget and there is not a lot of money around for these sorts of things."

We commiserate with the governor-elect and his attempts to deal with the state's budget woes.

And we appreciate his lip service to the rail link — calling it "very important" and saying the state should plan for it.

We would submit as well that an extended commuter rail line running up the lakeshore from Chicago to Milwaukee is vital to the long-term economic interests of our region; that extending service will not grow cheaper over time; and that — America's longstanding love affair with the automobile notwithstanding — southeastern Wisconsin and the Chicago area are in dire need of a more balanced transportation system.

Wisconsin's Interstate highway corridor here has grown busier and busier in the past decade and is only a step or two behind the jammed highways and ever-extended drive times in the Chicago area. That pressure on our transportation systems will not abate in the years ahead and we need to move ahead now to deal with it.

The proposal advanced by the advisory panel last week is not the high-end model. It calls for extending the Metra run north from Kenosha with seven trains per day in each direction. The cost to establish service is estimated at $152 million with operating costs of about $13.8 million per year.

The proposal now goes to public hearing in February and must also be approved by municipal and county governments.

Many of those dollars — up to 80 percent — are expected to come from the federal government, which would also subsidize about a third of the annual operating costs. Fares would pay for perhaps 15 to 17 percent of the operating costs, according to the report.

That still leaves some financial gaps — including just how much the state would be willing (and able) to add to the pot. Those issues will no doubt take considerable discussion.

And while the state is grappling with a deficit right now, the planning for commuter rail extension will take time and actual service would not commence for four to seven years so the planning and public approval process should move ahead at a steady pace.

The price tag is not a small one, to be sure, but when we look at that we should put it in perspective by looking at costs of alternatives.

Widening or expanding our interstate system would be one such option — and that is not cheap either. Milwaukee is currently struggling with a deteriorating Marquette interchange, the crossroads of the heart of the city, and the price tag for rebuilding that is estimated at $1.5 billion — a cost ten times that of extending commuter rail.

A balanced transportation system with commuter rail would give southeastern Wisconsin residents better transit options, enhance opportunities for business within the metro areas and would in time likely extend to link Madison and Green Bay as well.
Commuter rail extension backed

Panel supports expanding service to Milwaukee, Racine

By JENNIE TUNKERZC
jtunkierz@journalsentinel.com

Last Updated: Dec. 14, 2002

Ives Grove - Several Racine County leaders are hopeful that a recommendation to expand Chicago's commuter rail service from Kenosha to Racine and Milwaukee at a cost of $152.1 million will become a reality.

An advisory panel, which includes Racine County representatives, made the recommendation Wednesday after reviewing the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's commuter rail study during a meeting at the county's Ives Grove Office Complex.

The state should be the lead agency in planning for the extension, and state and federal money should pay for the operating costs, the panel recommended at the meeting.

Public hearings on the commuter rail study are expected to begin in February.

The panel is recommending a medium level of commuter rail service, at $152.1 million, which would include vehicles, stations, track and signals, storage and servicing. High-level service would cost $224.8 million, the study states.

Commuter railroads such as Metra run full-size trains on existing freight rail tracks between a major city and its suburbs.

Joseph Clement, Town of Mount Pleasant chairman, who serves on the advisory committee, said a high level of service should be endorsed, but other panel members supported a more conservative approach. The panel would send its recommendation if it hears from the public that a greater service level is preferred, SEWRPC officials said.

Clement said after the meeting that he understands the committee's recommendation is based on the idea that it might be easier to get the money for the medium service level, "but the higher you reach, if you fall a little bit short, it's not so bad. If you start in the middle, you might end up at the bottom," he said.

Clement sees commuter rail as a critical link for building Racine County's economy.

"People need to move much more freely in this corridor," he said. "We only have one option now and that's the automobile. I don't think a large portion of the community is interested or willing in using a bus service. I think they are more apt to use a train."

Other Racine County officials serving on the panel urged that the process to approve a commuter rail service extension move more quickly.

Racine Mayor James Smith told other committee members that the discussions already had dragged on for too long.

Federal money would pay for 80% of construction costs and about $5 million of the net operating costs, estimated at $15.4 million a year. The state would pay $10.4 million for net operating costs. Farles would cover 13% to 17% of operating costs, the study projected.

Under a medium-service scenario, the rail service would provide about 4,100 weekday rides during the week, or 1,14 million trips a year, SEWRPC estimates. A high level of service would provide up to 5,100 weekday trips, or 1.4 million trips a year.

 Stops would include Cutaby, South Milwaukee, Oak Creek, the Town of Galewood and the Town of Somers, in addition to Racine and Milwaukee.

Panel member Jack Schueller, St. Francis city engineer, voted against the recommendation. Schueller said he was not prepared to cast a vote on behalf of his community without hearing from the community first.

State Department of Transportation officials serving on the panel - Kenneth Leonard and Edward Frieda - abstained from the vote. The new state administration has not weighed in on the study.

Rosemary Potter, Director of Community Outreach for the Southeastern Wisconsin Coalition for Transit Now, said she was pleased that the committee supported commuter rail.

"Commuter rail is the best alternative, and the economic benefits outweigh the costs," Potter said. "Commuter rail is an essential investment in our local and regional economies."

The advisory committee will meet at 10 a.m. Jan. 15 in Ives Grove to review a summary of the SEWRPC report and set the times and dates for public hearings.

JSOnline Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
December 15, 2002
State funding for Metra likely: Doyle expansion not

KENOSHA NEWS STAFF

RACINE — The idea of connecting Chicago to Milwaukee with an expanded Metra commuter rail line has merits, but state funding for the estimated $152.1 million project can’t be considered for the time being because of the state’s budget crunch, Gov.-elect James Doyle said Thursday.

“I am not in a position where we are going to be looking around for huge expenditures,” Doyle said outside a public meeting about ways to make up a projected $4.3 billion state budget shortfall. “The money isn’t there right now.”

On Wednesday, a Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission advisory committee recommended extending Metra from Kenosha to Milwaukee.

The recommendation included wording that the state would implement the expansion and help fund it, including potentially $10.4 million of its $15.4 million annual operating costs. Representatives from local governments in Kenosha, Racine and Milwaukee counties have said they are against local funding for the rail system.

“It’s a very important thing, and if we lived in a perfect world and we just had a whole lot of money right now it’s something we ought to be thinking about,” Doyle said. “Hopefully, maybe down the road, when our economic circumstances are better, linking Chicago and Milwaukee through this corridor would be very helpful to the economy of Wisconsin.

“There are further future plans about how you do that as a triangle with Milwaukee-Madison-Chicago, how you link to the Twin Cities. But let’s just be very practical right now. In the next four or five months, I’ve got to balance a budget, and there is not a lot of money around for these sorts of things.”

Doyle was also asked Thursday about a Wisconsin Policy Research Institute report that recommended charging tolls to use the Marquette Interchange in downtown Milwaukee as a way to fund the interchange’s reconstruction.

“I have driven on those Illinois toll roads too long,” Doyle said. “I don’t want any toll roads in Wisconsin. Imagine going through the Marquette Interchange ... from your family on the north side of Milwaukee to the south side, and you’ve got to pay whatever the toll is. We’re going to have to find other ways to finance it.”

Panel calls for Metra service to Milwaukee

The Associated Press

December 12, 2002, 1:59 PM CST

IVES GROVE, Wis. — Chicago’s Metra commuter rail service should be extended from Kenosha to Racine and Milwaukee at a cost of $152.1 million, an advisory panel said.

The state should be the lead agency in planning for the expansion, and state and federal money should pay for the operating costs, the panel recommended after reviewing the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission’s commuter rail study during a Wednesday meeting in Racine County.

Public hearings on the planning agency’s commuter rail study are expected to begin in February.

The panel is recommending a medium level of commuter rail service, which would include vehicles, stations, track and signals, storage and servicing. High-level service would cost $224.8 million, the report states.

Commuter railroads such as Metra run full-size trains on existing freight rail tracks between a major city and its distant suburbs. (Currently, Metra’s Union Pacific North line from downtown Chicago to Kenosha is the agency’s northernmost line, and the only one to extend into Wisconsin.)

Federal money would pay for 80 percent of construction costs and about $5 million of the net operating costs, estimated to be $15.4 million a year, according to the study.

The state would pay $10.4 million for net operating costs. Fares would cover 15 percent to 17 percent of operating costs, the study projected.

Under a medium-service scenario, the rail service would provide about 4,100 weekday rides, or 1.14 million trips a year, SWPRC estimates. A high level of service would provide up to 5,100 weekday trips, or 1.4 million trips a year.

Stops would include Cudahy, South Milwaukee, Oak Creek, the Town of Caledonia and the Town of Somers.

The new state administration has not weighed in on the study, and a message left for Gov.-elect Jim Doyle at his office early Thursday was not immediately returned.

But Doyle said during the campaign he was concerned about spending on new services.
Panel puts rail extension to Milwaukee back on track

Regional committee votes to bring plans to public hearings

KENOSHA NEWS
December 12, 2002

KENOSHA NEWS STAFF

STORYTELLER — Metra rail should be extended from Kenosha to Milwaukee, and the state government should work to make it happen, according to a preliminary recommendation three years in the making by a Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission committee.

The Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor transit study advisory committee voted Wednesday to bring the proposal — estimated to cost $125.1 million to build and another $16.4 million per year to operate — to the public at a series of hearings, likely in February.

From there, the committee will craft a final recommendation that it will pass on to SEWRPC and eventually to county and municipal governments in the three counties.

"The train is back on the track," said Phil Evenson, executive director of SEWRPC.

The recommendation was made after a 90-minute presentation at the Ivy Grove Office Complex outlined three options for expanding transit service between Kenosha and Milwaukee.

The committee considered:

■ Commuter bus service. It was by far the cheapest of the three options at $16.4 million to start and $3.4 million to operate, but also offered the slowest commute, among other drawbacks.

■ A combination of commuter bus and rail service. It would extend Metra, which currently ends in Kenosha, to Racine and rely on bus service between Racine and Milwaukee. Startup costs ranged from $145.3 million to $129.3 million, with annual operating costs ranging from $13.7 million to $10.3 million.

■ Commuter rail only. It would extend Metra's service from downtown Milwaukee with stops in between. Like the commuter bus/rail combination, two alternatives were presented for the rail possibility: high-level and medium-level service. The committee voted to recommend the medium-level service.

Under that plan, rail service would be offered mostly during peak periods, with three trains heading north and south each weekday morning and afternoon. During the mid-day period, there would be one train heading in each direction, meaning that seven trains would operate each weekday through Friday. On weekends and holidays, three trains would run in each direction for a total of six.

All trains would make all planned stops between Kenosha and downtown Milwaukee: Somers, Racine, Caledonia, Oak Creek, South Milwaukee, and Grafton.

In choosing the medium-level rail plan, the committee also recommended that the state implement the service with no funding from local governments. Other options included having a multi-government cooperative or regional transit authority oversee the rail extension.

Most of the funding would likely be provided by the federal government. Under one scenario presented for medium-level service, various federal agencies would kick in 80 percent of the initial start-up cost, with $76 million of the $125.1 million necessary coming from the Federal Transportation Administration. State and local governments would then be on the hook for 20 percent, or about $25 million. Operating costs would be taken up mostly by the state, according to one proposal that had the state government responsible for $30.6 million of the $125.1 million necessary to keep up the rail line.

While at Wednesday's advisory committee meeting made it clear that no local funding would or should be provided for the project, Caledonia Town Chairwoman Susan Greenfield said all funding options must be considered, including local dollars.

"That must be on the table," she said.

Under past leadership in Madison, transit projects have required local matching funds, said Kenneth Leonard, director of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Bureau of Planning and a member of the transit study committee.

"But I am not going to make any assumptions," Leonard said. "The new administration may feel that this is a high enough state priority (to fund it without local money). That is still something that is going to have to be debated by the public and obviously the new governor and his legislature."

Leonard said he asked Gov. elect Jim Doyle to take a look at his transit project funding policy as part of his transition to power.

A Doyle spokesman did not return a phone call seeking comment Wednesday.

Committee members stressed that such decisions would be hashed out at the local government level. The public hearings will also be helpful in gauging support for the plan and how it will be paid for.

Fred Patrie, chairman of the committee and Kenosha County's public works director, said he hopes the committee can have a final recommendation for SEWRPC in March or April. That recommendation would be used to seek federal funding for the project if local governments sign off on it.

Patrie is a strong supporter of the rail concept.

County Executive Allan Kohl and Mayor John Antaramian have also backed the project, along with a number of politicians, educational and business leaders from Kenosha, Racine and Milwaukee counties.

Patrie said he is just happy the project is moving along. Delays in receiving an adequate report from a consultant played a role in a nearly 10-month gap between meetings of the advisory committee.

"I am not sure I believed we would be at this point by Dec. 11, 2002," Patrie said.

Said Racine Mayor James Smith: "It's been a long journey."

And the journey is just beginning. It will likely be five years or more before any Metra trains are running north of Kenosha, if at all, officials have said.

The project has been discussed on and off for more than a decade.

"We want to move forward," Greenfield said. "I don't want to study this thing to death."

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Costly alternative

Extending Metra commuter rail service between Kenosha and Milwaukee will cost $125.1 million, and that's just to build the system as recommended by a Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission committee on Wednesday.

Here is a closer look at those costs.

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<td>$4 million</td>
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<td>Total: $125.1 million</td>
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Source: Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Transit Study Advisory Committee

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C-44
Advisory group says yes to commuter rail for area

BY DAVID STEINKHAUS
Journal Times

IVES GROVE — An advisory committee comprised of elected officials, business representatives, and municipal government's staff on Wednesday recommended that commuter rail be developed to link Chicago, Racine and Milwaukee.

The recommendation is only preliminary. Next will be a series of public hearings after the first of the new year. Approval of the group's final recommendation will be up to municipal governments.

In recommending commuter rail, the committee rejected two other options: a commuter service using only buses, and a combination service in which commuters would ride buses between Milwaukee and Racine, where they would transfer to or from trains.

A bus-only system would have only one advantage, and that is low cost, said Ron Yunker, deputy director of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. Under every other criterion — speed, ease of use, comfort, and reliability — trains have the advantage, he said.

"In my mind, the only alternative that really meets all of the objectives of the study is the full commuter rail service," said Jeffrey Mantor, chief planning development engineer for the city of Milwaukee.

The medium level of rail service suggested by the committee would mean seven trains per day in each direction. The cost to establish this service would be about $152 million, and the annual operating cost would be about $41.6 million, according to an analysis prepared by a consultant for SEWRPC.

Joe Clementi, chairman of the Mount Pleasant Town Board, questioned whether the medium level would be enough. "Why not look at a higher level of service," he said. "It's never going to get any cheaper."

The higher level would be 13 trains in each direction per day. Start-up cost would be about $225 million, and annual operating costs would be about $87 million.

Ridership projects from SEWRPC's consultant, projections based on other systems in the nation, call for 4,100 trips daily under the medium service. Numbers from the 2000 census show that only 46 people in Caldonia, Mount Pleasant and Racine report-taking a train to work. The census didn't differentiate between people who ride Metra from Kenosha and those who ride Amtrak from Sturtevant.

The increase in ridership, Yunker said, will come from greatly increased service. There is no way now for people to ride between Milwaukee suburbs and Chicago suburbs or from Racine to Chicago's northern suburbs, he said.

"Failing for the service is another question," SEWRPC staff said there are several options, most of which rely heavily on federal funds.

"From a local perspective, we would like not to have to contribute," said Susan Greenfield, chair of the Caldonia Town Board and a member of the committee.

"I want to make it clear that Milwaukee County opposes any local cost," said Ronald Rutkowski, planning and transit director for Milwaukee County and another committee member.

Perhaps it was better to leave those options open because one of the quickest ways to squash the idea is to argue about funding, said Racine Mayor Jim Smith, who serves on the advisory committee.

Commuter rail is necessary to keep Racine County prosperous, committee members said. Its presence could stop talented people from leaving and enable talented people to come to Racine County and work. Area businesses, including SC Johnson, are backing the proposal for commuter rail.

"We need to look at ourselves as a corridor, an economic development corridor," said Roger Caron, president of Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce and a member of the advisory committee.

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<td>Pleasant Prairie village</td>
<td>8,016</td>
<td>83.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloomfield town</td>
<td>2,704</td>
<td>82.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salem town</td>
<td>4,964</td>
<td>86.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caldonia town</td>
<td>12,285</td>
<td>88.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Milwaukee village</td>
<td>2,127</td>
<td>77.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Pleasant town</td>
<td>11,375</td>
<td>87.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muskego city</td>
<td>119,707</td>
<td>65.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin-on-Geneva Lake village</td>
<td>931</td>
<td>73.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racine city</td>
<td>35,175</td>
<td>70.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grafton City village</td>
<td>981</td>
<td>82.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukwonago Lake village</td>
<td>1,573</td>
<td>87.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich Mountain town</td>
<td>4,122</td>
<td>80.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beckett town</td>
<td>1,533</td>
<td>85.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenfield city</td>
<td>16,733</td>
<td>86.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linn town</td>
<td>1,038</td>
<td>76.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elm Grove village</td>
<td>2,625</td>
<td>84.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twin Lakes Village</td>
<td>2,579</td>
<td>87.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waukesha city</td>
<td>24,200</td>
<td>84.65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source (both graphics): U.S. Census Bureau
Commuter rail extension supported

Panel backs running
Chicago service past
Kenosha to Milwaukee

By JEROME TURGEON
jturegon@journalsentinel.com

Ives Grove — Chicago’s commuter rail service should be extended from Kenosha to Racine and Milwaukee at a cost of $135.1 million, an advisory panel recommended Wednesday.

The state should be the lead agency in planning for the expansion, and state and federal money should pay for the operating costs, the panel recommended after reviewing the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission’s commuter rail study during a meeting in Racine County.

Public hearings on the planning agency’s commuter rail study are expected to begin in February.

The panel is recommending a medium level of commuter rail service, at $116.1 million, which would include vehicles, stations, track and signals, storage and servicing. High-level service would cost $124.3 million, the report states.

Commuter railroads such as Metra run full-size trains on existing freight rail tracks between major cities and its distant suburbs.

Joseph Cisamici, Town of Mount Pleasant chairman, said the panel should recommend a high level of service, but other panel members supported a more conservative approach. The panel could amend its recommendation if it hears from the public that a greater service level is preferred, SEWRPC officials said.

Federal money would pay for 85% of construction costs and about 25% of the net operating costs, estimated to be $10.4 million a year. The state would pay $10.4 million for net operating costs. Fares would cover 18% to 17% of operating costs, the study projected.

Under a medium-service scenario, the rail service would provide about 4,100 weekday rides during the week, or 1.4 million trips a year, SEWRPC estimates. A high level of service would provide up to 6,500 weekday trips, or 2.4 million trips a year.

Stops would include Cudahy, South Milwaukee, Oak Creek, the Town of Oak Creek and the Town of Somers.

Panel member Jack Schultz, St. Francis city engineer, voted against the recommendation. Schultz said he was not prepared to cast a vote on behalf of his community without hearing from the community first.

State Department of Transportation officials serving on the panel — Kenneth Leonard and Edward Priore — abstained from the vote. The new state administration has not weighed in on the study, and Governor-elect Jim Doyle could not be reached for comment Wednesday. Doyle said during the campaign he was concerned about spending on new services.

Rosemary Potter, director of community outreach for the Southeastern Wisconsin Coalition for Transit Now, said she was pleased the committee supported commuter rail.

“Commuter rail is the best alternative, and the economic benefits outweigh the costs,” Potter said. “Commuter rail is an essential investment in our local and regional economies.”

The advisory committee will meet at 10 a.m. Jan. 15 in Ives Grove to review a summary of the SEWRPC report and set the times and dates for public hearings.

Passengers leave a Metra train from Chicago after it arrives Wednesday in Kenosha. An advisory panel has recommended that the service be extended to Racine and Milwaukee at a cost of $135.1 million.
Appendix D

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PUBLIC MEETINGS AND HEARINGS SCHEDULED FOR KENOSHA-RACINE-
 MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY

Citizens are invited to a series of public informational meetings and hearings to learn more about, and to comment on, the findings, conclusions and preliminary recommendations of the Kenosha-Racine-
Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study. The study is an evaluation of various rail and commuter bus alternatives connecting the Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee areas to each other, and to southeastern Wisconsin and Chicago.

The public informational meetings and hearings are scheduled as follows:

Wednesday, April 23, 2003
Kenosha Gateway Technical College-Mariagrazia Auditorium
3330 36th Avenue
Kenosha, WI

Thursday, April 24, 2003
Douglas County Civic Center-Harbor Lights Room
100 E. Michigan Street
Milwaukee, WI

Wednesday, April 29, 2003
Racine Galesville Technical College-Great Lakes Room, Racine Building
964 Pennington Drive
Racine, WI

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The preliminary recommendation of the Advisory Committee is to implement for commuter rail alternative. The Advisory Committee concluded that the potential local and economic development impacts which are unique to commuter rail are significant and outweigh its associated costs. In addition, commuter rail would attract more ridership and efficiently serve any regional needs, and would provide a superior and more attractive level of service. The State of Wisconsin is recommended to take responsibility for funding and implementation.

The Advisory Committee invites comments and feedback about the alternatives and the preliminary recommendations.

[Note: Attached to this news release is a copy of the most recent study newsletter. The newsletter and other study materials are also available on the study website which can be found at www.swrpa.org/ weres/.

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Thursday, May 1, 2003
Commuter City Hall-Council Chambers
500 E. Lake Drive
Chilton, WI

The first part of this meeting will be an "open house" format from 6:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., and will provide an opportunity to meet one-on-one or in small groups with study staff to ask questions and provide feedback and input on the study, particularly concerning the preliminary recommendations. A presentation will be made by study staff at 6:30 p.m., followed by a public hearing providing a forum for public comments in "open house" format. Citizens may also submit written comments by Friday May 16, 2003, to be included in the Study Record of Public Comments. To provide written comments on the study, and specifically the preliminary recommendations, citizens should contact:

Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
PO Box 1807
W239 N1812 Rockwood Drive
Waukesha, Wisconsin 53186-1807
Phone: 262-547-6721 Fax: 262-547-5103
E-mail: info@swrpa.org

The Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study is being conducted by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission at the request of the Counties and Counties of Kenosha, Racine and Milwaukee and under the guidance of an Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee is comprised of elected and appointed local officials, representatives of federal and state departments of transportation, the business community, and the railroads. The study represents the next step following a recently completed feasibility study of the potential for commuter rail service in the corridor.

The commuter rail and bus alternatives examined under this study would provide an improved limited stop service connecting the three cities of the corridor to each other and to the Chicago and Milwaukee central business districts. The regional transportation plan for Southeastern Wisconsin recommends the improvement and expansion of both public transit and highway system capacity to address existing and future traffic volumes and congestion. The study was undertaken to examine ways to provide more and

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News Release No. 03-04
April 5, 2003
Page 3
Introduction

This newsletter provides a summary of findings and conclusions for the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Study. The study is an evaluation of commuter rail and commuter bus alternatives connecting the Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee areas to each other, and to northeastern Illinois and Chicago. The purpose of this study is to compare commuter bus and commuter rail alternatives, consider funding and implementation options, and provide information to the public and local elected officials so that they may determine whether or not to pursue implementation of improved commuter rail or commuter bus service.

The existing public transit service linking the Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee areas operates at least in part as a local transit service with local stops and low travel speeds while carrying passengers for long distances over the same streets and highways used by automobiles and trucks. The growing traffic congestion in the corridor increases travel times for public transit as well as automobiles. The year 2020 regional transportation plan for Southeastern Wisconsin recommends the improvement and expansion of highway system capacity and public transit services to reduce existing and future traffic congestion. The alternatives examined under this study would provide an improved limited stop service connecting the urban centers of the corridor to each other and to the Milwaukee and Chicago central business districts.

The study is being conducted by the Regional Planning Commission and is being guided by an Advisory Committee of elected and appointed local officials, business representatives, and transportation professionals from within the corridor. A series of public informational meetings and hearings have been scheduled to obtain comments from the public concerning the alternatives being considered and the preliminary recommendations of the Advisory Committee (see box below). Once the Advisory Committee has reviewed the comments and other feedback, it will prepare final recommendations for the counties and municipalities in the corridor and, as well, the State of Wisconsin.

Additional background and technical information for this study is available on the web site at www.sewrpc.org/wiseride.

Public Informational Meetings and Hearings

A series of four public informational meetings and hearings have been scheduled throughout the corridor on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. The list below indicates the dates and locations of the upcoming meetings. Please mark these dates on your calendar. The first part of each meeting will be an “open house” format between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. and will provide an opportunity to meet one-on-one or in small groups with study staff to ask questions and provide feedback and input on the study. A presentation will be made by study staff at 6:00 p.m., followed at 6:30 p.m. by a public hearing providing a forum for public comment in “town hall” format.

Wednesday, April 23, 2003
Kenosha Gateway Technical College—Madrigano Auditorium
3520 30th Avenue
Kenosha, WI

Thursday, April 24, 2003
Downtown Transit Center—Harbor Lights Room
909 E. Michigan Avenue
Milwaukee, WI

Wednesday, April 30, 2003
Racine Gateway Technical College—Great Lakes Room, Racine Building
901 Pershing Drive
Racine, WI

Thursday, May 1, 2003
Cudahy City Hall—Council Chambers
5050 S. Lake Drive
Cudahy, WI

Tell us what you think!

Do you think any of the alternatives should be developed? If so, which one? What do you like or dislike about any of the alternatives? What do you think about the preliminary recommendation? Attend one of the meetings and give us your feedback, or send us your comments.

Objectives for Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Corridor Transit Alternatives

1. Provide high quality public transportation service to improve mobility and to enhance the attractiveness of public transportation as a mode of choice.
2. Contribute to desirable economic and community development in the corridor and the Region.
3. Preserve, protect, and improve the natural and man-made environment.
4. Make investments in public transit that are economical, efficient, and effective.
5. Provide facilities that connect with, and are compatible with, existing and other planned public transportation systems, and rail freight and private vehicle travel.
Travel Markets to Be Served

The alternatives are intended to provide a complete all-day service much more comprehensive and serving many more kinds of trips than would a traditional weekday peak-period, peak-direction commuter service. Importantly, passengers going to and from work would be able to commute from any one station to any other station in either direction along the corridor.

In fact, a key enhancement is that all alternatives would permit travel in both directions along the entire corridor during weekday peak periods as well as during other times of the day. For example, passengers who live in Racine or Kenosha could use the service to commute to jobs in Milwaukee or Chicago. Passengers who live in Milwaukee or Chicago could commute to jobs in Racine and Kenosha. These passengers would have the option of returning home either during the midday or evening. This same kind of service would also be provided to and from other communities along the corridor, including Somers, Caledonia, Oak Creek, South Milwaukee, Cudahy, and St. Francis.

In addition, nonwork trips would be served as well. This would be trips for shopping, entertainment, recreation, sightseeing, medical and other personal appointments, and visiting friends and relatives. For example, passengers could use the service to travel to shows and festivals in Milwaukee and Chicago or to visit museums, events, and restaurants in Racine and Kenosha.

Ridership

The commuter rail alternative with a high level of service would attract the highest weekday ridership of about 5,100 trips (see table below). This is about 20 percent greater than the commuter bus alternative and about 16 percent greater than the combination rail and bus alternative. The commuter rail alternative would attract the most interregional—or “longer distance trips.” The estimated average trip length would be 27 miles under the commuter rail alternative, 19 miles under the combination rail and bus alternative, and 18 miles under the commuter bus alternative. Importantly the forecast annual passenger miles of travel for the commuter rail alternative would be almost twice as much as the other alternatives under a high level of service and about 50 percent greater than the other alternatives under a medium level of service (see box at right).

About 60 percent of the commuter rail ridership may be expected to be new transit trips diverted from the automobile, as compared to about 50 percent under the bus and combination alternatives.

How Much Ridership Could Be Expected?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Commuter Rail and Bus</th>
<th>Commuter Rail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Level of Service</td>
<td>Medium Level of Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Level of Service</td>
<td>Medium Level of Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2020 Weekday Ridership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergional trips</td>
<td>3,100</td>
<td>3,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,100</td>
<td>2,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,100</td>
<td>1,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,100</td>
<td>4,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,700</td>
<td>6,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4,100</td>
<td>4,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2020 Annual Ridership Weekday</td>
<td>1,045,000</td>
<td>1,134,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat. Sun. &amp; Holidays</td>
<td>93,000</td>
<td>101,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>84,000</td>
<td>94,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,300,000</td>
<td>1,160,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,400,000</td>
<td>93,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,416,000</td>
<td>1,139,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,138,000</td>
<td>1,235,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,028,000</td>
<td>1,416,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Annual Passenger-Miles of Travel

The commuter rail alternative would attract the most interregional—or longer-distance—trips and have the longest average trip length. The commuter bus alternative would attract the least long-distance trips and would have the shortest average trip length. As a result, the commuter rail alternative could generate up to twice the forecast annual passenger-miles of travel:

Commuter Bus Alternative
- 20.0 million

Commuter Rail Alternative
- 38.2 million under high level of service
- 30.8 million under medium level of service

Combination Rail and Bus Alternative
- 23.6 million under high level of service
- 19.7 million under medium level of service
Final Alternatives

At the start of this study, a large number of variations and options for commuter rail and commuter bus alternatives were considered. These were eventually narrowed down to three final alternatives: commuter bus, commuter rail, and combination rail and bus. Under the commuter rail and combination rail and bus alternatives, both high and medium levels of service were considered.

Commuter Rail Alternative
Extension of Existing Metra Service between Chicago and Kenosha
- 33-Mile Extension
- Operated as a single through route between Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha, and Chicago
Uses Existing Union Pacific and Canadian Pacific Rail Freight Lines
8 Stations
Service Provided in Both Directions Along Corridor During All Time Periods
Two Level of Service Options
- High Level of Service - 15 Trains in Each Direction
- Medium Level of Service - 7 Trains in Each Direction
High Level of Service
- 3-4 Trains Each Way During Peak Periods
- 4 Trains Each Way During Midday
- 4 Trains Each Way During Evening
Medium Level of Service
- 3 Trains Each Way During Peak Periods
- 1 Train Each Way During Midday
- No Service During Late Evening
Train Operation
- Most service provided by extension of existing Metra trains beyond either Kenosha or Waukegan
- Requires operation of 4 new trains over entire distance between Milwaukee and Chicago
New Shuttle Bus Services
- Dedicated shuttle service between Amtrak station and Milwaukee central business district
- Dedicated shuttle between General Mitchell International Airport and Cudahy-St. Francis station

Commuter Bus Alternative
Expansion and Improvement of Existing Bus Service Between Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee Parallel to Route of Commuter Rail Alternative
- Would connect with existing Metra trains at Kenosha
- Some service extended to Waukegan to connect with other Metra trains
Primarily uses STH 32, STH 31 and Lake Parkway in Wisconsin
11 Major Stations or Stops
Service Provided in Both Directions Along Corridor During All Time Periods
Passengers Transfer Between Buses and Trains at Kenosha or Waukegan
Schedule of Service Similar to Commuter Rail Alternative With High Level of Service
- Milwaukee-Racine Segment - 15 buses in each direction
- Racine-Kenosha Segment - 16 buses in each direction
- Kenosha-Waukegan Segment - 16 buses or trains in each direction when new buses are added to existing Metra trains
Bus Operation
- Service operated as 5 coordinated and overlapping routes centered on Racine and tailored to passenger markets
New Shuttle Bus Services
- Dedicated shuttle between General Mitchell International Airport and Oak Creek station

Combination Rail and Bus Alternative
Includes Elements of Both Commuter Rail and Commuter Bus Alternatives
- Racine to Kenosha - Commuter Rail Alternative
- Racine to Milwaukee - Commuter Bus Alternative
9 Major Stations or Stops
Service Provided in Both Directions Along Corridor During All Time Periods
Passengers Transfer Between Buses and Trains at Racine
Two Level of Service Options
- High Level - 15 Trains or Buses in Each Direction
- Medium Level - 7 Trains or Buses in Each Direction
Schedule of Service Similar to Commuter Rail and Commuter Bus Alternatives
Train Operation
- Most service provided by extension of existing Metra trains beyond either Kenosha or Waukegan
- Requires operation of 4 new trains over entire distance between Racine and Chicago
New Shuttle Bus Services
- Dedicated shuttle between General Mitchell International Airport and Oak Creek station

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Level of Service

Many level of service considerations would be the same or similar under all of the alternatives. These would include: area served, number of residents and jobs served, travel markets served, ability to travel in both directions in the corridor, amount and frequency of service, and service provided to minority and low-income populations. However, the commuter rail alternative would provide a superior level of service for many reasons.

The commuter rail alternative would provide the most direct “no-transfer” service.

- It would accommodate the most “no-transfer” trips between all stations in the corridor as well as between the corridor and northeastern Illinois.
- Except for only the shortest length trips, the commuter bus alternative will require a transfer at Racine, Kenosha or Waukegan and the combination rail and bus alternative will require a transfer at Racine.

The commuter rail alternative would provide the highest level of comfort, reliability, and overall attractiveness.

- It can provide the highest level of passenger comfort because of the large and spacious vehicles used.
- It can provide a smoother and more consistent ride due to the vehicles operating on a dedicated route alignment that doesn’t have interference from other traffic.
- Compared to automobiles or buses, commuter trains offer larger seats, more leg room, restrooms, space to walk around, and in general are more conducive to enabling passengers to use the travel time for a wide variety of other purposes while en route.

The commuter rail alternative would provide the highest level of reliability.

- Because it operates over a separate nonhighway right-of-way, it would not be affected by the unpredictable nature of rush-hour automobile and truck traffic.
- It would have priority over street and highway traffic at crossings and also over freight traffic on railroads.
- Inclement weather would normally have little impact, this being especially important during the winter season.

The commuter rail alternative would provide the highest average speeds and the shortest travel times for the majority of trips.

- Average speeds for station-to-station travel would be about 34 mph under the commuter rail alternative, about 28 mph under the combination rail and bus alternative, and about 20 mph under the commuter bus alternative.
- Some examples of travel times are listed in the below table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Trip</th>
<th>Station-to-Station Travel Time (in minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commuter Bus Alternative</td>
<td>Combination Rail and Bus Alternative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milwaukee-Racine</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cudahy/St. Francis-Kenosha</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oak Creek-Waukegan</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racine-Kenosha</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other attributes of commuter rail.

- It denotes a positive and cosmopolitan image for a metropolitan area.
- Its route simplicity, dedicated route, and larger stations and equipment make it more visible and therefore easier to use.
- The possible need for increased short-term and long-term passenger carrying capacity can best be provided by the commuter rail alternative.

For all of these reasons listed above, the commuter rail alternative was concluded to offer the best level of service in the corridor among the alternatives.

Capital Costs

The commuter bus alternative would have the lowest capital cost and the commuter rail alternative would have the highest capital cost (see table). The combination rail and bus alternative would have a capital cost similar to that of the commuter rail alternative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Cost of Alternatives (in millions of dollars)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commuter Bus/Baseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Level of Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehiciles</td>
<td>$5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stations</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track and Signals</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage and Servicing</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$19.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Operating Costs and Revenues

The commuter bus alternative would have the lowest annual operating cost and the commuter rail alternative would have the highest annual operating cost (see table). The combination rail and bus alternative would have an operating cost similar to that of the commuter rail alternative. The commuter rail alternative would provide the highest passenger revenue while the commuter bus alternative would provide the lowest annual revenue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Annual Cost of Alternatives (in millions of dollars)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commuter Bus/Baseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Level of Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Expense</td>
<td>$3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passenger Farebox Revenue</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Operating Expense</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Cost Recovery Rate</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Under these alternatives, some of the new commuter rail service would operate within northeastern Illinois and would attract and serve additional northeastern Illinois trips. The range of operating cost recovery rates reflects how much of the operating expenses for the new service operating within northeastern Illinois may be ultimately allocated to Wisconsin. The lower rate is based on all operating expenses being allocated to Wisconsin. The higher rate is based on some of the operating expenses being allocated to northeastern Illinois. The actual allocation of such costs would be determined through negotiation and agreement among appropriate parties. The operating costs of commuter rail will also be affected by the need to operate longer trains in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor than would otherwise be necessary to accommodate the peak loads along Chicago’s North Shore suburbs. For this reason, most peak period trains would likely be at least eight cars in length whereas the demand solely from the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor could be handled with a train no more than three or four cars in length.
Land Use Impacts Around Stations

It is widely accepted that commuter rail alternatives may be expected to have land use development and economic development impacts, while bus alternatives may not. Fixed-rail urban transit such as commuter rail represents a permanent long-term commitment to high quality transit service. Development investment in residential and office development, and attendant retail development can be linked to the investment in commuter rail. Bus service over existing streets and highways is flexible, and provides no long-term service commitment, and therefore, no link to investment in land development and redevelopment. The impact that the commuter rail alternative may be expected to have on land development and redevelopment would be expected to occur within the immediate vicinity—within one-fourth to one-half mile—of the commuter rail stations. A station may be expected to promote the development of retail businesses such as dry cleaners, drug stores, food stores, and restaurants that benefit from the additional market of the commuter rail passengers. Residential and office development also will have incentive, with attendant retail development, to locate in proximity to high quality, permanent rail transit service. Development immediately surrounding stations will further influence adjacent neighborhoods beyond the station area in a positive manner. The potential influence of commuter rail on land development and redevelopment is apparent from Metra’s experience in northeastern Illinois. Metra stations are considered a valuable community asset in that they are a physical and symbolic link to convenient, prompt, and affordable transportation, and are a community focus for quality-of-life improvements and redevelopment efforts.

Commuter rail in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor through its influence on land development and redevelopment would assist in meeting regional land use development objectives through the promotion of sound land use development and redevelopment in desired central city locations, including the long-developed communities of Kenosha, Racine, South Milwaukee, Cudahy, St. Francis and Milwaukee. The significance of the influence of commuter rail on land development and redevelopment is already being recognized in the Cities of Racine and Cudahy as they are including transit center/commuter rail stations in their downtown redevelopment plans.

A study conducted by the Racine County Economic Development Corporation has identified the potential land use development impacts associated with the City of Racine commuter rail station. The study is documented in a report published in January 2003 and entitled “Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Commuter Rail: An Analysis of Current and Potential Economic Activity Surrounding the Racine Station Area.” The study concluded that:

- Commuter rail can have a positive impact on the surrounding real estate market by acting as a focus for new businesses, employers, and residential development.
- Transit-oriented development surrounding the station will have a direct impact on generating increased property tax revenues, this being dependent on the aggressiveness of a coordinated development strategy.
- Many of the conditions for successful development already exist in the Racine station area.
- Commuter rail and related development would contribute to the stabilization of neighborhoods around the Racine station by increasing employment and transportation opportunities.
- It is likely that other stations along the potential commuter rail line might realize even higher gains than those estimated in the study for Racine. This would be especially applicable to station sites that currently have unused land nearby for development opportunities.
- The study also noted that the positive implications of commuter rail also extend to other areas including: increasing the local and regional available workforce for Racine, providing similar development benefits to smaller communities along the corridor, and contributing to the enrichment of the corridor in terms of access to cultural and recreational opportunities.

Economic Development Impacts in Corridor

Commuter rail may also have the potential to help increase economic development and growth in the entire Milwaukee-Racine-Kenosha-Chicago corridor and, in particular, for Racine County as part of the corridor by better interconnecting all of the corridor communities to each other and to Milwaukee and Chicago. A report published by the Racine County Economic Development Corporation (RCEDC) in April 2002 entitled, “Racine County Strategic Economic Development Plan” envisions that commuter rail will more closely link Racine County with the Milwaukee area and the Chicago area, and assist in establishing and promoting a Chicago-Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee mega-metropolitan area. The strategic plan of the RCEDC envisions that such linkage will result in more economic and population growth for the Chicago-Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor, and more economic and population growth specifically for Racine County. Major employers such as S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc. have stated that commuter rail service is essential to maintaining and expanding their presence in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor and is essential to attracting qualified employees and adding to the quality of life in the area. Commuter rail would make employers more accessible to the potential work force in the Corridor and in northeastern Illinois.

Environmental Review

Minimal or no adverse environmental impacts would be expected from the commuter rail and bus alternatives. This includes with respect to compatibility with existing land uses, land acquisition and possible displacements, visual and aesthetic, historic and cultural, farmlands, parks and open spaces, water resources, biological resources, hazardous material sites, and air quality and air pollutant emissions. The total ridership under the commuter rail and bus alternatives may be expected to result in a very small reduction in ozone-related air pollutants ranging from reductions of .02 tons per hot summer weekday of volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxide emissions or about a 0.1 percent reduction, in regional transportation system emissions under the bus and combination rail/bus alternatives, to reductions of .04 tons, or about a 0.2 percent reduction under the commuter rail alternative. Anticipated environmental impacts would be modest because of the extensive use of existing facilities and rights-of-way. Any new construction would generally be limited to stations, park-ride lots, and vehicle storage facilities. The only possible minor impacts might be in two areas: noise and vibration impacts for commuter rail, and safety at railroad grade crossings. These potential impacts would warrant further consideration and possible mitigation.

Effect on Highway System

The transit ridership represents trips that would be otherwise made by automobile over streets and highways. The streets and highways principally affected would include IH 94, IH 794, and the Lake Parkway. The impact would be greatest during weekday peak travel hours. The commuter rail alternative would have the greatest impact since it would attract the greatest ridership, the longest trips, and the most new transit trips. Potential reductions in average weekday vehicle traffic on the highways would be modest but not insignificant. Total commuter rail ridership would represent a reduction in total average weekday traffic on the nearby streets and highways ranging from 0.8 to 2.6 percent. During peak periods, total commuter rail ridership would represent a reduction in average weekday morning peak-hour peak-direction traffic ranging from about 4 to 12 percent.
Organization and Management

Three concepts for an organizational structure capable of owning, operating, and managing the commuter service in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor were identified:

- State of Wisconsin
- Multi-Government Cooperative
- Multi-County Commuter Rail or Transit Authority

All three organization and management alternatives would have the capacity to implement and manage commuter rail or commuter bus service. For commuter rail, each type of organization would be expected to contract with Metra to provide service. However, for commuter rail, each type of organization would also require new State legislation to provide dedicated funding. Obtaining such legislation may have obstacles and therefore may be difficult to achieve.

For commuter rail, a sequential attempt toward implementation was determined to be most appropriate. First, State implementation and management funded with Federal and State funds through the Wisconsin Department of Transportation would be pursued. The rationale for this is that the State is the lead for intercity and high speed passenger rail and has staff and expertise in contracting with Amtrak for the provision of Hiawatha Milwaukee-Chicago service. Many of the commuter rail passenger trips would be trips between and through Southeastern Wisconsin counties which would otherwise be carried on State trunk highways and principally the interstate highway system. In fact, many commuter rail passengers would be making interstate travel between Wisconsin and Illinois. This will require State legislation to direct the Department to implement and manage commuter rail, and to provide funding. Should this option prove infeasible, a variation may be to require local governments to develop, own, and operate the commuter rail stations. Should State implementation and management prove infeasible, a multi-government cooperative or commuter rail authority could be considered. Both would require new State legislation to provide State funding and local dedicated funding.

For commuter bus, only one organizational structure was appropriate. A multi-government cooperative would appear to be the best option to implement commuter bus. The City of Racine is already the lead for existing corridor bus service, as no local funds are presently required. The commuter bus alternative may be expected to require local operating and capital funding, and State legislation for dedicated funding may be necessary for the implementation of commuter bus service.

Funding

The study considered implementation schedules, financial requirements, and potential funding options for both total capital costs and annual net operating and maintenance costs. For commuter rail, Federal funds may be available to fund 80 percent of total capital costs, with Federal Transit Administration new start fixed guideway discretionary grants limited to 50 percent of total capital costs. The remaining 30 percent of capital costs expected to be federally funded could come from Federal Highway Administration Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program funds, Federal Highway Administration Surface Transportation—Program State Discretionary Program funds, and Federal Transit Administration Section 5307 Formula funds which would be allocated to the Milwaukee area only upon the initiation of commuter rail service.

Under those options which would have the State of Wisconsin responsible for the implementation, operation, or funding of commuter rail, the remaining 20 percent of capital cost would be funded by the State, and under those options which would have a multi-county authority or multi-government cooperative implement or operate and share in the funding of commuter rail would have the State fund half of the remaining total capital cost, or about 10 percent, with the multi-county authority or multi-government cooperative funding the other 10 percent of total capital cost.

With respect to annual net operating and maintenance costs of commuter rail, a combination of Federal, State, and local funds has been identified as the likely funding strategy, with local funds expected only under the alternative with multi-county authority or multi-government cooperative implementation and operation. Local governments within Southeastern Wisconsin have indicated that those commuter rail implementation and management options which entail a local share of capital and operating costs will require State legislation for a commuter rail or transit authority, or State legislation providing dedicated funding for commuter rail and possibly all public transit.

For the commuter bus alternative, it may be expected that Federal funds, principally Federal Highway Administration Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program funds, may be available to fund 80 percent of the capital costs, with the remaining 20 percent being matched by local funds in the absence of a State program which would equally share in the matching of Federal funds. With respect to net operating and maintenance costs, it is expected that these costs would be funded by a combination of State and local funds. State legislation for dedicated funding may be necessary for implementation of this alternative also.

Preliminary Recommendation

After considering all of the findings and conclusions regarding the costs, benefits, and impacts of the alternatives, the Advisory Committee arrived at the following preliminary recommendations:

- The commuter rail alternative with a medium level of service is recommended for implementation. The Advisory Committee made this recommendation because it concluded that the potential land use and economic development impacts which are unique to commuter rail are significant and outweigh its increased cost. In addition, commuter rail would attract more ridership, especially those trips of a longer-distance regional nature, and would provide a superior and more attractive level of service.

- With regard to organization and management, the State of Wisconsin is recommended to have responsibility for funding and implementation. Funding for implementation and operation of the actual service including provision of operating subsidies would be provided from a combination of Federal and State sources with no local funds being utilized. However, local governments may be responsible for the funding, construction, operation, and maintenance of station facilities for their particular communities. The Advisory Committee made this recommendation for two reasons. First, the State already is the lead for, has the staff for, and has the expertise with, contracting for passenger rail services, namely, the Amtrak Milwaukee-Chicago Hiawatha Service. Second, many of the trips that would use the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter rail service would be trips between and through Southeastern Wisconsin counties which would otherwise be carried on State trunk highways, especially the Interstate highway system. In fact, many commuter rail passengers would be making interstate trips between Wisconsin and Illinois.
Major Differences Among the Alternatives

The three final alternatives are comparable or similar in many respects. The principal differences are ridership, level of service, capital and operating costs, land use development and redevelopment impacts, and economic development impacts. The higher cost of the commuter rail alternative would provide benefits and advantages that cannot be provided by the commuter bus or combination rail and bus alternative.

Potential advantages of commuter rail over commuter bus:

1. Higher Ridership
   - Greater number of weekday and annual passengers
   - Up to twice the annual passenger-miles of travel—serving more interregional, or longer-distance trips

2. Higher Level of Service
   - Greater level of comfort: larger and spacious vehicles—smoother vehicle operation due to route alignment separated from other traffic; passengers have opportunities to do many other things while en route
   - More reliable—especially during weekday peak periods and inclement weather due to nonhighway right-of-way; no interference and delays from other auto and truck traffic or weather conditions
   - Would enhance the attractiveness of public transportation as a mode of choice

3. Faster and More Convenient Service
   - Direct no-transfer ride between all stations in Milwaukee-Racine-Kenosha-Chicago corridor; improved coordination with northeastern Illinois transit services to Chicago
   - Higher average speeds due to route alignment free from other traffic
   - Shorter travel times for many trips due to higher average speed

Potential to influence land development and redevelopment around stations:

4. Commuter rail is a long-term permanent commitment to, and investment in, a high quality transit service
   - Investment in residential, office, and attendant retail development within one-quarter to one-half mile of stations can be linked to investment in commuter rail
   - Can help attract retail businesses that benefit from the additional market of commuter rail passengers
   - Will further influence adjacent neighborhoods beyond the station area in a positive manner

Potential to increase overall economic development:

5. Will help establish and promote a Milwaukee-Racine-Kenosha-Chicago mega-metropolitan corridor by interconnecting all corridor communities to each other and to Milwaukee and Chicago
   - Would help promote economic and population growth for entire Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee corridor and especially for Racine County and intermediate communities
   - Helps set Milwaukee-Racine-Kenosha-Chicago corridor apart—a high quality service other areas don’t have

Expected benefits for employers and employees:

6. Makes employers more accessible to potential work force in corridor including northeastern Illinois. Companies such as S.C. Johnson & Son have indicated this to be very important
   - Attractiveness of alternative forms of transportation
   - Provides employees with improved access to jobs throughout the entire corridor

Potential advantages of commuter bus over commuter rail include:

1. Lower costs
   - Lower capital cost
   - Lower operating cost

2. Acts as own distributor in downtown Milwaukee
   - No need for dedicated shuttle

3. Flexibility
   - Routes and stops can be moved or changed easier

4. Faster and easier implementation.
What Happens Next?

The next step is for the Advisory Committee to get comments and feedback about the alternatives and the preliminary recommendations. The Committee needs to hear what you and other residents, businesses, and groups think about this so it can make an informed final recommendation. In addition to the public meetings and hearings, presentations will be made to, and comments obtained from business, community, and other groups. If your group would like a presentation and/or opportunity to comment, please contact the Commission staff.

Following a period of review and comment, the Advisory Committee will consider the comments made and formulate a final recommendation to be formally transmitted to Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Racine Counties, and to corridor municipalities for their consideration and approval. Also, the preliminary draft of the study summary report will be finalized.

Tell us what you think!

Which alternative do you think is best?

What do you like or dislike about the alternatives?
PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS AND HEARINGS FOR THE KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY

Appendix D-3

Citizens are invited to a series of public informational meetings and hearings to learn more about, and to comment on, the findings and preliminary recommendations of a study of commuter rail and transit options in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee area. The preliminary recommendations propose that commuter rail service be implemented on a schedule that will begin with an “open house” from 4:00-6:00 P.M. A presentation will be made by staff at 5:30 P.M. followed by question and answer period. The public hearing will be held from 6:30-8:30 P.M. in a public hearing format.

Date Location
April 23, 2003 Kenosha Gateway Technical College
April 24, 2003 Racine (Schools) Technical College
April 30, 2003 Elks Club Room, Racine (Schools) Technical College
May 1, 2003 Elks Club Room, Racine (Schools) Technical College

Persons with special needs are asked to contact the Commissioners office at least 72 hours before a meeting to request reasonable accommodation. Written comments should be received no later than May 15, 2003. Additional study materials, including the latest edition of the newsletter on which the preliminary recommendations are based, are available at the study web site which can be found at www.wisconsinrtap.org. To ask questions, to submit written comments, or to request a newsletter, please contact:

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The Racine Journal Times
April 14, 2003

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS AND HEARINGS FOR THE KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY

Citizens are invited to a series of public informational meetings and hearings to learn more about, and to comment on, the findings and preliminary recommendations of a study of commuter rail and transit options in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee area. The preliminary recommendations propose that commuter rail service be implemented on a schedule that will begin with an “open house” from 4:00-6:00 P.M. A presentation will be made by staff at 5:30 P.M. followed by question and answer period. The public hearing will be held from 6:30-8:30 P.M. in a public hearing format.

Date Location
April 23, 2003 Kenosha Gateway Technical College
April 24, 2000 U.W. Technical College
April 30, 2000 Elks Club Room, Racine (Schools) Technical College
May 1, 2000 Elks Club Room, Racine (Schools) Technical College

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Kenosha News
April 14, 2003

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS AND HEARINGS FOR THE KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY

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April 24, 2000 Racine (Schools) Technical College
April 30, 2000 Elks Club Room, Racine (Schools) Technical College
May 1, 2000 Elks Club Room, Racine (Schools) Technical College

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El Conquistador
Week of April 14, 2003

PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS AND HEARINGS FOR THE KENOSHA-RACINE-MILWAUKEE CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY

Citizens are invited to a series of public informational meetings and hearings to learn more about, and to comment on, the findings and preliminary recommendations of a study of commuter rail and transit options in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee area. The preliminary recommendations propose that commuter rail service be implemented on a schedule that will begin with an “open house” from 4:00-6:00 P.M. A presentation will be made by staff at 5:30 P.M. followed by question and answer period. The public hearing will be held from 6:30-8:30 P.M. in a public hearing format.

Date Location
April 23, 2000 Kenosha Gateway Technical College
April 24, 2000 Racine (Schools) Technical College
April 30, 2000 Elks Club Room, Racine (Schools) Technical College
May 1, 2000 Elks Club Room, Racine (Schools) Technical College

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