

1 By Supervisor Weishan

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A RESOLUTION

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Opposing the development of a proposed downtown streetcar route and creation of a
City of Milwaukee entity to operate the new public transit system

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WHEREAS, in 2009, Congress allocated the final \$91.5 million in transportation aid that was originally part of a \$289 million appropriation in 1991 by providing \$54.9 million to the City of Milwaukee ("City") for a streetcar line and \$36.6 million to Milwaukee County ("County") for buses; and

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WHEREAS, modern streetcars run on rails laid in streets and draw power from overhead wires and operate in traffic; and

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WHEREAS, the initial plans for the City streetcar system is an approximate 2.1 mile loop from the Intermodal Station on St. Paul Avenue to the lower east side (north to Ogden Avenue); and

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WHEREAS, the proposed construction budget for the City streetcar system is approximately \$64.6 million, with \$54.9 million from the federal transportation funds and an additional \$9.7 million from a tax financing district, which is partially supported by County property taxpayers; and

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WHEREAS, the proposed initial loop does not significantly impact minority neighborhoods, where access to public transportation is critical; and

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WHEREAS, the County already operates a county-wide transit system that already serves the area where the proposed streetcar route would be constructed; and

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WHEREAS, it was initially estimated that the cost to relocate utilities along the route could cost up to \$65 million, but that figure is expected to be trimmed due to route modifications and other efforts; and

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WHEREAS, despite the extensive efforts to reduce the cost of utility relocation, the issue remains contentious due to recent State legislation that essentially forces that the Public Service Commission to rule against the City's claim that private utilities and their ratepayers must pay for the cost of utility relocation for the streetcar project; and

40 WHEREAS, it is anticipated that this matter will end up in the courts to ultimately
41 determine whether the private utilities or the City must pay the significant utility
42 relocation costs; and

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44 WHEREAS, in the meantime, the \$54.9 million can be better used to enhance
45 public transportation through the existing transit system operated by the County; now,
46 therefore,

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48 BE IT RESOLVED, that Milwaukee County is hereby opposed to the construction
49 of the proposed downtown streetcar loop in the City of Milwaukee; and

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51 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Milwaukee County opposes the creation of
52 another public transportation entity that would provide public transportation to an area
53 that is already heavily served by the Milwaukee County Transit System; and

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55 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the County Clerk is authorized and directed
56 to provide a copy of this resolution to the Mayor of Milwaukee and the members of the
57 Milwaukee Common Council.