



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

# Milwaukee County

CHRIS ABELE • COUNTY EXECUTIVE

September 12, 2014

Marisol Simon  
Regional Administrator  
Federal Transit Administration  
200 West Adams Street, Suite 320  
Chicago, IL 60606

Dear Administrator Simon:

As Milwaukee County has worked to restructure our transit operations, we have appreciated the time and effort your team has devoted to working with us to chart a path forward.

As the current contract end date with MTS approaches, we have been working diligently to find a way to maintain transit service, respond to the legal issues we have faced and stay within FTA guidelines. We believe we have found a mechanism that will allow Milwaukee County to achieve these goals.

Working with external legal counsel, Milwaukee County has determined that a legally structured quasi-governmental corporation can exist under Wisconsin State law. Under the plan, the existing non-profit will be restructured into an entity that will be controlled and operated by Milwaukee County.

The restructured MTS will be under the authority of the Milwaukee County Department of Transportation. While there may be management and operational changes over time, transit employees will continue to operate transit services as they have for many years. This action will also allow existing labor agreements to remain in place. Thus, we do not expect that we will need to seek a new 13(c) agreement.

We have attached the legal opinion and all related documentation that was developed by our external counsel, von Briesen & Roper, as well as a memorandum that outlines the rationale for the opinion.

As you are well aware, we do not have much time left before the existing contract with MTS expires; thus, we ask that you do what you can to expedite FTA's review of our plan for moving forward. I would like to extend an offer to have the Director of Transportation and our Corporation Counsel visit your office in person to walk you through the plan and to answer questions. Please let us know our next steps.

Sincerely,

Chris Abele  
County Executive

CC: Paul Bargren, Corporation Counsel  
Brian Dranzik, Director of Transportation