

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-office Communication

DATE: 4/17/2025

TO: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Donna Brown-Martin, Director, Department of Transportation

SUBJECT: From the Director, Department of Transportation providing an Informational Report on a rail with trails shared bicycle and pedestrian feasibility study in the 30th Street Corridor from the Hank Aaron Trail to Havenwoods State Forest.

FILE TYPE: Informational Report

REQUEST

This report is for informational purposes only.

BACKGROUND

The Milwaukee County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) Director's Office is facilitating a feasibility study in collaboration with the Milwaukee County Parks Department on capital project WP081311, for a potential rail with trails shared bicycle and pedestrian path within the 30th Street Corridor. The project corridor is centered on a railroad right of way to the west of 30th Street from the Menomonee Valley to Havenwoods State Forest. The planned shared-use trail facility, measuring 6.7-miles in length, will offer underserved neighborhoods vital connections to recreational as well as job and education centers, thereby extending access to the Oak Leaf Trail and Hank Aaron State Trail. The grade-separated nature of the railroad right of way would allow for residents walking or biking through Milwaukee County's dense grid of streets to travel safely and efficiently.

The railroad is owned and operated by WATCO/Wisconsin Southern, which is a Class II Railroad. An additional section closer to the Menomonee Valley is owned by the Canadian Pacific Railroad Company. The corridor actively serves railroad customers particularly in the Glendale Yards railroad site.

MCDOT is facilitating this study through a Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) Transportation Alternatives Grant (TAP) in the amount of \$700,000 to the Parks Department. The request for proposal (RFP) for this planning and feasibility study was launched in December 2024 and MCDOT received a number of strong consultant proposals.

The project will include multiple public involvement meetings to engage community residents and leaders on the potential impacts of a shared bicycle and pedestrian path

in the 30th street industrial corridor. Further, the project aims to partner with railroad companies operating within and through Milwaukee County to achieve shared objectives. The final report will present on feasibility and design concepts.

MCDOT anticipates the length of the project to be between 18-24 months. Members of the community, business improvements districts, and neighborhood associations will be heavily involved in the project timeline.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Describe how the item aligns to the strategic plan:

2A: Determine what, where, and how we deliver services to advance health equity.

2C: Apply a racial equity lens to all decisions.

3C: Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities.

RECOMMENDATION

This report is for informational purposes only.

FISCAL EFFECT

There is no fiscal effect.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

Donna Brown-Martin, Director, Milwaukee County Department of Transportation

John Rodgers, Deputy Director, Milwaukee County Department of Transportation

Danny Park, Transportation Planner, Milwaukee County Department of Transportation

PREPARED BY:

Danny Park, Transportation Planner, Milwaukee County Department of Transportation

APPROVED BY:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Donna Brown-Martin", is written over a horizontal line.

Donna Brown-Martin, Director, Department of Transportation

ATTACHMENTS:

PowerPoint

cc: Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, County Board of Supervisors
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk