

## COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE

### INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

DATE: February 6, 2012

TO: Lee Holloway., Chairman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Frank Busalacchi, Director, Department of Transportation

SUBJECT: Authorization to Sell County-Owned, Federally-Funded Downtown Transit Center

#### **POLICY**

Requesting County Board action to declare the Downtown Transit Center Surplus.

#### **BACKGROUND**

In 1988, Milwaukee County received a \$25.5 million dollar Federal grant for the "Northwest Corridor Express Bus Project." The grant provided 75% funding for the implementation of express bus service and amenities between downtown and the northwest side of Milwaukee. Project elements included the purchase of new buses, passenger shelters, and bus stops signs, a park-ride lot near Northridge and the construction of the Downtown Transit Center and the Mill Road Transit Center. The Mill Road Transit Center was declared surplus in 2007 and sold in 2010 for \$421,681. The park-ride lot at Beatrice Court remains up for sale.

The Downtown Transit Center has 26 vehicle stalls and is an origination point for nine bus routes. Since the building's construction, route modifications and restructuring has occurred resulting in fewer buses using the facility than what it was originally designed for. In addition to the bus terminal, the second floor of the building is used as a rental hall facility operated by Parks who has a contract with the Zilli Hospitality Group to perform catering services.

In August of 2011, The Long Range Lakefront Committee made a recommendation to redevelop the Downtown Transit Center site with a high value, multi-story development. The County Board adopted the Long Range Lakefront Committee recommendations on November 3, 2011. Since federal funds were used on this facility, the Department of Transportation must work with the Federal Transit Administration to determine what disposition methodology will be used for the site. The Department's intent is to make the recommendation that sale proceeds of the Downtown Transit Center be used for future transit needs in Milwaukee County. This was the methodology recommendation used on the Mill Road Transit Center and was approved by the FTA.

The Milwaukee County Transit System will still have a need for a layover location of the nine routes that currently serve the Downtown Transit Center. An adequate site will need to be identified prior to transit's removal from the facility. Depending on the development needs of the new site location, some of the funds from the sale of the Downtown Transit Center could be used for the modest development of the new site. Transit would use the Downtown Transit Center up to the point of property conveyance. This will allow time for identifying a modest alternative site location of a new transit layover point.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Director of the Department of Transportation recommends that the Downtown Transit Center property located at 909 E. Michigan Avenue be declared surplus property and be offered for sale.

Report Prepared by: Brian Dranzik, Director of Administration - DOT

Approved by:

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Frank Busalacchi, Director  
Department of Transportation

Cc: Chris Abele, Milwaukee County Executive  
Supervisor, Michael Mayo, Sr., Chairman, Transportation, Public Works and Transit Committee  
Amber Moreen, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele  
Terrence Cooley, Chief of Staff, County Board of Supervisors  
Pat Farley, Director, Department of Administrative Services  
Brian Taffora, Director of Economic Development  
Lloyd Grant, Managing Director, Milwaukee County Transit System  
Pam Bryant, Interim Fiscal and Budget Administrator, Department of Administrative Services  
James Martin, Fiscal and Budget Analyst, Department of Administrative Services