

# BADGER COACHES



June 12, 2009

Tim Parks, Planning Division  
215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
Room LL-100, Municipal Building  
Madison, WI 53703-3352

Re: Relocation of bus stops following beginning of construction of redevelopment of bus depot at the corner of Bedford Street and West Washington Avenue

Dear Tim:

## Background

Badger Coaches, Inc. began its bus services in Madison almost 100 years ago and it continues to be a local, family operated business to this day, providing daily bus service between Madison and Milwaukee. Badger Coaches currently serves approximately 140,000 riders a year, and of those only about 20% actually get on or off the bus at the bus depot at the corner of Bedford Street and West Washington Avenue. The majority of Badger Coaches' riders in Madison get on and off the bus at the UW Memorial Union, and Badger Coaches has a mutually-rewarding relationship with the UW and the Memorial Union staff. Riders can obtain Badger Coaches bus schedules and purchase tickets at the Memorial Union. We have seen a marked decrease in riders using the bus depot over the past 10 years due to the significant increase in internet ticket purchases. Operating bus depots in fixed locations is becoming out of date and is no longer a viable business model for Badger Coaches because the costs to operate are not being met by the ridership utilizing the depot since 80% of our passengers are getting on at other stops.

## Relocation Plans

Upon the start of construction to redevelop the site at Bedford Street and West Washington Avenue, Badger Coaches will continue to offer its bus services uninterrupted and riders will have the option to purchase tickets at the Memorial Union, by internet, over the telephone or directly from the bus driver. We realize that some of our clients do not have computers so we will be upgrading our phone system to enable ticket sales over the phone. We are also looking to make arrangements for a stop on West Washington Avenue in close proximity to the current bus depot where riders will be able to obtain our schedules, purchase tickets and get on and off the bus.

Badger Coaches plans to offer the following stops once construction begins on the project:

- 1) Memorial Union will continue to be the primary stop. Currently approximately 80% of our riders either get on or disembark at this location. As noted above, the Memorial Union currently distributes our schedules and sells our tickets. We have confirmed with Tim Gloeckler, the Director of Retail Sales at the Memorial Union that Badger Coaches will be able to continue to utilize the Memorial Union as a stop and for ticket sales once the bus depot closes. Only one additional bus will be added to the

BADGER Bus Lines

BADGER Coaches

BADGER Tour & Travel

Meier Truck Service

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Madison, WI 53718

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[www.badgerbus.com](http://www.badgerbus.com)

635 N. James Lovell Street

Milwaukee, WI 53233

(414) 276-7490

(414) 276-5335 Fax

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Memorial Union stop once the depot closes, at 6:30 a.m. each day and we have confirmed this will not be a problem for the UW or the Memorial Union.

2) We are currently working on establishing a stop within close proximity of the current bus depot location and will have arrangements for that stop finalized prior to when construction of our redevelopment project begins. We anticipate that stop will offer riders a place to obtain schedules and tickets and will provide restroom facilities.

3) Our final stop in Madison will be at the Dutch Mill Park and Ride lot where riders may leave their car free of charge. We currently utilize the Dutch Mill Park and Ride for charter buses and will begin using it as a regular stop like some of our competitors do such as Van Galder (owned by Coach USA). It is our understanding that Keith Pollock, City Traffic Engineering, approves of Badger Coaches using the Dutch Mill Park and Ride as a regular stop.

### Greyhound Lines

We have been asked some questions regarding what Greyhound plans to do once the bus depot is no longer available. As you may or may not know, Greyhound is owned by First Group which is based in Scotland and is currently the largest bus and train operator in the world with tremendous financial resources. In the past 15 years we have seen their ridership in Madison significantly decline. It is our understanding that Greyhound has lost almost all of its regional student riders to Mega Bus, its overall ridership is worse than it has ever been and its utilization of the bus depot is minimal at best.

Badger Coaches has been working with Greyhound for some time to identify a new location for Greyhound to utilize as its primary stop. Greyhound has both the financial resources and know-how to handle a relatively small-scale relocation such as this and has frequent occasions when it has to relocate its operations in many locations all over the world. In many cities Greyhound uses convenience stores and gas stations as regular stops and for ticket sales, and has plenty of experience to find ways to relocate the stop it currently has at the bus depot once the project begins. Very few of Greyhound's riders actually purchase tickets at the bus depot ticket counter, again, the majority of riders buy their tickets over the internet. Badger Coaches is committed to continuing to help Greyhound find a new primary stop to offer its service in Madison which suits its current riders but Greyhound's small ridership is not a reason to continue bus depot operations.

Several representatives of Badger Coaches will be in attendance at Monday's plan commission meeting and will be available to answer any additional questions folks may have regarding our future plans for continued operation of our bus services. We would appreciate your including this letter as part of the packet of information provided to the plan commissioners.

Sincerely,



John R. Meier  
Badger Coaches, Inc.