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City of Madison  
Legislative File Number 05547 (version 1)

**Title**

Requiring a Binding Referendum, in a Form to Be Approved by the City Attorney, Prior to Expenditure of City Funds to Construct a Streetcar or Commuter Rail System in the City of Madison.

**Body**

WHEREAS, a projected increase of 100,000 cars on Dane County roads over the next 20 years will create significant challenges for the City of Madison in the areas of traffic, land use and air and water pollution; and

WHEREAS, the City of Madison is taking a multi-faceted approach to addressing these challenges, including:

- Over \$150 million invested in construction and reconstruction of City streets over the past four years;
- A 35% increase in funding for Madison Metro over the past four years;
- Significant investments in bike trails and connectors;
- Partnership with Milwaukee and State Department of Transportation to promote a high-speed rail link between Madison and Milwaukee, as part of a broader Chicago-Minneapolis corridor; and

WHEREAS, four committees are now at work studying options to meet future challenges. These committees are: the Transport 2020 Committee exploring commuter rail; the Long Range Metro Transit Planning Ad Hoc Committee exploring the potential for a regional bus system among other goals; the Platinum Bike Committee working on a plan to make Madison the best place in America for bike commuting; and the Streetcar Study Committee which was created to develop a complete proposal for a streetcar system; and

WHEREAS, each of these committee is expected to deliver reports during 2007; and

WHEREAS, the City of Madison has a history of using referenda to give voters a direct say on decisions involving major investments, such as Monona Terrace and the Goodman Pool; and

WHEREAS, Dane County also may consider a county-wide referendum on construction of a commuter rail system or streetcar system or both within Madison and other parts of Dane County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that when these reports are complete the Mayor and the relevant City committees will evaluate them with a view toward establishing an integrated response to the challenges of mobility in a growing region; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that prior to the City spending any City funds to construct a streetcar or commuter rail system in part within the City of Madison, a binding referendum on such spending, in a form to be approved by the City Attorney, must be approved in a City election.

*Mayor  
C's  
alternative*

*NTBR that the referendum? be placed on the  
April 3, 2007*

**Fiscal Note**

Approximately \$200 would be required to code each of the 81 tabulators, and roughly \$100 would be needed to program each of the 76 AutoMark machines (for the sight impaired). An additional \$1,000 would be provided to cover the City's pro rata share of the paper ballot costs. Total costs associated with the referendum question are therefore estimated at \$24,800. (All cost numbers are built upon the assumption that the referendum would be integrated into a normally scheduled election.) If the referendum question is scheduled for a 2008 election, funds will be requested as part of the normal 2008 Operating Budget development process