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April 20, 2010

**VIA E-MAIL AND U.S. MAIL**  
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Honorable Frank J. Busalacchi  
Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Transportation  
433 W. St. Paul Avenue  
Milwaukee, WI 53203

**RE: Madison Station Location for High Speed Rail**

Dear Secretary Busalacchi:

This letter is submitted on behalf of the Transportation and Parking Committee of Downtown Madison, Inc. ("DMI"), with the approval of the DMI Board of Directors. I am the chair of that committee. As you may know, DMI has been a long-time supporter of the Regional Transit Authority here in Dane County, and we are keenly interested in transportation issues affecting Madison and the region.

Let me begin by congratulating DOT on your successful application for funding for the high speed rail line between Milwaukee and Madison. We are aware that the competition for those federal dollars was intense, and the success of your application is a tribute to your hard work and foresight. The fact that this project was 100% funded by federal dollars is further evidence of your outstanding work on behalf of the people of Wisconsin. Thank you!

The location of the high speed rail station in Madison is critical, both to the success of the line and to the people of Dane County. We understand that DOT has hired, or is in the process of hiring, a consultant to assist you on this important decision. We appreciate DOT's careful and thoughtful approach to this decision.

Our committee met recently to discuss what we felt were the most important criteria for the Madison station. In general, our goals for the station fall into three broad categories

First, after only a short discussion it became clear that the most important objective for the station is to help the high speed rail line be successful. To maximize the chances for its success, the station must be located where it maximizes ridership. This means that the station should be located as close to potential riders as reasonably possible, maximizing convenience, ease of use, ease of access, and attractiveness. For this reason, we strongly recommend that your

consultant conduct a comprehensive market study, so that an informed decision can be made on a location that will best attract and serve potential riders. We view this step as critical to a wise decision.

Of course, the station must have adequate parking to provide the necessary convenience and ease of access. At least initially, we anticipate that most of the riders will get to the station by car, and if parking is inadequate or inconvenient, it will seriously deter use. What is "adequate" will depend in large part on the market study and on other experiences around the country.

Second, we believe that the station must be located where it can serve as a hub for different modes of transportation. This would include inter-city bus, local bus (Madison Metro), and bicycles, and the potential for future connections to commuter rail lines. The rail station needs to be more than a rail station; it needs to be a transportation center. This will make it easier for people to get to the station and to get from the station to their ultimate destination, which will of course increase ridership. It will also increase the flow of people through the station, which will increase its visibility and its importance in the community.

Our committee does not believe that air travel as a mode of transportation must be located at the same site as the rail station. Because both air travel and high speed rail are forms of transportation primarily for destinations outside Dane County, we believe that the number of passengers who will want to take the high speed rail line to board a plane, or vice versa, will be small. Rather, the vast majority of air or rail passengers arriving in Madison will want to obtain quick and convenient transportation to their ultimate destination here in Dane County. Therefore, although we believe that there must be convenient local transportation between the rail station and the airport, as appropriate to serve the small number of passengers who will wish to travel between those two locations, we do not believe that air travel is a necessary component of a successful multi-modal transportation center.

Third, we believe that the station must be located in an area that can accommodate and is attractive to economic development. As you are well aware, rail transportation around the country has spurred economic development along the line, particularly near the stations. We anticipate that the rail station in Madison will generate nearby economic development, both for residential and commercial uses. We intend that the rail station will be inviting and attractive, and will include restaurants and other amenities for travelers and guests. The more people who live and work near the station, the more successful it will be. Therefore, we urge you to consider the importance of economic development, not only for Madison's growth, but also for the success of the high speed rail line.

As you may have discerned from the above statements, given the above criteria our committee thinks it unlikely that the best choice would be a station at the Dane County Regional Airport. Put simply, we don't think that that location creates the best opportunity for the line to be successful. However, we know that there are other important factors for this decision that have not been addressed in this letter, and some of those factors may favor the airport. We would be delighted to hear from DOT on your process and on your criteria, and we pledge to

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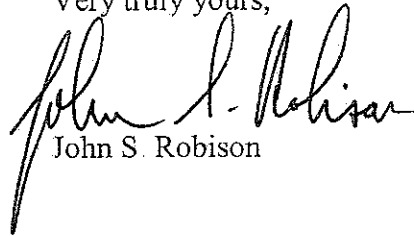
keep an open mind as the decision-making process evolves. Nevertheless, until any factors persuade us otherwise, we intend to be an advocate for a station location that we believe best serves the needs of the people of Dane County according to the criteria set forth above.

We would be delighted to be a partner with DOT in this critical decision. Our committee includes leaders in transportation issues for the region, including representatives from Madison Metro, City of Madison Transportation and Parking, the University of Wisconsin, and the Regional Transit Authority. Please feel free to call on us at any time if we can be helpful to you.

Our next committee meeting is on Friday, May 14 at 8:00 a.m. Would it be possible for one or more representatives from DOT to attend that meeting, to discuss DOT's process and your progress to date? If so, please have the appropriate person contact me at 608-283-2653 or Susan Schmitz, President of DMI, at 608-512-1330.

We look forward with great excitement to the completion of the high speed rail line to Madison!

Very truly yours,



John S. Robison

JSR:dlp

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