



WUA POSITION PAPER

**WISCONSIN STATE BUDGET AB-133/SB-45
NEW FACILITY FEES--DNR**

The Wisconsin Utilities Association (WUA), representing Wisconsin's investor-owned gas and electric utilities, is opposed to the new facility fee contained in the state budget.

The Issue:

The State Budget contains a variety of new fees and fee increases. One such new fee is the facility fee which allows the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to annually impose a fee on all owners operating under an air permit. The fee ranges from \$50 to \$20,000 depending on the amount of emissions:

<u>Total Emissions (in tons)</u>	<u>Fee Amount</u>
5-25	\$50
26-100	\$650
101-250	\$2,000
251-4000	\$7,000
Over 4000	\$20,000

The new fee would be used to offset lower emission fees and decreased federal funding. The fee would generate \$1,593,650 and would pay for new software and five positions which were previously federally funded.

Background:

The air management division in DNR is supported primarily by fees. Currently stationary sources pay an emissions tonnage fee of \$33.19/ton for certain air pollutants up to 4000 tons per pollutant per facility. The emissions tonnage fee is indexed to automatically increase each year. There are also additional federal funds. The state collected approximately \$9.3 million in fees in 1998 based on 1997 emissions.

Utilities are high emitters and therefore fund a large part of the air program. However, through pollution control measures, utility emissions have decreased over the years, with a consequential decrease in emission fees. In addition, DNR claims federal funding has been decreased causing a shortage of funds.

It is estimated that the new facility fee would cost Wisconsin electric utilities approximately \$300,000 to \$350,000 per year. Other industries affected include the paper industry, foundries, and small manufacturing.

(over)



WUA Position:

The Wisconsin Utilities Association opposed the new fee during DNR budget discussions and continues to oppose the fee for the following reasons:

- It is a new fee imposed on top of several current fees. Our industry is trying to become more competitive. Increased fees make Wisconsin generated power more expensive.
- Program funding through fees allows the agency to be less accountable to the public, lacks the incentive to control costs, and provides less legislative oversight.
- There is little if any decrease in federal funding when other sources are taken into account such as new EPA funds.
- DNR argues that billable tonnage is down and, therefore, an increase is needed. However, billable tonnage has been under the current estimates since the fees were initiated. Nothing has changed in this area.

4-1-99



WISCONSIN NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION

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April 15, 1999

To the Joint Finance Committee

Re: Access fees for Computer Databases
Reference section 2353 which would create section 224.30 (3)

Speaking for the members of the Wisconsin Newspaper Association, the members of the Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council and the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association, we wanted to make sure that the ability of DFI to charge the public a fee for accessing or using the Department's databases or computer systems is limited to the actual direct necessary expense of providing the record. This is and should remain the standard for access to public information.

Sandra George
Executive Director, WNA

John Laabs
Wisconsin Broadcasters Association

**PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON STATE BUDGET
TO BE TAKEN BY JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The Joint Finance Committee will hold a series of public hearings on the proposed 1999-2001 State Budget Bill [SB 45/AB 133] according to the following schedule. All hearings will be held from 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

GREEN BAY. Friday, March 26
Brown County Public Library Auditorium
515 Pine Street

OSCEOLA. Wednesday, April 14
Osceola High School Gymnasium
1029 Oakridge Drive

RACINE. Thursday, April 8
J. I. Case High School Auditorium
7345 Washington Avenue

MADISON. Thursday, April 15
State Capitol - Room 411 South

STEVENS POINT. Tuesday, April 13
UW-Stevens Point University Center -
Alumni Room
1015 Reserve Street

*Kim Glabbe Wood?
Ans Barrett
Madeline Young*

**"LISTENING SESSION" ON STATE BUDGET
SCHEDULED FOR MILWAUKEE**

Senator Gwen Moore (D-Milwaukee) has arranged an opportunity for those in the Milwaukee area to comment on the Governor's proposed 1999-2001 State Budget. Sen. Moore will chair the session and some members of the Joint Finance Committee are expected to attend. The "listening session" will be held on **Wednesday, March 31, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** at the Milwaukee Public Schools Administration Building Auditorium, 5225 W. Vliet Street.

HEARINGS SCHEDULED IN THE WEEK AHEAD

MONDAY, MARCH 22

- ◆ **SENATE HEALTH, UTILITIES, VETERANS AND MILITARY AFFAIRS** (Brown County Public Library, 515 Pine Street, Rooms 1 & 2, Green Bay) 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The Committee will take testimony on provisions in Senate Bill 45/Assembly Bill 133, the Governor's proposed 1991-2001 State Budget, that relate to health, utilities, veterans and military affairs. **(FOR INFORMATION)**

- ◆ **JOINT SURVEY COMMITTEE ON RETIREMENT SYSTEMS** (Room 417 N) 1:00 p.m.

The Joint Survey Committee on Retirement Systems (JSCRS) will begin with an informational hearing featuring state agency personnel. Invited representatives, including those from the Department of Employee Trust Funds and the State of Wisconsin Investment Board, will address the committee about the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) and their responsibilities relating to the system. The committee will then hear public testimony regarding the proposed University of Wisconsin Optional Retirement System (UWORS). Specifically, recent reports evaluating the UWORS will be addressed: a) *Supplemental Actuarial Valuations of Enhancements to Hybrid Plan Features of the WRS and a Separate Optional Retirement System for University of Wisconsin Employees* prepared by Gabriel, Roeder, Smith & Company on December 21, 1998; b) *A Supplemental Actuarial Study of Proposals to Provide an Optional Retirement Plan for University of Wisconsin Faculty and Academic Staff* prepared by Scott Dennison, the Retirement Research Committee's Research Director, on February 7, 1999. **(FOR INFORMATION)**

April 14, 1999

To: Public Hearing
Wisconsin Legislature Joint Finance Committee
Wisconsin Heritage Trust Program
April 15, 1999

Re: Wisconsin Heritage Trust Program

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a principal with Schreiber/Anderson Associates, a landscape architecture and urban design firm located near downtown Madison at 1435 East Main Street. My firm's work and my professional career have been dedicated to the revitalization of Wisconsin downtowns. For the past eight years, I have also worked on the Board of Directors for Wisconsin Downtown Action Council. That organization, which has worked in close partnership with the Wisconsin Main Street Program, supports downtown revitalization efforts for all Wisconsin communities.

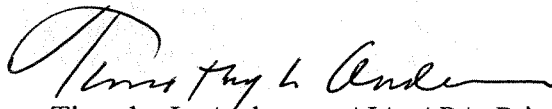
In both my professional and volunteer pursuits, I have come to understand how historic preservation is directly linked to achieving our physical and economic revitalization goals for our downtowns. Wisconsin downtowns are unique because of their cultural heritage and historic identity and downtown economic viability is directly related to retail and tourism activities that capitalize on these historic resources. New economic opportunities also derive from the preservation of historic buildings and places which have attracted new residents and businesses back to the downtowns.

We are fortunate to have a strong commitment to historic preservation from both the public and private sector. However, there are limited funding sources available to acquire and rehabilitate historic properties and ensure that our historic resources are adequately protected and preserved. The Wisconsin Heritage Trust Program will be a huge asset that will supplement available funding sources to achieve our historic preservation goals.

I believe that the Wisconsin Heritage Trust Program can have a major impact for the State of Wisconsin as a "stewardship" program much like the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Stewardship Program. Protection, preservation and enhancement of our historic resources is equally important to the commitment we have made to our natural resources.

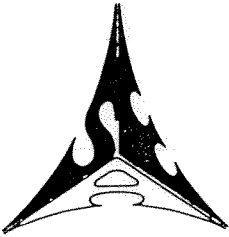
I urge you to support the legislation enacting the Wisconsin Heritage Trust Program. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy L. Anderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "T".

Timothy L. Anderson, AIA, APA, Principal
Schreiber/Anderson Associates, Inc.

EII/ssa/worddocs/wlhertrust



STATE ENGINEERING ASSOCIATION

4510 REGENT STREET

MADISON, WISCONSIN 53705

(608) 233-4696

April 15, 1999

TO: Co-chairs Senator Brian Burke &
Representative John Gard
Joint Finance Committee

RE: Dept. of Employee Trust Funds Budget

The State Engineering Association wants to communicate our support for the following areas of the Dept. of Employee Trust Funds Budget to your committee:

. We support the ETF New Call Center. However to maintain the future continuity of call service, the one permanent position cut by the Governor should be reinstated, unless it is the intent of the Legislature to provide poor service to annuitants and employees who now total 349,375 individuals.

. We also support the 1.0 permanent position and 1.0 project positions to support the increased work load for duty disability in both budget years.

. We disagree with the funding cuts by the Governor in the area of replacement and training of any new Trust Fund counsellor. Without proper training, the existing wealth of knowledge will be lost and the level of service will diminish. We feel some provision should be replaced in the ETF Budget because it is program revenue, not GPR funds.

We appreciate this opportunity to communicate our concerns about the Wisconsin Retirement System to your committee and want to thank you for your consideration.

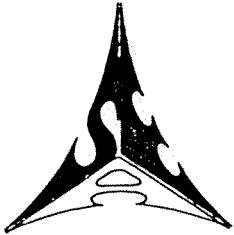
Sincerely,

Robert W. Schaefer, President

DNR Section

STATE ENGINEERING ASSOCIATION

cc: Eric Stanchfield, Secretary
Dept. of Employee Trust Funds



STATE ENGINEERING ASSOCIATION

4510 REGENT STREET

MADISON, WISCONSIN 53705

(608) 233-4696

April 15, 1999

TO: Co-chairs Senator Brian Burke &
Representative John Gard
Joint Finance Committee

RE: State of Wisconsin Investment Board Budget

The State Engineering Association wants to support the following areas of the Investment Board budget:

1. Recruit and retain experienced staff (LFB Summary Item #2)
We support the bonus increase recommended by the Governor.

We also support the proposed salary adjustment being proposed by DER to fund base salary increases for closing the gap between SWIB salaries and the private investors.

2. Critical staffing needs (LFB Summary Item #4)
The Governor's budget recommendation provides three new positions for Assistant Portfolio Managers.
3. We continue to support the IT project and the second phase to provide user support & training (LFB Summary Item #6).
4. Outside Management.
We agree with flexibility; however, we don't agree with increasing the outside management to 25% of the total retirement fund.

We totally support the more economical internal management of retirement funds and outside management only used when there is an emergency.

Co-chairs Senator Brian Burke &
Representative John Gard
Joint Finance Committee
Page 2
April 15, 1999

We trust that your committee would make the necessary changes to the SWIB budget to provide them more flexibility for outside management only when they have a critical shortage of qualified internal staff.

We want to thank your committee for this opportunity to communicate our concerns about our retirement system and appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert W. Schaefer".

Robert W. Schaefer, President
DNR Section
STATE ENGINEERING ASSOCIATION

cc: Pat Lipton, Executive Director, SWIB

PRESENTATION TO THE JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE ASKING
ITS SUPPORT FOR THE MIDWEST RAIL INITIATIVE

Connie Palmer Smalley, member of Pro-Rail and WISARP, April 15, 1999

Thank you for this opportunity to address you today. My name is Connie Palmer Smalley and I'm here as a representative of Pro-Rail, a Madison based organization and WISARP, the Wisconsin Association of Rail Passengers. Both these organizations are very anxious to see passenger rail service return to Wisconsin's major cities via the Midwest Rail Initiative. You probably already know that the Midwest Rail Initiative is a visionary proposal, being put forward by the governors of the nine Midwest states, which would link these states by rail with Chicago as its hub. This regional high-speed rail network would offer a fast, modern, comfortable and affordable transportation option for travel within the Midwest.

It has become increasingly obvious that we here in Wisconsin and in the Midwest as a whole need to develop a balanced transit system encompassing bus, air and rail alternatives. Although highway and air travel is increasing due to increased population and demand, capacity by these systems is not. We cannot build enough highways to relieve this congestion and there also is a limit to how many extremely expensive airports we can build. The prospect of acquiring the land to build these airports is extremely daunting. As there are inherent financial limits to building more highways or airports, the need to return to passenger rail service becomes a must. Developing an inter-city rail system would mean less road and airport congestion, less pollution from cars and planes, thousands of new rail-related construction, commercial and manufacturing jobs and economic development opportunities through a stronger, better-connected regional economy.

The nine Midwest Rail states have asked the US Congress for 7.5 million for engineering and design work, representing a final stage of planning before construction begins in three corridors in 2001. These three prime corridors are service from Chicago to Minneapolis via Madison, Chicago to Detroit and Chicago to St. Louis. This first phase of implementation includes upgrading the Milwaukee-Madison rail line to 110 MPH, and initiating new train service possibly as early as 2003.

Pro-Rail and WISARP is asking this body and the legislature as a whole to make this vital rail system a reality by taking the following actions:

Encourage the state's congressional delegation to support Midwest Rail's federal request for \$7.5 million of engineering and design funds.

Provide an as-yet-to-be determined state match to these funds for the next fiscal year.

Continue financial support for existing Amtrak service and

Work with our governor, Tommy Thompson's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Passenger Rail Service to overcome institutional and financial hurdles as this proposed rail system is being developed.

I'd like to conclude my remarks by making available to the committee our Pro-Rail brochures on the system, along with the wonderful brochures developed by our own Wisconsin Department of Transportation. I have also given each of you, a copy of a very insightful article on this plan that just appeared in our local Madison paper, The Isthmus.

Thank you for your time and attention.

TRANSPORTATION

Training ground

Rail initiative promises to return the iron horse to the heartland.



By BRIAN LAVENDEL

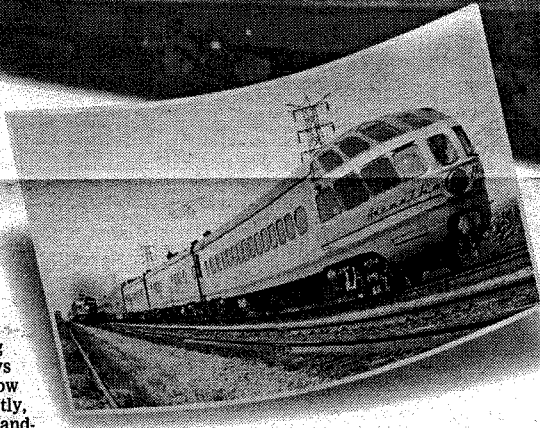
Railroad lover Peter Maiken, who grew up in Madison half a century ago, recalls the joy of traveling by train. Just going to the bustling station was a thrill, says the 64-year-old retiree, now living in Beloit. Recently, Amtrak proposed a hub-and-spoke railroad system radiating out of Chicago, with service to a dozen mid- to large-sized cities, including Milwaukee, Madison, Minneapolis-St. Paul, St. Louis and Detroit. Although he has some reservations about the plan, Maiken and other rail enthusiasts are heartened.

Maiken remembers when the railroad ruled. Railroad stations were the place to be, though he says they were "kind of dirty." Travelers coming and going filled restaurants, bars, lounges and "cigar counters, where one could pick up smokes, snacks, comic books, newspapers and magazines—everything necessary for a comfortable journey." The bursts of steam, the throb of mammoth train engines and the smell of burning coal still echo in his childhood senses.

On board the trains of old, passengers sat in comfortable chairs beside large windows, dozed in men's and women's "lounges," played cards, or tipped a bottle in the tavern car. Hungry travelers could visit the full-service dining car, which featured "real linens, silverware and fresh flowers, plus impeccable service," says Maiken. "It was quite exciting." The rail experience, he says, was synonymous with "the joy of travel."

With or without the perks, the railroad was the fastest, most efficient and most comfortable means of travel available. "The highways were narrow and slow," says Maiken, and airlines were still a novelty. People and freight moved on the railroad.

And in contrast to today's mediocre rail service, train travel of old was convenient.



Business travelers could hop aboard in Madison at 8 a.m. and arrive at Union Station in downtown Chicago at 10:50. Service was safe, reliable, comfortable and fast. The Milwaukee Road line, going by such names as "Varsity," "Marquette" and "Sioux," operated between Madison and Chicago seven days a week. On weekdays, passengers could choose from four trains each day to Chicago and back.

Six round trips a day linked Madison and Milwaukee, with the fastest trains covering the distance from Madison's Main Station at West Washington Avenue to downtown Milwaukee in 90 minutes, stopping in Sun Prairie, Watertown and Wauwatosa along the way.

Using other rail spurs, passengers could ride to and from the northern communities of Waunakee, Baraboo and Reedsburg; west to Mount Horeb or Blue Mounds; and south to the towns of Oregon and Brooklyn. Dozens of passenger trains passed through Madison every day.

Surprisingly, the Midwest sported some of the fastest trains in the world, says Jim Scribbins, a train historian who worked for the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad—better known as "The Milwaukee Road"—for some 40 years. Today the 70-year-old retiree lives in West Bend, where he writes books and gives lectures about railroad history.

Speeds on the Burlington line, which competed with Milwaukee Road on the Chicago

The railroad was once the fastest, most efficient and most comfortable mode of travel, and it could be again.

to St. Paul route, ranged from 85 mph to 100 mph. And the train would often be pushed to over 100 mph if it were running behind schedule. One particularly speedy train, the "Twin Zephyr," sprinted from Chicago to St. Paul in five hours and 33 minutes.

The modern European and Japanese trains, which outclass the dwindling U.S. rail service, owe much to the Midwest railroad companies' competitive efforts to offer the best and fastest service. "Much of the European technology was developed in the U.S. and was imported," says Scribbins.

The trains back then were plush as well as fast. "Basic coach travel," notes Scribbins, "was far roomier than anything you'd find on an airplane today." Plus all the trains had dining and tavern cars. A 1942 menu from the "400" train, providing 40-minute service between Chicago and the Twin Cities, allowed diners to choose from baked Lake Michigan trout, roast prime rib of beef, or Chicken Georgian, plus vegetables, salad, cheese, dessert and coffee—all for \$1.50. Cocktails were 40 cents extra.

It all seems like some grainy black-and-white film. Pan across long-legged ladies and men in trench coats standing on the station platform beside a steaming black engine, whistle blowing. But there's a chance we'll get to experience the warm, busy commotion of the train station once again.

MAKING IT VIABLE

In February, Gov. Tommy Thompson, the chairman of Amtrak, announced the Midwest Rail Initiative. The plan, which calls for a 3,000-mile railroad network to be phased in over the next decade, is the result of a cooperative effort of nine Midwestern states and the Federal Railroad Administration. The plan is distinct from, but could complement,

a proposal to revive commuter rail service in Dane County. (See sidebar, page 9.)

It's part of a larger move to make passenger rail viable again. Amtrak last month unveiled a new 150-mph service between New York and Washington, D.C., a speed that makes train travel comparable with air travel plus the time it takes to drive to and from airports. Now the rails there shuttle as many passengers between the Big Apple and D.C. as airlines, and the service provides a large portion of Amtrak's operating income.

Transportation officials say that, outside of the northeastern United States, the Midwest has the best odds of a successful regional railroad service. Midwest residents make 460 million intercity trips each year, 97% of them by auto. But increased congestion and gridlock on regional highways and interstates make for longer travel times and added costs for the downtime workers spend on the road. Meanwhile, vehicle emissions have caused ozone alerts and respiratory health problems in several cities in the region, including Chicago and Milwaukee. Rail planners are hoping to lure some road warriors to the rails, and provide a relief valve for travel demand, which will only grow during the next several decades.

By 2010, the proposed rail network would attract eight million passengers a year, according to one study. A bus feeder network is planned to link communities not on the rail line with the service. For instance, dedicated buses from Wausau, Stevens Point and Sheboygan could be timed to meet trains in Oshkosh.

Here in the heartland, the prospect of getting a viable regional rail network in place is improved by two important indicators—political will and monetary might. Rail has strong support in political circles, including from Thompson and governors in several

other states. Most of the Midwest region's congressional delegates are also likely to climb on board.

The Midwest Rail Initiative is also designed to generate a positive cash flow. That's right: If it performs as expected, the passenger service will make money. But getting things started will require an initial investment of about \$3.5 billion, including \$500 million for the trains themselves. Most of the rest will go for infrastructure—primarily upgrading tracks and signals.

This cost, while not pocket change, is relatively small compared to federal spending on highway maintenance and construction. Rail advocates point out that, at about \$1 million per mile, the rail system is cheaper than rural interstate highway construction, which runs \$5 million to \$10 million per mile. And it's an outright bargain compared to \$10 million to \$20 million per mile for new urban expressways.

The rail initiative calls for the federal government to finance 80% of the cost of the network, with the states coming up with the other 20%. Then, after a two-year start-up period, the rail system is expected to support itself. Revenues are predicted to grow gradually through 2010, when the passenger rail service will be earning \$100 million per year in profit.

PLUSES AND MINUSES

Aside from being cheaper than new highways, the railroad has several other advantages. Rail could reduce airport and highway congestion, saving time and money for those on the train as well as those in cars and planes. Plus, trains emit less air pollution per passenger mile than cars or planes, so we'll be breathing cleaner air. Economists estimate the value of such benefits at \$2.7 billion during the first 30 years of operation.

The rail system could have a sizable economic impact on states and communities along rail lines. Besides an estimated 1,500 new rail jobs, the system would promote growth within the Midwest region's manufacturing, service, and tourism industries.

Rail transit might also have a positive impact on what Rob Kennedy calls "the biggest environmental concern we've got—sprawl." Kennedy, an economist with Citizens for a Better Environment, sees the rail lines as a magnet to bring business and industry back to downtowns throughout the region.

"If employees can walk two blocks and get on high-speed rail from downtown to downtown," he says, "a lot of employers will want to locate there." Kennedy hopes train travel will reverse the suburban flight of businesses, leading to renewed interest and activity in the region's central cities. And he says it will benefit downtowns by increasing the number of pedestrians, "so cities will be forced to become more pedestrian-friendly"—making shops, restaurants, hotels and other services more accessible to those on foot.

But would the proposed rail system succeed at getting people out of their cars and plane seats and on the train? Although Maiken is a train booster, and would be pleased to see passenger rail return to the Midwest, he believes the new plan is based on an outmoded system. It builds, he says, "on 19th-century infrastructure" and a system "that rail passengers deserted 30 or 40 years ago."

Maiken would like to see trains run the same routes as the interstate highway system. The Madison-Chicago trip, for instance, would be faster if it were routed through Janesville, Beloit and Rockford. Maiken would also like to see the new trains incorporate "tilt" technology, allowing the cars to travel the curves more comfortably.

Beyond such quibbles, reaction to the Midwest Rail Initiative has been mostly positive. Even Ernie Stetenfeld of AAA Wisconsin, traditionally aligned with automobile and highway interests, says the plan would add a "potentially useful layer of transportation infrastructure" and have a special appeal to business travelers. Kennedy, who estimates from Madison to

Milwaukee once a week, insists many people now driving would welcome an alternative. Trains are less likely than cars to experience unforeseen delays, and they allow commuters to use their travel time working on laptops, reading or making phone calls without the distractions of the road.

And Kennedy says the true cost of auto travel is hidden because "the road and highway system is heavily subsidized by property taxes." He thinks it's time to turn the auto-subsidy around, and provide less financial incentive to drive.

AS ENVISIONED

Perhaps the greatest obstacle to the return of the passenger train is the boom in air travel. But airplanes have become so popular that they are no longer as attractive. Swelling numbers of passengers have led to airline delays and hassles getting to and through airports.

Trains are actually more reliable than airplanes because congestion and severe weather rarely cause delays. Train stations tend to be located in central city areas, which are easier to get to, reducing overall travel time.

But before they trade in their frequent-flyer cards for train passes, business travelers will require frequent and convenient service. So the Midwest Rail Initiative envisions service levels of up to 10 round-trips from Madison to Milwaukee each day. Six round-trips would take riders to and from the Twin Cities, 10 trips would go between Chicago and Detroit, and 14 between Milwaukee and Chicago.

Of course, business travelers will also want fast service. The plan calls for notching up speeds on the rail lines so that the Chicago-Milwaukee express route takes just 65 minutes, and Madison-Milwaukee one hour. If this happens, there would be little time savings to going by air, at least when travel to and from the airport and waiting times at airline terminals and gates is taken into account.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

One city, two trains?

Madison may be the home of two distinct rail transit systems—the Midwest Rail Initiative and a commuter rail service offering local transit options.

The first is an intercity system, intended to augment the interstate highway system and short airplane trips. The second is directed at transportation within the Dane County urban and suburban area.

The functions of the two systems are quite different, although it is likely they will tie in together. For example, a traveler could take the commuter rail from a neighborhood station in Middleton to the regional rail station by the Dane County Regional Airport. Both systems are receiving serious consideration, say transit advocates.

Last fall, a study on local rail transit concluded that commuter rail is "a viable option for Dane County," according to Andrea Broaddus, the New Transportation Alliance's campaign director. The next step, she says, is an "alternatives study" to consider several options to meet the county's transit needs. Broaddus hopes the study will begin by the end of this summer. As a result of the agreement brokered last month over the expansion of U.S. Highway 12 to four lanes between Madison and Sauk City, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation has agreed to support the results of the alternatives analysis.

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cha-cha-cha.
3,4,
on-line now.**

Rail initiative

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

The new stations, rail advocates say, will feature restaurants and shops, lounges and business clubs—with computer facilities, fax machines and photocopy services—banking and information kiosks. Larger rail stations could house specialty shops, bookstores and video arcades. Links to buses, taxis, auto rentals, parking and even commuter rail connections would be readily available. And passengers might be able to bring bicycles on the train, allowing them to ride to and from their rail destinations.

In Madison, a rail station might be built adjacent to the Dane County Regional Airport, says Randy Wade, chief of intercity planning for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. This would allow travelers to take advantage of both forms of transit. In the future, it's possible the Dane County commuter or "light" rail system would connect with the regional rail system at the station, allowing passengers to take the commuter rail from their neighborhood directly to board a train or plane to their final destination.

The trains, as envisioned, would be roomier than coach-class air travel and have phones, outlets for laptop computers and modems, and television monitors. Video screens would keep passengers informed of arrival information—and those meeting passengers could check arrival times by phone or the Internet. Soundproofing and shock-absorbing technologies should make the ride more comfortable and quiet than train travelers have come to expect.

Although the final train equipment hasn't yet been decided, one proposal calls for diesel multiple units—train cars that contain their own motors so no "engine" car is required. Widely used in Europe, the cars

are constructed from lightweight aluminum, allowing for rapid acceleration as the train pulls out from the station. The result is a more flexible system operating at higher efficiency and with reduced pollution.

WHERE TO BEGIN?

Much of the work needed to be done to put the rail system in place will happen at the ground level—literally. Tracks would have to be upgraded to handle trains traveling at speeds of 79-110 mph. And in light of accidents like the recent Amtrak derailment by a semi-truck on the tracks south of Chicago, crossings will be eliminated or improved.

Railroad crossings could be equipped with high-tech sensors that detect the speed of the train in order to close gates in time. One new device can also send a warning to an approaching train if there's an obstacle in the crossing. More heavily traveled railroad crossings require overpasses and underpasses or heavy-duty barriers to prevent vehicles from crashing through gates and onto the tracks.

The projected costs for train travel are higher than current Amtrak fares but lower than air travel prices. One-way fares would be about \$35 for the Milwaukee-Chicago route, \$100 from Milwaukee to the Twin Cities, and \$66 from Chicago to Detroit. Monthly passes, family fares and weekend discounts could be offered to encourage commuter and off-peak use.

And if all of this comes to pass, observes rail historian Jim Scribbins, the "new" regional system "would-in effect return—somewhat improved—the service that existed throughout the upper U.S. in the 1930s to 1950s." The irony is that this earlier passenger rail was done in by the interstate highway system and the airline industry. How fitting that the failure of those systems to meet passengers' needs might bring the iron horse back again. ■

More Great Deals

Madison's Finest Quality Produce at Outstanding Values!

Organic New Crop Red Potatoes ...	\$.49 lb
Organic Cantaloupe	\$1.49 ea
Organic Lettuce red & green leaf	\$.89 ea
Organic Zucchini	\$1.59 lb
Hydroponic Tomatoes	\$1.19 lb

Produce Prices Good 4-8-99 through 4-13-99

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community SHARES of wisconsin

Backyard Hero Award

Recognizing outstanding volunteers for their work in our community

Rochelle Frounfelker, Rape Crisis Center

Rochelle has been a Rape Crisis Center volunteer since June 1998. As a Crisis Line Counselor, Rochelle provides telephone counseling to survivors of recent and past sexual assault. She also provides individual counseling and has facilitated a support group for adult survivors of childhood incest. Additionally, Rochelle helps with outreach events, writes newsletter articles and assists with office work as needed.

The Rape Crisis Center is in need of Crisis Line Counselors. No experience necessary, and training is held winter, summer, and fall. For more information, call 251-5126.

Jim Hanson, Wheels for Winners

Jim has been involved with Vera Court's neighborhood bike repair program for two years and has helped in efforts to assess potential shop spaces. His help was crucial to getting the neighborhood bike repair program off the ground. Jim's knowledge of similar programs around the country, rapport with the kids, and creativity were invaluable in establishing this program.

Wheels for Winners refurbishes donated bicycles and presents them to Dane County youth who want to earn them through community service. Call 273-4787 if you want to get involved.

Community Shares of Wisconsin supports a world of change right here in your backyard by raising funds locally to support 40 member organizations. By challenging the root causes of social problems through education, prevention efforts, direct services and advocacy, our member agencies address issues that affect our whole community.

Sponsored by:

photos by Judy Perrott

PASSENGER RAIL TO MADISON . . . NO LONGER A DREAM!

A MADISON destination is now part of the collective vision and initiative of nine mid-western states, Amtrak and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). Their study proposes modern, swift rail travel between major metropolitan areas -- a MIDWEST REGIONAL RAIL SYSTEM (MRRS).

"The best part is that the Midwest Rail Initiative would be funded largely by federal dollars with minimal investments by the states."

Tommy Thompson, Governor of Wisconsin and Chairman of the Amtrak Board of Directors (The Capital Times, 1/28/99)

"The Midwest Rail Initiative is not a luxury. It is a necessity!" Jolene Molitoris, Federal Railroad Administrator, 1/28/99 (Chicago conference)

WHY A MIDWEST REGIONAL PASSENGER RAIL SYSTEM?

... and WHY NOW?

The time is right!

1. AMTRAK and the FRA have designated this nine state region as one of five for higher speed rail corridors.
2. AMTRAK is advancing \$25 million to help start this region's collaborative plan, with \$2 million of that allocated for preliminary engineering of the Milwaukee-MADISON route.
3. Through cooperative effort, planners can design efficient projects, using large scale, discount purchasing.
4. Modern, high frequency service can move eight million people annually through this area, helping to relieve airport and highway overload, lessening congestion and emission pollution.

WHAT WILL BE DIFFERENT FROM EXISTING RAIL SERVICES?

More Connections!

- * 80% of the region's population within a one-hour drive of a MRRS station or a feeder bus connection that will be integral to the system
- * 3000 track miles to handle 15 million train miles annually
- * six daily trains to/from MADISON and Chicago or St. Paul

Faster Travel Times!

- * Milwaukee-Chicago: in 65 min.
- * Chicago-St. Paul: 5-1/2 hours
- * speeds up to 110 mph

Better Passenger Services!

- * comfortable seats, on-board amenities, fax and telephone
- * seatside power and modem ports; audio-video monitors for information and entertainment
- * modern stations with links to airports, hotels, key locations

WHAT CAPITAL INVESTMENT WILL BE REQUIRED?

- * Infrastructure -- \$3 billion
 - * Train sets -- \$470 million
- For the nine states over a nine year period...

Infrastructure Upgrades

...about \$1 million per mile (compared with \$5 to \$10 million per mile for rural interstate and \$10 to \$20 million urban expressway)

...includes tracks, grade crossings, signaling and control systems, station improvements, maintenance facilities.

Train Sets

...modern trainsets assembled in the Midwest (discounted 30%)

WHAT ARE THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS?

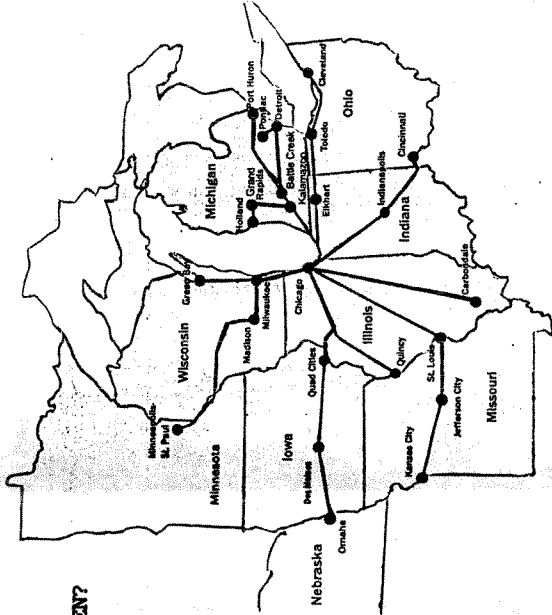
- * 1500 new permanent rail jobs and 4000 construction jobs
- * commercial revitalization and redevelopment around stations
- * manufacturing, services, tourism, conventions

THE MIDWEST REGIONAL RAIL SYSTEM will also improve the safety and productivity of existing freight services and improve the performance and travel times of any separate Amtrak services, thus keeping the Midwest competitive as a major transportation hub for the nation.

HOW AND WHEN WILL THIS HAPPEN?

The study commissioned by transportation departments of the nine states, AMTRAK, and the FRA, describes a six phase development period that places MADISON connection to the Chicago hub in Phase One, along with St. Louis and Detroit.

Full system operation is projected incrementally over nine years, with the first phase beginning operation in 2003, following a three year design, engineering and development period.



Proposed Midwest Regional Rail System

February 1999. Issued by ProRail, the Madison Area Chapter of the Wisconsin Association of Railroad Passengers (WisARP). ProRail is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, dues-and-contribution-supported membership organization, whose volunteers work to improve and expand rail passenger service in Wisconsin and throughout the Nation. For membership and other information, write to ProRail, P.O. Box 5401, Madison, WI 53705-0401.

(Main information source: Midwest Regional Rail Initiative Executive Report, August 1998.) See report at: www.dot.state.wi.us/dti/bop/mwrrsrtpt.pdf

"Rail is a quality of life issue. ... If we backtrack (now), we may not be able to get going again. ... (we must get) Congress to sustain Amtrak — honor its commitments." — Bob Franks, (N.J.) Vice Chair House Sub committee on Ground Transportation.

WHAT ARE THE OPERATING COSTS?

- * By 2010, annual operating costs should be \$347 million.
- * After a two year start-up period, system revenues should exceed system operating costs in all corridors.
- * Revenue surpluses can be used to recover the initial investment made by the states, as well as pay for system expansion and preservation.

HOW WILL THE MARRS BE FUNDED?

- * 80% federal funds, predominantly for infrastructure
- * 20% state funds, predominantly for rolling stock
- * State issued bonds (Wisconsin law already provides \$50 million in bonding authority for Madison and Green Bay capital improvements.)

Midwest Regional Rail Initiative

The Midwest Regional Rail Initiative is a cooperative and collaborative effort among nine Midwest states, Amtrak and the Federal Railroad Administration. Ongoing objectives of the initiative are to evaluate financing options and work together to secure the funding needed to proceed to engineering design and construction of the MWRRS.

For more information about the regional rail system, contact your local representative.

Illinois Contact:
Mr. Merrill Travis, Tel: 212-782-2835 Email: travism@nt.dot.state.il.us

Indiana Contact:
Mr. Tom Beck, Tel: 317-232-1478 Email: tbeck@indot.state.in.us

Iowa Contact:
Mr. John Hey, Tel: 515-239-1653 Email: jhey@iadoweb.com

Michigan Contact:
Mr. Tim Hoeffner, Tel: 517-373-2835 Email: hoeffner@mdot.state.mi.us

Minnesota Contact:
Mr. Dan Krom, Tel: 651-296-1611 Email: dan.krom@dot.state.mn.us

Missouri Contact:
MoDOT Customer Service, Tel: 573-751-2551 Email: modot.state.mo.us

Nebraska Contact:
Mr. Dan Rosenthal, Tel: 402-479-4438 Email: dan_rosenthal@dot.state.ne.us

Ohio Contact:
Mr. Thomas O'Leary, Tel: 614-644-0306 Email: bwilson@odot.dot.ohio.gov

Wisconsin Contact:
Mr. Randy Wade, Tel: 608-267-7753 Email: randall.wade@dot.state.wi.us

Amtrak Contact:
Mr. James Wolfe, Tel: 312-655-1333 Email: wolfe@c1.amtrak.com

MWRRS

Midwest Regional Rail System

A 21st Century
Transportation System
for the Midwest

A 21st Century
Transportation
System for the
Midwest

MWRRS

Midwest Regional Rail System

Amtrak

Intercity Train Travel In The Midwest Is About To Be Revolutionized

3,000 MILES OF TRACK

Regional Rail Network with Hub in Chicago

110 MILES PER HOUR

New Train Equipment & Reduced Travel Times

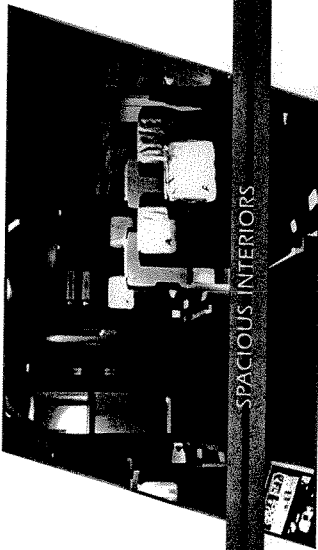
9 STATES

Fast, Frequent City Center Connections

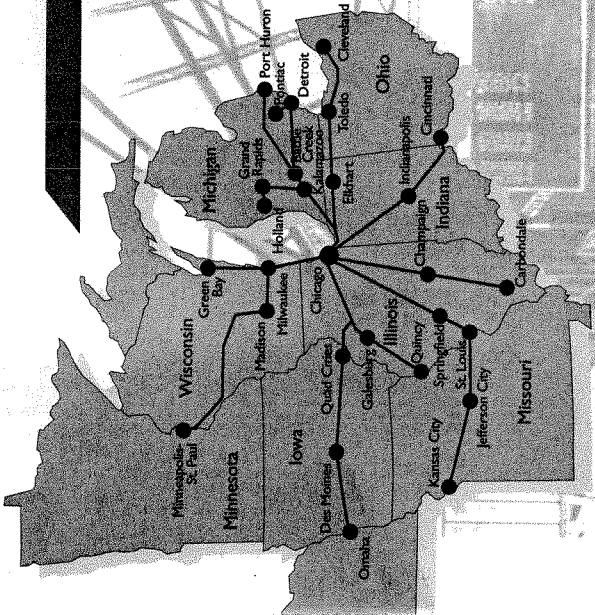
This proposed travel option uses the latest train technology to create a fast, efficient and reliable passenger rail system that will offer amenities rivaling business class airline travel. Modern stations will offer shops, restaurants, business support services and convenient transportation links.

SPACIOUS MODERN INTERIORS

Comfortable seating, headroom & on-board amenities, including on-train fax & telephone facilities



SPACIOUS INTERIORS



CONVENIENCES AT EACH SEAT

Full range of business support services—power & modern ports & audiovisual monitors with news, entertainment & information programs



BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES

The MWRRS Will:

- Reduce travel times with high quality reliable passenger rail service
 - Bring 80 percent of the regional population within less than a one hour drive of the MWRRS
- 8 MILLION PASSENGERS PROJECTED TO RIDE THE MWRRS ANNUALLY
- Provide alternative to highway travel and reduce congestion, energy use and emissions
 - Generate significant economic benefits for the Midwest region, including:
 - 1,500 NEW PERMANENT RAIL JOBS
 - 4,000 CONSTRUCTION JOBS
 - Propose a nine-year construction program to upgrade track and purchase new train equipment
 - Project \$3.5 billion capital investment, proposed to be financed with 80% federal funds and 20% state, local and private sector funds

MODERN STATIONS

Shops, restaurants & business support services. Convenient ground transportation links to airports, hotels & other key locations



MODERN STATIONS