

## COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

### VICE CHAIR

- Public Works Committee

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- Anti-Graffiti Policy Committee
- Judiciary and Legislation Committee



**ROBERT G. DONOVAN**

Alderman, 8th District

September 11, 2013

Chris Abele  
Milwaukee County Executive  
Milwaukee County Courthouse  
901 N. 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 306  
Milwaukee, WI 53233

Dear County Executive Abele:

As you have undoubtedly noticed, the Milwaukee Streetcar project now appears to be on its last leg. Just last week, the U.S. Department of Transportation rejected the City's request for \$26.6 million in grant funds to expand the proposed system. More significantly, the project is well behind schedule, and whatever support for the Streetcar may have once existed is quickly evaporating. Even philanthropist Michael Cudahy, initially a staunch proponent of the project, now opposes the Streetcar because of its limited route and the high costs of relocating underground utility lines.

In my humble opinion, the vast majority of your constituents – the residents of Milwaukee County – would not benefit from the Milwaukee Streetcar and are opposed to its construction. Their concerns and needs – relating to public safety, jobs, taxes, etc. – are much more basic, but often go unmet. No downtown transit project is going to make a bit of difference in meeting these basic needs.

For these reasons and others, I would implore you to prevail upon Mayor Tom Barrett to cancel the project and put an end to this fiasco. Milwaukee has many more pressing needs than a downtown streetcar line – streets in need of repair, a growing and spreading crime problem, and the foreclosure crisis, just to name a few. Funds currently earmarked for the Milwaukee Streetcar should be reprogrammed for use by the Milwaukee County Transit System or to address these other, far more serious issues facing our community.

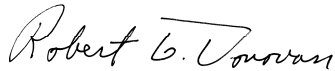
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It should also be pointed out that while the estimated initial capital cost of the Milwaukee Streetcar is \$64.6 million, the annual operating cost of the system would be \$2.65 million. This would be an unconscionable burden on our taxpayers. We are in no position to take on this additional financial responsibility when we cannot even find the resources to take care of basic needs.

The Milwaukee Streetcar project has been fraught with problems since its inception. The project is now languishing and more unpopular than ever. It's simply time for everyone involved to call it quits and move on. Please do whatever is in your power to bring about prompt cancellation of the project and the reallocation of funds for more useful purposes.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert G. Donovan".

Robert G. Donovan  
Alderman, 8<sup>th</sup> District