

RESOLUTION NO. 64 - 07

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR CONTINUATION OF RAIL SERVICE
THROUGH THE BADGER ARMY AMMUNITION PLANT AND
FOR PRESERVATION OF A CONTIGUOUS RAIL CORRIDOR SERVING
THE SAUK PRAIRIE COMMUNITIES AND SUPPORT FOR A TRAIL ALONG
THE EXISTING RAIL ALIGNMENT THROUGH THE VILLAGES OF
SAUK CITY AND PRAIRIE DU SAC AND EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR
THE CONTINUATION OF RAIL SERVICE TO SAUK COUNTY

WHEREAS, continuation of active rail service is vital to the Sauk County economy, and economic development in the County is dependent upon rail freight service; and,

WHEREAS, Sauk County has consistently supported the continuation of rail service and the preservation of rail alignments where it is no longer feasible to continue active rail service; and,

WHEREAS, the uncertain future of energy sources makes rail a vital option for the future transportation needs of Sauk County; and,

WHEREAS, Sauk County has frequently been requested to state its position on the future of rail service through the Badger Army Ammunition Plant, the former railroad bridge at Sauk City, and a variety of other issues that are currently under study and consideration; and,

WHEREAS, the Villages of Sauk City and Prairie du Sac are desirous of converting the current unused rail line through the villages to a trail and the villages have also expressed concern regarding the return of active rail service through the center of the villages; and,

WHEREAS, the rail line through the Badger Army Ammunition Plant completes a through link between the mainline running from Madison to Reedsburg and State of Wisconsin owned right-of-way from Mazomanie to the Sauk Prairie community, and this link could become vital if the bridge at Merrimac was removed from service for whatever reason; and,

WHEREAS, your undersigned Committee does believe it is imperative to maintain the option of future rail service to the Sauk Prairie communities as well as northern Sauk County; and,

WHEREAS, the reconstruction of U.S. Highway 12 presents an ideal time to consider the future alignment of rail to permit this through route to exist and that future rail service remains a viable option for the Villages of Sauk City and Prairie du Sac.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors, met in regular session, that Sauk County hereby expresses its support for the following concepts:

- A. Sauk County desires to go on record as supporting the preservation of the option of through rail service through Badger and around the edge of the Sauk Prairie communities that links the current mainline between Madison and Reedsburg through Merrimac and Baraboo and State of Wisconsin owned right-of-way running between Mazomanie to the Sauk Prairie communities; and,
- B. Sauk County encourages the acquisition by WisDOT of the rail line through Badger as a rail easement over WDNR land, but is opposed to the transfer of this rail line from public ownership, and is opposed to the storage of rail cars at Badger or along this right-of-way,

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or use of any rail facilities in Badger that are incompatible with the conservation vision for the property and the Badger Reuse Plan, with the expectation that the rail right-of-way will be utilized for the current and potential through transit of trains; and,

- C. Sauk County believes that the existing rail line through the Villages of Prairie du Sac and Sauk City is not the ideal location for a railroad right-of-way in the event that the bridge at Merrimac needs to be removed from service for some period of time, or it is otherwise desirable to return rail service to the Sauk Prairie area, and Sauk County urges that provisions be made to provide for a rail relocation as part of the Highway 12 bypass around the Villages or that some other plan for preservation of a contiguous line connecting northern Sauk County to State owned right-of-way be made as part of this planning process consistent with the comprehensive master plan of the Villages of Prairie du Sac, Sauk City and the Town of Prairie du Sac; and,
- D. Sauk County supports the creation of a trail through the Sauk Prairie communities on the current railroad right-of-way, with the retention of the right-of-way through the villages until such time that an alternate right-of-way is located around the Sauk Prairie communities, so as not to jeopardize the future of rail service to the Sauk Prairie area or through the Sauk Prairie area to northern Sauk County; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Sauk County makes the general statement that it supports the continuation of rail service to Sauk County where it currently exists and declares that continued rail service is vital to the communities of Baraboo, North Freedom, Rock Springs, Reedsburg and Spring Green and every effort needs to be made to ensure there is no disruption of this service in the future.

For consideration by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors on May 15, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

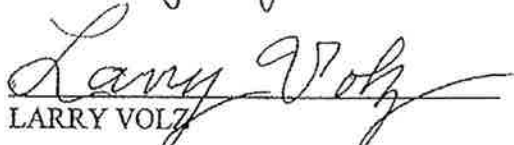
TRANSPORTATION AND PARKS COMMITTEE


VIRGIL HARTJE, Chairperson


TIM MEISTER


HALSEY SPEECHER


DONALD STEVENS


LARRY VOLZ

FISCAL NOTE: The preservation of rail service is essential to many taxpaying businesses and enterprises in Sauk County, and privately owned railroad real estate is taxable and provides revenue to Sauk County. *CLT*

MIS NOTE: No MIS impact.