

Milwaukee Alderman Donovan: Proposed streetcar expansion expensive, ill-advised and premature

Posted on Thursday, May 2, 2019

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Alderman Donovan asks one simple question: 'Where's the money?'

Statement from Alderman Bob Donovan

For many, this is a really good time to live in Milwaukee.

There are billions of dollars in new construction going on throughout the downtown, we are scheduled to host the 2020 Democratic National Convention, and the Bucks are making a good run in the playoffs.

It should be a time when we stand shoulder-to-shoulder — Common Council, Mayor, and citizens — to ensure this positive energy and growth benefits the entire City.

Why, then, must Mayor Barrett insist on having what will surely be a bruising debate on a premature extension of his pet project, the Milwaukee Streetcar?

Forget about the fact that the first circulator loop isn't done yet. The Couture about which so much ink was spilled remains months behind schedule and little more than a good intention at the moment.

Forget about the fact that, for all the excitement about "The Hop", the system for counting its passengers broke only a few weeks ago and we still don't know how many people are willing to ride it when it's free, much less when there's a fare required.

Forget about the fact that the federal government has repeatedly refused the

Mayor's requests for grant money for streetcar extensions leaving all of us not in on his secrets to dread how he imagines this extension will be paid for.

What I cannot get over is that, with basic services slipping and neighborhoods crumbling, Mayor Barrett chooses this precious moment of optimism and hope to pursue the most divisive policy imaginable. I am amazed at this.

The Mayor knows I will oppose this as will many on the Common Council and within the community and yet he does not seem to care; preferring to privately brief my colleagues he regards as potential supporters.

In some ways, this is a crowning disappointment from an administration in which I have long grown accustomed to being disappointed.