

Once again, we have been sold on a plan to reinvigorate the downtown. This time it is KRM Rail. The plan has many problems, from financing to the stark reality most people do not want it.

The biggest single argument against it is simply that, if being the northernmost suburb of Chicago did not save downtown, why assume making us a rail linked southern suburb of Milwaukee will add much kick. Milwaukee is roughly a tenth the size of the Windy City. Do the math.

Much of the growth downtown has been publicly funded. The Harbor Park area had over 18 million dollars of improvements made by the city of Kenosha. Stationside Village has subsidized housing included which allowed further millions from government sources to help make that a reality. I have heard that supporters point to those developments like they were directly the result of the existing rail line. A rail line that has existed for over 150 years! Yet, only now, has it spurred this remarkable growth. It is somewhat deceitful to allow Racine and the northern cities to believe the rail line is a powerful influence on downtown Kenosha.

Financing of this rail line brings up issues which are very troubling. They wish to finance the local communities' share of the rail line from additional rental car fees. They need this for the system will not charge enough in fares to pay for itself. In fact, the system would be unable to generate enough income to privately finance itself, so federal and state dollars will be needed for the initial capital investment. That investment will never be paid back and the special tax will only pay to keep it running and the remaining capital costs after the feds and the state pay for up to 85 percent of it. This system will never be self-sufficient. The supporters of this system cannot pay to create it without help. Where will they get the money for the rebuild 20-30 years from now? Are they going to hit up Uncle Sam, again?

Uncle Sam is a really nice guy. He runs a money laundering operation. He washes away the guilt of borrowing money from your children. Local communities see no further than Uncle Sam opening his thick wallet and giving them a gift. They choose not to see that Uncle Sam is at least 9 trillion bucks in debt and has liens on everyone's children's future. If, the entitlement programs are included, our kids are on the hook for nearly 50 trillion dollars! Must we add more to that debt?

The additional tax, if somehow insulated from the local communities' need to rent cars for their own use like during a car repair, will hit businesses and tourists. The easiest way to lure business and tourism to any community is to lower the cost of engaging in those activities. Wisconsin lags behind many states in development for we are known as a tax hell. If, more business development is desired, why make it such a burden to do business here? Low taxes are a great incentive to business. We would not need to bribe corporations to move here, if we were naturally an inexpensive place to do business.

The real madness lies in that most people will never consider taking the train to Milwaukee as a commuting option. There are too many stops which make the travel time longer than driving. Any final destination will require additional bus or taxi transport for everyone not working in downtown Milwaukee. Point to point transit is the norm for the vast majority of daily commuters. That is a trend that will not go away. Even when rail systems show increased usage, automobile use in those metropolitan areas shows greater growth.

I am sorry, but rail is no longer the hot technology it was in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Downtown Kenosha is no longer the major business center of our community. The automobile has decentralized our way of life and people love it. Even, if gas prices go up further, most people would just buy smaller cars. Please, put away the cultural time machine and embrace reality, cars won.