



# City of Racine

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[www.cityofracine.org](http://www.cityofracine.org)

## Legislative Report

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**File Number: Res. 0429-21**

**Agenda Date: 06/01/2021**

**File Type: Resolution**

Support for Federal Investment in the Construction of the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee Commuter Rail Line

WHEREAS, Restoring commuter rail in the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee (KRM) corridor would improve mobility, increase transit use, enhance access to employment and education, and contribute to desirable economic and community development in Wisconsin's most densely populated area, including approximately 1.3 million residents, and directly serving 23% of Wisconsin's population; and

WHEREAS, the City of Racine is located in the 3rd largest economic region in the United States and 10th largest economic region in the world, yet is the largest municipality furthest away from an interstate highway in the Midwest, illustrating a lack of regional transportation connection to an area with a GDP of \$789 billion; and

WHEREAS, increased transit access and regional rail connectivity is critical in addressing Southeastern Wisconsin's stark disparities in socioeconomic measures between black and white residents such as household income, education attainment, unemployment rates and homeownership; and

WHEREAS, the proportion of households without access to an automobile in the cities of Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee is twice the regional average; and

WHEREAS, without enhanced passenger rail service, the cities of Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee will continue to struggle with higher unemployment and lower income levels than the regional average; and

WHEREAS, regional connectivity is critical for economic growth and competitiveness in attracting and retaining a skilled workforce, promoting tourism, and creating a vibrant business community; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak's Hiawatha Line, servicing Milwaukee and Chicago and the busiest route in the Midwest, experienced a 9% increase in ridership between 2014 and 2019 illustrating a proven regional demand for and culture of passenger rail use; and

WHEREAS, The three urban centers that would be served by this passenger rail service—Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee—exhibit a development pattern that is largely shaped by pre-automobile transportation; and

WHEREAS, KRM will support and assist in providing thousands of jobs through transit-oriented development and connect Racine workers to over seven million jobs within the Milwaukee/Chicago metropolitan region; and

WHEREAS, On April 16th, 2018, the City of Racine Common Council passed Res. 0122-18 declaring its commitment to reducing its carbon footprint and supporting the goals of the Paris Climate Accord adopted on December 12, 2015; and

WHEREAS, The Biden-Harris Administration recently announced a federal goal of 50% reduction in economy-wide net greenhouse gas pollution by 2030; and

WHEREAS, According to the United States Department of Transportation’s Federal Transit Administration, public transportation reduces greenhouse gas emissions by “Providing a low emissions alternative to driving and facilitating compact land use”; and

WHEREAS, the KRM project would contribute to economic growth, environmental stewardship and racial equity in Southeastern Wisconsin;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT The City of Racine officially supports the construction of the KRM Commuter Rail Line; and, be it

Further resolved, the Office of the Mayor and other relevant departments lead and participate in efforts related to the construction of the KRM Commuter Rail Line.

Fiscal Note: N/A