

# KENOSHA NEWS

## Transit director Brandrup to retire

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Len Brandrup is making his last stops as Kenosha's transit director.

Brandrup, 64, will retire at the end of the year. He has been transit director since April 2002.

"I reached a point in my career when it was time to step aside," Brandrup said.

Brandrup previously worked with transit systems and companies in Texas, including Dallas, Austin, El Paso and Corpus Christi, as well as Arkansas, near Walmart's corporate headquarters in Bentonville.

So why Kenosha?

"I was looking for a small urban system where I could actually get something done," Brandrup said. "It's a nice place to finish my career."

Accomplishments

Brandrup's time as transit director included overseeing the construction of a new \$13.3 million garage and headquarters for Kenosha Area Transit at 4303 39th Ave. It was completed in 2006.

"We brought in this project under budget, and it served as a catalyst for the development of the (Kenosha Auto Transport) site and the Wilson neighborhood," Brandrup said.

The facility was also part of changing the overall look and performance of the city's buses. The larger space allows the fleet to be stored indoors, which has greatly improved maintenance efficiency and reduced weather damage.

"We were able to put a product on the street of much higher quality," Brandrup said.

The city has also furthered transit partnerships with Kenosha County and the Kenosha Achievement Center and joined with other transit systems in southeastern Wisconsin to pool transit awareness efforts and federal support.

"We've been able to leverage other funding that the city of Kenosha could not afford by itself," Brandrup said.

The new facility, and all transit developments, were not possible without the help of many, Brandrup said.

"I couldn't do this without the support of the mayor, Transit Commission and administration," Brandrup said. The support of area elected officials and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation also were a boon for Kenosha's transit developments, he said.

Recognitions

Brandrup said he was proud of recognitions the system received, such as an award from the Kenosha Area

Chamber of Commerce for the design of the transit building and a national award for promotional materials aimed at children.

Kenosha Mayor Keith Bosman said Brandrup brought experience and recognition to the city's transit efforts.

"Len is probably one of the most knowledgeable transit directors in the country," Bosman said. "He is a very highly respected person in the transit business. People would lean on him for both local and national issues. We are losing a great guy in Len."

Alderman Don Holland, chairman of the city's Transit Commission, said Brandrup was able to improve the system.

"He looked at advancing the streetcar system so it became an integral part of our transit system," Holland said. "He had the ability to know how to gain entry into a lot of funding at the federal level.

"Our bus fleet has been updated, and we have been reducing the age of our buses considerably. And the new transit building has left its mark on the community."

#### The future

Several transit developments could be near for Kenosha. Locally, grants are available that could extend the city's streetcar line, and renovation of the Metra station is in the works.

A regional transit authority is still being discussed, and plans for the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter rail link are continuing their review.

Those regional issues will be vital for Kenosha, Brandrup said.

"A community without a viable public option can't grow and develop in tomorrow's economy," Brandrup said. "We need to get the legislation in place to get the system to grow and allow us to be a viable system for all residents in the community and not just those that need it."

Brandrup said he has enjoyed Kenosha and plans on staying in the area. And he also plans on staying involved in area transit, perhaps as a consultant.

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