



**News release**

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**EVOC Track Update  
Gateway Technical College to explore alternate locations**

As part of an ongoing community conversation, officials from Gateway Technical College and the University of Wisconsin-Parkside confirmed plans to explore alternate locations for a proposed emergency vehicle operations course (EVOC) training track. Gateway and Parkside had discussed constructing the EVOC track east of Tallent Hall on the UW-Parkside campus.

“The Parkside location would have provided a much-needed training facility close to Gateway campuses in Racine and Kenosha,” said Bill Whyte, Gateway’s vice president of human resources and facilities.

“In addition, the location would have saved time and financial resources for area law-enforcement agencies and added to the educational experience of Gateway and Parkside students. Even so, Gateway and Parkside have always strived to be good neighbors at all of our locations, and the neighbors of the proposed site have expressed concerns.”

The most efficient and effective use of very limited financial resources is always a primary goal for any Gateway project, Whyte noted, including the

proposed EVOC track and expansion of other facilities that support Gateway's law-enforcement program. The Parkside site met that goal in that it could have been developed at a minimal cost to taxpayers and still meet the needs of students.

"A partnership with UW-Parkside to utilize state property was certainly a plus," Whyte said. "However, to accommodate the concerns expressed by neighbors would have limited our ability to provide the full law enforcement training experience."

Nearly 50 residents of the Village of Somers attended a recent community information session hosted by the village. Gateway representatives presented development plans and what the track would mean for law enforcement training in the area. Residents were given the opportunity to voice any concerns.

Residents were also invited to experience an EVOC track in operation. Gateway is currently using a parking lot at the former Dairyland Greyhound Park. However, that property is up for sale and Gateway will no longer be able to use that location once it is sold. The broker for that property has recently noted he is in negotiations with potential developers interested in the site.

Whyte said people who visited the current track were surprised by the low level of sound during training.

Mel Klinkner, UW-Parkside vice chancellor of finance and administration, said the proposed partnership would have benefited students at both institutions. "Parkside has close to 20 academic partnerships with Gateway, including our most recent in criminal justice," Klinkner said. "The goal of these and any future

partnerships is to do what is best for our students and to make the best use of our scarce financial resources.”

The current UW-Parkside master plan does not include development of the land east of Tallent Hall. However, Klinkner said future use for academic buildings, residence halls or athletic fields is possible. “That land is the original parking area the university used when it opened in 1968,” Klinkner said. “While we have no plans for development at this time, we’ll consider this space if the need arises.”

Whyte and Klinkner noted support from the Village of Somers for local law enforcement training. “Our institutions have had a strong and valued partnership with the Town of Somers and the Village of Somers,” Klinkner said. “Residents of Somers understand that law-enforcement training in our area is a priority and we appreciate that support.”

Whyte said he’ll work with Somers officials as Gateway explores alternate locations. “We looked at 25 properties in all three counties of our district over a three-year time frame before our discussions with Parkside began,” Whyte said. “Our plan is to continue the search.”

**Gateway Technical College** collaborates with communities in Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties to ensure economic growth and viability by providing education, training, leadership and technological resources to meet the changing needs of students, employers and communities.

**The University of Wisconsin-Parkside** is one of 13 four-year campuses in the University of Wisconsin System. Founded in 1968 to better serve the needs of a growing population in southeastern Wisconsin and northeastern Illinois, UW-Parkside offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs and serves as an academic and cultural resource. The campus is located at 900 Wood Rd. in Somers.

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