

Fields, Debbie

From: Siddiqua DeShazer <siddiqpd@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 7, 2026 2:11 PM
To: Madison, Sabrina; All Alders; Mayor; Board of Public Works; Finance Committee; swr.dtsd@dot.wi.gov; Vision Zero; cityclerk@cityofmadison.com
Subject: OPPOSITION: Jurisdictional Transfer (Park St/John Nolen) — Beltline Hazards, Regressive Enforcement, & Budget Deficits 7/8/26 Board of Public Works

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To Alder Madison, the Common Council, City Clerk, and Mayor Rhodes-Conway:

I am writing as a resident of District 17 (3346 Forest Run) to formally put my opposition to the jurisdictional transfer of S. Park Street, W. Washington Avenue, and John Nolen Drive on the official written record. The current proposal represents a contradiction in the city's fiscal prioritization, traffic flow logic, and approach to equitable justice.

1. The Mechanical Failure: Displacing Hazards onto the Beltline

As a daily commuter on the Beltline, I observe the severe congestion at the US-151/Park Street exit, which routinely backs up past Fish Hatchery Road. Because the exit acts as a constricted valve, any Vision Zero lane reduction on Park Street will drastically reduce the volume of vehicles that can exit the highway per minute. This will mathematically push the dead-stop traffic line further back onto the high-speed interstate, creating a lethal rear-end collision zone. The city's proposal does not eliminate traffic violence; it displaces it onto WisDOT's high-speed corridor.

2. The Restorative Justice Void & Un-Audited Enforcement

The city relies on the tragic death of Sasha Rosen to justify this transfer. However, MPD records confirm the intersection already had a 25 mph limit and active flashing warning beacons. The driver ignored them while traveling 62 mph. Passive engineering cannot fix active non-compliance. Furthermore, relying on physical policing defaults to a regressive financial citation system. Financial fines punish our lowest-income neighbors the hardest while acting as a mere "cost of speeding" for the wealthy. If the city truly wants a progressive Vision Zero, it must advocate for automated enforcement (cameras) paired with restorative justice diversion programs (community volunteering/education). Instead of absorbing road debt, Madison should pool its resources with Milwaukee to lobby the state legislature to repeal the ban on automated enforcement.

3. The Fiscal Contradiction: Capital Grants vs. Operating Liabilities

Proponents of this transfer frequently state that federal Safe Streets grants or Capital funds will pay for the road redesign, indicating it does not affect our operating budget for social services. This overlooks a critical structural liability. While Capital grants may pay for the initial paint, taking jurisdiction of a state highway transfers the long-term Operating liabilities to the city.

Currently, WisDOT pays the daily costs for plowing, winter salting, and heavy base-patching on these corridors. If Madison takes ownership, the cost of that daily maintenance permanently shifts onto the city's General Operating Fund. This is the exact same bucket of money that is currently facing a \$3.3 million deficit to provide 24/7 staffing at the new Bartillon men's shelter.

Furthermore, in November 2024, Madison taxpayers passed a historic \$22 million operating referendum purely to keep basic city services running, concurrent with a massive \$550 million MMSD school referendum. Taxpayers are already stretched to their absolute limits funding our schools and keeping the city's lights on. We cannot claim operating budget austerity when evaluating a \$3.3 million gap for unhoused residents, while simultaneously volunteering to permanently absorb WisDOT's operating liabilities for regional highways. Every mile of state highway we absorb mathematically drains the exact same General Fund we need for community care. You cannot separate the road from the ledger.

I urge you to vote against this transfer. Keep the physical and fiscal liability of state highways with the state.

One love,
Siddiqua DeShazer
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