

Agenda Item No. 150
Common Council Meeting of February 22, 2005

18 February 2005

Re: Assessable curb and gutter replacement in conjunction with street resurfacing
(Midvale Blvd.)

(The following letter is basically the same one which I presented at a public hearing on the 2nd of February hosted by the City Engineering Division to the Board of Public Works. At that time they essentially simply took our comments for the record, but I need to repeat my concerns)

I don't understand why this is an individualized assessment and why this isn't a municipal-wide budget item and city-wide shared responsibility just like—and this is the obvious example—schools. In fact, as a major artery, and particularly as it's an exit off the Beltline, I would presume State and Federal funds are a sizeable portion of this project cost.

Again, this is probably an argument you've heard repeatedly in relation to many city services: a large percentage of people living elsewhere in the county would use this street every day going to work in Madison (and quite often driving over the speed limit, I might add). Are they contributing to this project cost?

This project serves a much greater populace—city and county—who should be sharing in the costs. It does not directly benefit me as an individual (certainly not in the proportion as defined in this direct personal charged assessment); consequently, that is why I'm questioning the reason for an individual assessment. (And please don't refer to the one-liner that this is simply a city ordinance.) Along this same thought, schools are one of those ingredients in a recipe that make this a most livable city; they are something we all share in supporting, even though they are absolutely of no direct benefit to me.

In regard to the curb and gutter specifically, this is an integral part of the street and the city-wide storm water drainage system. It is a project serving the city populace and not a specific individual.

Incidentally, this portion of Midvale was completely stripped and resurfaced about seven years ago. It would seem to be in awfully good shape compared to many routes.

Circumstances have found me trying to make it as a self-employed individual. It's not easy, and this special assessment—coming completely out of the blue—represents a huge percentage (believe it or not) of what I can—or had—hoped to earn this year. Please reconsider the reasoning or justification behind directing an individual assessment for a project that clearly benefits the greater city and regional populace.

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