

# Poems Coming To Sidewalks On Williamson Street In Madison?

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Straight out of the gate let me say [I LOVE this idea](#). It is refreshing and needed in this time of anger and disgust that has so encompassed Madison over the past months due to the Republicans who have captured state government up the street.

We need to find ways to lift the spirit of Madison, and do so a step at a time. (Bad pun!) **Placing poetry into the sidewalk is a grand way to show that our city has values that differ from what the GOP are pressing on the state.** This place we call home is unique and set apart due to the make-up of our residents, the diversity of our thoughts, and the loftier goals that we seek to attain. Everything worth having, after all, is not gained with a tax cut.

The cost for this idea is minimal, and in this time of budget constraint should in no way pose a problem. I think Madison should not give up on the notion that we are unique and understand that to get our footing back after the Republican attacks we need to think outside the box. The rest of the state, even when they pretend to sneer at us, all would welcome living here if they could.

*The city's Board of Public Works will consider a plan Wednesday to stamp poems into newly laid sidewalk as part of the reconstruction of Williamson Street.*

*Short poems from past and present Madison poet laureates John Tuschen, Andrea Musher and Fabu Carter-Brisco would be embedded into the sidewalk on the southeast side of the street, probably somewhere between Livingston and Baldwin streets.*

*Each poem would cost about \$1,000, with the bulk of the expense going to create the stamps needed to press the poems into drying concrete, Wolf said. No signs or other forewarning would announce them, and I imagine the effect of stumbling upon one would be revelatory.*

*Plus, poetry isn't exactly up there with Beyonce when it comes to capturing America's popular imagination, and could probably use the boost.*

*It "seems a little odd" to put poetry into sidewalks, said Theresa Kelley, an English professor at UW-Madison, as "these things tend to wear away and people look up rather than down to read."*

*"But a few lines of poetry, with the poet's name and dates below, seem to me a good boost to reflection, which we desperately need in these times and in our culture," she said.*