

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

As I write this letter, Madison just experienced a freeze and thaw weekend with lots of accidents caused by slippery streets and sidewalks. For each snow emergency, our Streets Department works diligently plowing, salting, and sanding Madison street miles equal to the distance from here to Las Vegas. The crews also handle numerous winter emergencies such as water main breaks and the inevitable potholes. The groundhog predicted six extra weeks of winter, and potholes already appear. If you spot any pothole within the neighborhood, please contact the Pothole Patrol at <https://www.cityofmadison.com/ReportaProblem/Potholes.cfm>.

The tough decision for a 50¢ Metro bus fare increase was passed by the Common Council. I voted in support of this much needed increase to improve Metro efficiency and safety at transfer points. Metro desperately needs resources to enhance routes and services to attract more riders. Delaying the increase would require the inevitable cuts in Sunday and holiday services and further route elimination. Eventually, a fare increase is unavoidable.

While our City still faces the Overture Center financial dilemma, we also are waiting for details to be worked out with the recently approved stimulus package that promises to revitalize our economy. With safety as my top priority and as a Commissioner for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), I'm encouraging Dane County Habitat for Humanity to explore opportunities to purchase troubled spots within our district (based on calls for police service). Once renovated, these units will be offered to screened buyers, who are expected to be new contributing members of our community.

Although saddened that Cub Foods on Verona Road has closed, I am quite excited with the opportunity presented to the languishing Westgate Mall by employee-owned Iowa Hy-Vee Groceries' proposal to build and operate a store at Westgate. This will bring hundreds of jobs to the area and ensure the current 29 small local business owners in this mall can continue to serve our community. I do believe the positive rewards of business competition will benefit consumers, who must watch spending during this economic downturn. The developers are working with City authorities to address area traffic safety. My sincere gratitude to all who have participated in this process to ensure that everyone gains from this joint effort.

Since last December when I was first notified of the proposed project for a pedestrian/bicycle path to University Research Park via Tocora Lane, this issue has become volatile. After consulting with those in charge, as well as listening to impacted residents, I requested City Engineering to arrange for a public hearing (tentatively slated for 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24, at Sequoya Branch Library) so area residents have an opportunity to openly share views and concerns. Soon, a large number of Midvale Heights residents should be receiving official notice in the mail. I look forward to this public meeting where neighbors can work together in finding a solution that benefits all.

As the stoplight at the S. Whitney Way and Raymond Road intersection has proven to be well-liked by many, I expect the next traffic calming project at the Segoe/Tokay/Constitution intersection (slated to start after spring thaw) will also be well-received. Funding has been approved to replace decaying trees on various medians within District 20, especially along Raymond Road and S. Whitney Way. Gypsy Moth numbers have been growing in our area, so aerial spraying will resume in the spring. Please log on to <http://www.gypsymoth.wi.gov> for more information.

The pilot Neighborhood Center got Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) and Board of Estimates (BOE) approval just in time to execute the lease and start remodeling work at Meadowood Mall. A successful open house was celebrated on Monday, February 23, and operation started the very next day. Since this is only a one-year "pilot center," please volunteer your time and service and make your best use of it. City and Madison School & Community Recreation (MSCR) staff will assist us and collect data for a feasibility study to secure permanent funding beyond next year. Your suggestions on HOW we can all pitch in to make this Neighborhood Center a permanent success are welcome. I encourage you to drop in and check it out or contact Cristine Reid, the Center Director, at 467-8918.

Since 2007, when Clear Channel dropped sponsorship of Fourth of July fireworks at Elver Park, Midwest Family Broadcasting Service has graciously stepped in to take over. The costs for police, EMS, insurance, and park permits/fees, etc. total about \$60,000, in addition to \$20,000 for the fireworks display. The City contributes nearly \$20,000, while Midwest Family Broadcasting absorbs the remainder. Midwest Family Broadcasting just alerted me that unless additional funding and sponsors can be secured by March, our area's twenty-year tradition of July Fourth fireworks won't happen this summer. This is three years in a row I've had to make special efforts to continue this celebration. I have enlisted assistance from the Mayor's Office, Police Chief Noble Wray and West District Police Captain Jay Lengfeld. We have agreed to hold Elver Park Fireworks on Friday, July 3, (instead of Saturday, July 4) to save on police holiday overtime costs. While details are being worked out, please cross your fingers for our success in maintaining this traditional celebration.

I am very thankful to run for re-election unopposed. This definitely will allow me to devote my precious time and energy to working on the urgent needs of this district and our city.

All my best,

Alder Thuy
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