



Office of the Common Council

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District 20 Newsletter

Dear Friends & Neighbors,

While many may be disappointed that Chicago lost its bid for the 2016 Olympics, I am relieved that now we can truly focus our resources and attention on real basic, local needs without a major distraction.

Despite recent cold wet weather, the Midvale Boulevard reconstruction has progressed smoothly and should be completed on schedule before winter arrives. Your patience with this project is truly appreciated. Madison has committed millions of stimulus money to purchase 14 hybrid buses for Metro Transit. This should enhance bus services in both scheduling and routing. I will continue to push for stimulus funds to be channeled toward projects that create jobs, particularly at the entry level, for the many limited income residents within District 20.

Our nation is experiencing a serious H1N1 flu epidemic that forced school closings and impacted workplaces all over the United States. Please make sure that you and your family (especially those at higher risk: people with asthma, women who are pregnant, and the elderly) get adequate immunization as soon as the vaccine is available. Meanwhile, everyone is encouraged to take precautions and maintain healthy habits as extra protection.

In November 2007 a Chronic Nuisance Abatement ordinance was passed thanks to our District 20 Listening & Response Sessions with the Madison Police Department. The ordinance was scheduled to sunset November 1, 2009. This ordinance has proven to be an effective tool for law enforcers to curb negative activities and maintain quality of life for Madisonians. I am very happy to report that the Council has made it a permanent law.

The first HyVee grocery store on East Washington Avenue opened to very positive media reviews and 5,000 applicants for the 425 jobs it created. The second HyVee grocery store will soon begin construction at Westgate Mall and is slated to open next fall. I strongly supported this project that promises 400 jobs (many will be entry level positions) for area residents. These two stores will be quite similar with some modifications tailored to accommodate site specifications and meet concerns expressed by area residents during the approval process.

The City Budget is always the Council's focus every October and November. The Mayor declared this "the most difficult budget ever" and has proposed an increase of only 0.5% in city spending. Yet, this will require nearly a 4% increase in taxes on the average home next year. The budget includes three multi-million dollar, all Downtown projects : a new Central Library, funding for a Central Park, and TIF (Tax Incremental Financing) benefits for the Edgewater Hotel overhaul. If approved, our City debt service and interest will increase 50% in future years. Please scrutinize these proposals and share your thoughts with me.

October 26, 2009

Page 2

The Mayor hasn't proposed any cuts in Police, Fire/Ambulance, or Library services. Additional police allocations will depend on whether we receive Federal COPS funding. I pledge to maintain basic City services while holding the line on frivolous spending to avoid taxing residents out of their homes especially during this deplorable economic downturn. While we may need to accept some unavoidable changes in brush collection and large item pickup I will fight to keep all city ice skate rinks maintained in response to many residents' strong requests.

My best wishes to all of you for a Safe Winter and a Happy Holiday Season with your loved ones.

Alder Thuy

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