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City of West Allis Matter Summary

7525 W. Greenfield Ave.
West Allis, WI 53214

File Number	Title	Status
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2004-0711 Communication In Committee

Communication from the Director of Public Works relative to maintenance of all or a portion of County boulevards.

Introduced: 12/7/2004

Controlling Body: Administration & Finance
Committee

Public Works Committee

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

APPROVAL

ACTION DATE:	MOVER	SECONDER		AYE	NO	PRESENT	EXCUSED
<u>DEC 07 2004</u>			Barczak	✓			
			Czaplewski	✓			
		X	Dobrowski	x			
		✓	Kopplin	y			
			Lajsic	✓			
			Narlock	x			
			Reinke	✓			
			Sengstock	x			
			Vitale	x			
			Weigel	✓			
		TOTAL		5	0	✓ A&F	
				5	0	x PW	

SIGNATURE OF COMMITTEE MEMBER

Chair: [Signature] Vice-Chair: _____ Member: _____

COMMON COUNCIL ACTION

APPROVAL

ACTION DATE:	MOVER	SECONDER		AYE	NO	PRESENT	EXCUSED
<u>12/7/04</u>			Barczak	✓			
			Czaplewski	✓			
			Dobrowski	✓			
			Kopplin	✓			
		✓	Lajsic	✓			
			Narlock	✓			
			Reinke	✓			
			Sengstock	✓			
			Vitale	✓			
			Weigel	✓			
		TOTAL		10	-		



CITY OF WEST ALLIS

WISCONSIN



Public Works Department

MICHAEL PERTMER
Director

November 18, 2004

Mayor Bell & Common Council Members
7525 W. Greenfield Ave.
West Allis, WI 53214

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

On November 16, 2004 the Common Council unanimously passed the Mayor's recommended budget for 2005. As you are all aware, to achieve the budget goals, most departments had to reduce, eliminate and/or, in some way, change their operations or service levels. The changes that will be implemented by the Public Works Department were listed on page "vi" of the recommended budget.

One of the changes that the Department will make in 2005 is the elimination of the maintenance of boulevards on county and state highways. These boulevards include Hwy. 100 from the north city limits to the south city limits (state); W. Greenfield Ave. from 100th St. west to 124th Street (state) and W. Oklahoma Ave. from S. 72 St. west to W. National Ave. at about 114th St. (county).

The Public Works Department took over the maintenance of these boulevard medians from the County in 1986 because, quite frankly, the County was doing a terrible job maintaining these areas. The City absorbed this added maintenance with the knowledge that we would receive no financial remuneration from the County. Our goal was to enhance the appearance of these median areas that passed through the city.

I believe, for the most part, we have been successful in achieving this goal. Over the past twenty years the Department has invested considerable time and money to both enhance the appearance and maintain these medians. We have added a number of planting beds, landscape features and water systems to various medians on these three roadways.

As noted above, difficult decisions were required to achieve the 2005 budget goals. As such, I found it necessary for the Public Works Department to discontinue the maintenance of the boulevards and return the responsibility of turf maintenance to the County, where it properly belonged. In accordance with the terms and condition of the permit (agreements) made with the County and State in 1986, if the City wishes to relinquish maintenance responsibility for the median turf, the City must do so in writing, giving ample time for the County to prepare to resume the maintenance. Also included in the County permit (agreement) is a stipulation that the City must restore the boulevards to their original condition. In essence, this means that the City will be required to remove all of the plantings and associated structures including termination of the water service lines and removal of all of the associated hardware. While it takes considerable time to construct planting beds and establish

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tree and shrub growth, the removal of these same trees, shrubs and planting beds can be accomplished in fairly short order. The water system will take somewhat longer.

My primary concern and the reason for writing this letter is that after a year of County maintenance which, in reality will, most likely, be non-maintenance, the Council may very well approach me and ask me to take this over again. The County and State may or may not be willing to turn it back over to the City, however, the greater concern, assuming we could get maintenance back, would be starting over establishing plant material and reconstructing the infrastructure for the watering system all of which would be both expensive and time consuming.

Rather than jumping into this with both feet and possibly regretting it soon afterward, I would like to propose an alternative that would necessitate only minimal additional funding. Instead of relinquishing all three of the highway boulevards in 2005, I propose retaining maintenance of one or two of the highway boulevard sections. This would give the City the opportunity to observe and determine if the level of maintenance the County gives to the relinquished boulevards is satisfactory to the City. If it is, we could relinquish responsibility for the remaining boulevard(s) in 2006. On the other hand, if the City is not satisfied with the County's maintenance, we have not lost control of all three of the highway boulevard sections.

Before I send letters to the State and County notifying them of the City's intent to relinquish maintenance responsibility for the above-mentioned medians, I felt it necessary to apprise you of my concerns and offer a possible alternative. As noted, this could be accomplished with minimal additional funding. We have estimated that the maintenance cost for turf and plant material on any one of these highway medians is approximately \$5,000 per year. I recommend adopting this proposed alternative at a level directed by the Council with funding provided by a transfer from the contingency fund.

I will be happy to discuss this issue in greater detail at your convenience.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael F. Pertmer
Director of Public Works