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January 16, 2024

Honorable Board of Public Works
City of West Allis

Re: Streets without Sidewalks

A communication from the City Engineer was presented at the November 14th, 2023 Common Council Meeting requesting the Board of Public Works to provide direction regarding the issue of adding sidewalks on reconstruction projects to areas that do not have existing sidewalks. This communication was introduced to follow the Complete Streets Policy passed by the Common Council in 2021. The Complete Street Policy (Resolution R-2021-0342) states (in part):

“Complete Street are defined as facilities that are safe, comfortable and convenient for users of all travel modes, including walking, use of mobility aids, bicycling, riding public transportation, and driving motor vehicles;” and,

The City shall endeavor to incorporate this Complete Streets Policy into projects, if appropriate and if funding is not excessive and is proportionate to the need or probable use, to incrementally achieve a complete, interconnected transportation network that serves all users and encourages walking, biking, and transit trips.”

The Board of Public Works indicated that a street-by-street approach should be taken. To follow that direction, the Engineering Department sent letters to the property owners along S. 118th Street from W. Washington Street to W. Rainbow Avenue asking their opinion about adding sidewalks to this street. The 18 properties along S. 118th Street that are in the project area were sent surveys. They were encouraged to reply in multiple ways including:

- Online through the Survey Monkey website
- Emailing the Engineering Department
- Calling the Engineering Department
- Writing a letter to the Engineering Department

They were given the option to:

1. Have sidewalks constructed during street reconstruction in 2024
2. Have the yards and driveways graded for future sidewalk, but not install the sidewalk at this time.
3. Reconstruct the road as it is now, with no sidewalks

They were instructed that their Special Assessment cost would be the same regardless of which option was chosen.

The Survey Monkey website had 11 responses. All chose Option #3. Two phone calls were received. Both chose Option #3. Four emails were received. Three chose Option #3 and one chose Option #2. In addition, Alderperson Grisham posted about this on her Public Facebook Page. One person chose Option #1 and one chose Option #3.

The Engineering Department anticipated that Option #3 would be preferred by the property owners; however, the ultimate decision about constructing S. 118th Street lies with the Board of Public Works and Common Council. The recommendation of the Engineering Department would be either install the sidewalks (Option 1) or to grade to driveways and yards for future sidewalk (Option 2). The picture below shows how the driveways would look like for Option 2. This way, if sidewalks are installed on S. 118th Street in the future, the cost would be substantially lower, because the driveways are already constructed with sidewalk.



Please feel free to contact me with any questions. If you would like to meet about this, we can arrange a meeting with you, Melinda and me. I can be reached by phone or text at **414-587-1699** or email at rhutter@westalliswi.gov.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert Hutter".

Robert Hutter
Assistant City Engineer
City of West Allis