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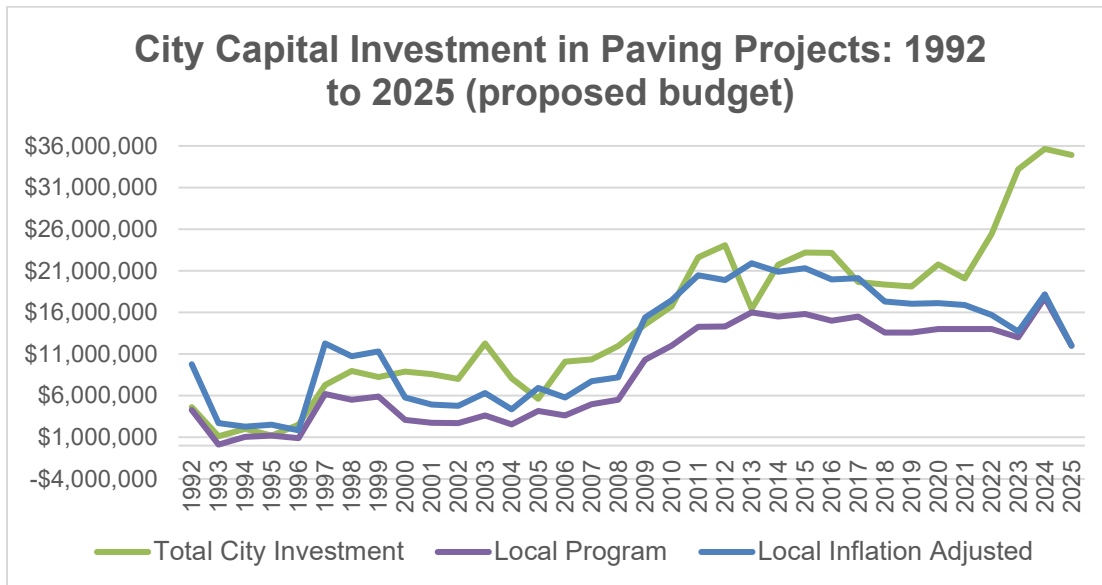
October 29, 2024

Ald. Peter Burgelis
(414) 286-3446

Ald. Burgelis Proposes Amendment to Address Decades-Long Underfunding of Local Roads

Alderman Peter Burgelis has introduced a budget amendment to add \$20 million in general obligation borrowing authority to the Department of Public Works’ High Impact Paving Program. First funded in 2013, this program has grown significantly and now plays a vital role in the City’s road maintenance and construction strategy. Currently, approximately 50% of the capital funds allocated for local road improvements each year go to the High Impact Paving Program.

“Investing in our city’s roads now is not just an infrastructure improvement; it’s a commitment to a safer, more connected, and economically vibrant community for years to come. While increased borrowing may seem like a short-term cost, the long-term benefits of improved roads are immense. Quality roads reduce vehicle repair costs for residents, enhance accessibility for local businesses, and contribute to safety by minimizing accidents and reduce the costs of emergency repairs,” said Alderman Burgelis. “With inflation impacting costs, delaying these investments would lead to even higher costs in the future. Borrowing to fund improvements now allows us to take advantage of lower financing rates and benefit our neighborhoods.”



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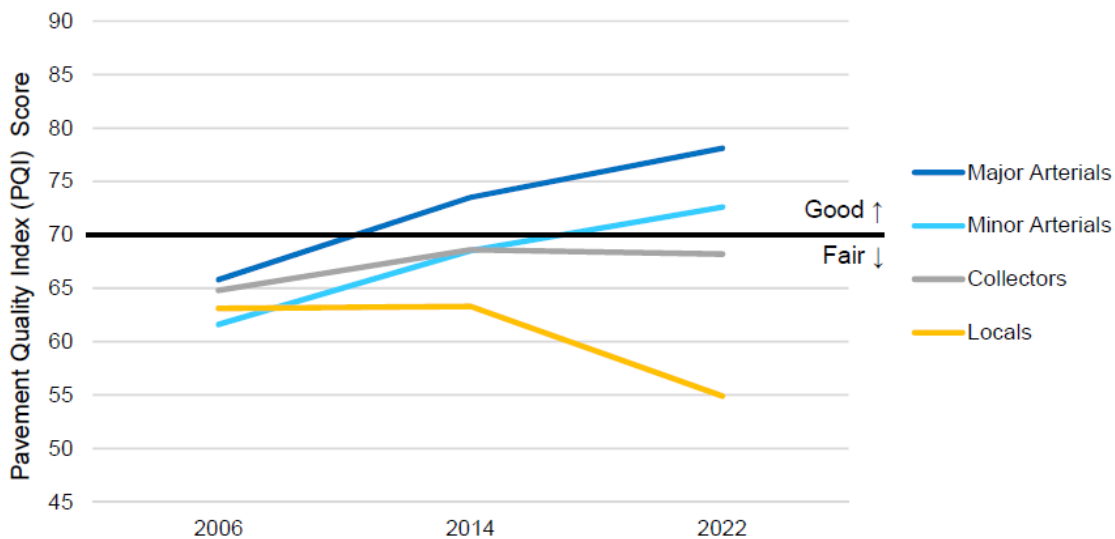
High Impact Budget Amendment/ADD ONE

There are 466 miles of local roads in Milwaukee with a “poor” Pavement Quality Index (PQI) rating. This rating has sharply declined since 2014, while the PQI scores for collector roads, minor arterials, and major arterials have remained steady or improved over the same period. Local roads typically do not qualify for state or federal matching funds.

The Mayor’s Proposed 2025 Budget includes a 33% or \$6 million cut to neighborhood road funding compared to 2024. The Department of Public Works estimates that one lane-mile of high-impact paving will now cost approximately \$175,000. The proposed budget would fund about 34 lane-miles of high-impact paving, while Alderman Burgelis’ additional proposed \$20 million would improve up to 114 more lane-miles over a 2-3 year period.

“The administration has failed to provide a sustainable and fundable framework to fix local roads. City residents are suffering from decades of underfunding, and investing less in 2025 than in 2024 is moving our community in the wrong direction. These critical repairs will only become more expensive over time. Estimates to repair the 466 miles of local roads currently rated as ‘poor’ exceed \$81.5 million. My budget amendment is not enough to meet the need, but it is a strong start, and I look forward to discussing the merits of this amendment on Thursday,” stated Alderman Burgelis.

Figure 1 - Average Pavement Condition by Street Class: 2006 to 2022



The Finance and Personnel Committee will consider all proposed amendments to the 2025 City budget during its meeting at 9 a.m. on Thursday, October 31. The meeting will be streamed live on the City Channel (channel 25 on Spectrum Cable and channel 99 on AT&T U-Verse in the City of Milwaukee) and via streaming video on the city website at city.milwaukee.gov/Channel25.