
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

February 5, 2008

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Aldermen Ask DOT For Major S. 27th Street Improvements To Mitigate I-94 Rebuild

*News Conference Friday to Address Four-Mile Streetscaping Component, Signage
Upgrade to Help Businesses and Consumers*

If federal officials approve the current preferred alternative for the proposed reconstruction of I-94 from Milwaukee to the Illinois border, three Milwaukee aldermen are asking the state Department of Transportation to help mitigate a potential decrease in consumer traffic by funding significant improvements along a busy four-mile stretch of S. 27th St.

Ald. Terry L. Witkowski, Ald. Joe Dudzik and Ald. Bob Donovan will discuss the proposed streetscaping and other improvements on S. 27th St. from W. Oklahoma Ave. to W. College Ave. during a news conference at 11 a.m. Friday, February 8, 2008, in the first floor rotunda at City Hall, 200 E. Wells St. Media coverage is invited.

A letter signed by Ald. Witkowski, Ald. Dudzik and Ald. Donovan requesting state funding for streetscaping, lighting and traffic safety improvements along stretches of Layton Ave. and S. 27th was sent to the state Department of Transportation to be considered as part of the draft environmental impact statement on the \$1.9 billion reconstruction of north-south I-94 lanes from Milwaukee south to the state line.

Ald. Witkowski, who has spearheaded Common Council efforts to minimize and mitigate the effects of the reconstruction project on south side businesses, homes and commuters, said the letter also asked for signage that will help route I-94 traffic from the south to the S. 27th St. business corridor.

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Aldermen Seek I-94 Help/ADD ONE

“We would rather see the freeway rebuilt with no loss of access or homes, but that is not on the table,” said Ald. Witkowski. “But we do see clearly what could happen if people don’t know how to get from ‘Point A’ to ‘Point B,’ and we’re doing everything we can to make sure consumers know that S. 27th St. is open for business and how they can get there without too much difficulty.”

As part of the project, the DOT has proposed relocating to Layton Ave. the ramp that takes traffic from 894 onto northbound S. 27th and will close the S. 27th St. ramp that allows traffic to go back onto 894 southbound. The ramps are used by 1,500 motorists daily who take advantage of the easy access to the businesses that line the bustling four-mile stretch of S. 27th between W. Oklahoma Ave. on the north and W. College Ave. on the south.

The “access effects” of the project on S. 27th St. mean motorists traveling on I-94 or I-894 will be required to use the relocated ramp at Layton Ave. to access the businesses along S. 27th St. “What we’re saying to the DOT is please provide clear ‘way finding’ signage at Layton Avenue that helps people find their way to S.27th St. and then back to the freeway as well,” Ald. Witkowski said.

The DOT is obligated to help mitigate the effects of reduced access to business and commercial areas, and the streetscaping improvements, upgraded lighting and other enhancements will serve to boost the S. 27th St. and the Layton Ave. business stretches as desirable and welcoming consumer destinations, said Ald. Witkowski. “We think the improvements can help draw back some of the consumer traffic that will be lost as a result of the project,” the alderman said.