



June 7, 2006

Ald. Terry Witkowski
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Are Chevron Markings the Answer to Safety in the Plainfield Curve?

Ald. Witkowski Trying to Implement Safety Measures in the Plainfield Curve and Wants to Outlaw "Jake Braking" to Quiet Streets

During a two-week period in early May there were three semi-trailer truck accidents and one motor vehicle accident on I-94/43 at or near what is known as the Plainfield curve. Ald. Terry L. Witkowski says converging chevron markings installed nearby in May 1999 on the I-94 approach to westbound I-894 have significantly approved safety there. And he wants the same chevron pavement markings in the Plainfield curve, where he said motorists regularly exceed the posted speed limit of 50 miles per hour.

A resolution prepared by Ald. Witkowski requesting the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to install converging chevron pavement marking patterns on northbound and southbound I-94/43 at the Plainfield curve will be discussed at a meeting of the Common Council's Public Safety Committee which begins at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow, June 8, 2006, in room 301-B of City Hall, 200 E. Wells St. Media coverage is encouraged.

"I'm asking the council and department of transportation to act now because the earliest any work is expected on the reconstruction of the Plainfield curve to improve its safety is not expected to happen until 2010," said Ald. Witkowski. The alderman said by acting now we can cut down on the number of accidents, fatalities, and waiting time for those who use that portion of the freeway system.

"According to an evaluation of the chevron installation prepared for the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety in July 2003, the markings to I-894 caused drivers, on average, to reduce their speed by nearly 15 miles per hour at the ramp," said Ald. Witkowski. He added the converging chevron markings also led to a reduction in total crashes, and that there were no semi-trailer truck rollovers.

Chevron/jake braking/ADD ONE

In addition, Ald. Witkowski, former safety director for the City of Milwaukee, would like to have the council pass a law to quiet city streets by putting up signs warning truckers not to use their engine compression breaks within the city. Such signs in other communities normally read “No Engine Braking.” This proposal will also be heard by the Public Safety Committee.

In certain vehicles, mechanical exhaust devices, commonly referred to as “jake braking,” are designed to aid in the deceleration of the vehicle. The alderman says between the number of trucking operations and the freeway in the 13th District, he has received numerous complaints about this type of braking. “We don’t need the kind of explosive noise created by these trucks further damaging our quality of life,” said Ald. Witkowski.