

Polanco (Urtiz), Joanna

Subject: FW: Expanding Walgreens Closures in Milwaukee and Public Safety Impact

From: Joe Duncan <joeyparkside@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 3:04 PM
To: Owczarski, Jim <jowcza@milwaukee.gov>
Subject: Fw: Expanding Walgreens Closures in Milwaukee and Public Safety Impact

Thank you!!!

City Clerk,

Please add the following statement to the agenda packet or public record for the next Common Council meeting.

Monday, May 4, 2026

RE: Expanding Walgreens Closures in Milwaukee and Public Safety Impact

Aldерwoman Moore,
Mr. Mayor,

There are moments in the life of a city when the agreements that once held it together begin to fray—not through catastrophe, but through quiet administrative decisions that seem small at the time. A memo here, a directive there, and the threads that once bound order to consequence begin to loosen. Many people point to the change in Milwaukee’s pursuit policy as the moment disorder spilled onto our roads. But there is another date, quieter but far more consequential: Tuesday, May 15th, 2012.

On that day, Milwaukee County Sheriff Deputy Inspector Kevin Nyklewicz, acting under the direction of Municipal Judge Derek Mosley and Chief Judge Jeffrey Kremers, issued the order:

“DO NOT ARREST SIMPLY FOR MUNICIPAL WARRANTS.”

It did not look like a turning point.

But it was the moment Milwaukee’s enforcement structure—and its basic social contract—began to unravel.

For decades, Milwaukee—like many Wisconsin municipalities—relied on a simple, predictable structure:

If you ignore a municipal citation, the resulting warrant leads to confinement.

This was not about inflating minor offenses into major crimes.

It was about maintaining the basic expectation that negative actions have consequences.

A person who ignored a ticket—whether for speeding or for shoplifting charged as a municipal ordinance violation—eventually faced a municipal warrant. And that warrant meant something. It upheld the city’s side of the social contract: if you disregard the rules, the city will respond in a way you cannot ignore.

After May 15th, 2012, that mechanism was effectively removed.

A citation could be ignored.

A warrant could be issued.

And officers were ordered not to arrest solely on that basis.

The city did not just stop arresting people for unpaid municipal tickets.

It stripped municipal enforcement of its only real consequence: confinement.

From that point forward, low-level offenses and misdemeanors that once carried enforceable consequences became, in practice, consequence-free if handled as municipal matters and then ignored.

And the results are no longer theoretical. They are visible in the built environment—and they are a warning that Milwaukee is dying.

Walgreens has announced it is closing its store at 27th and North due to “persistent safety challenges,” even after investing in private security. It is the ninth Walgreens in Milwaukee to close in recent years. Retail theft is one of those persistent challenges. When shoplifting is written as a municipal ticket, the ticket is ignored, the warrant is unenforceable, and confinement is no longer an option, the message to repeat offenders is clear: nothing meaningful will happen.

Businesses read that message, too.

A pharmacy is not just a store. It is a critical access point for medication, basic goods, and stability in daily life. When a Walgreens closes under the weight of “persistent safety challenges,” it is a visible symptom of a deeper policy failure: a city that removed the enforcement mechanism that once backed its own rules.

Before 2012, Milwaukee had a functioning chain:

Ignore a citation > warrant > confinement > consequence.

After 2012, that chain was severed:

Ignore a citation > warrant > no arrest > no consequence.

When a city removes consequences for low-level offenses, the effects accumulate: in reckless driving, in repeat offenders with multiple contacts and no meaningful outcome, in ignored citations, in shuttered storefronts, and in neighborhoods losing essential services like pharmacies.

Milwaukee is not beyond repair.

But it is past the point where anyone can claim the 2012 decision was insignificant. The Walgreens closure is not an isolated business choice—it is a measurable symptom of a city whose enforcement system no longer functions. While Walgreens will make headlines for closures, many businesses leave Milwaukee without notice.

Will you act before it's too late?

Joe Duncan
1260 N 43rd St

SOURCE:

[Walgreens is shutting down this Milwaukee store due to safety challenges](#)

Walgreens is shutting down this Milwaukee store due to safety challenges

By Tanner Kahler

The stores last day is June 23, 2026.

Recent Milwaukee Walgreens Closures (2024–2026):

- 2727 W. North Avenue: Closing June 23, 2026.
- 6442 N. 76th St.: July 28, 2025.
- 2826 N. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr.: December 5, 2024.
- 5201 N. 91st St.: December 3, 2024.
- 2625 W. National Ave.: November 3, 2024.
- 2222 W. Capitol Dr.: January 5, 2024.

2023 Closures:

- 6707 W. Hampton Ave.
- 2410 W. Forest Home Ave.

Prior:

- 4520 W. North Ave.