

## MEMORANDUM

TO: STREETScape COMMITTEE

FROM: DAVID LUDESCHER

DATE: OCTOBER 5, 2009

Dear Streetscape Members:

At the last meeting I raised my concerns that there seems to be no good decision-making process for deciding on streetscape expenditures. I was particularly concerned that we plan on spending \$240,000.00 on a bike trail (of which there is a portion on which you cannot ride your bike). I was concerned that we not repeat the same mistake we made with the Water Street parking lot. That parking lot was, in my opinion, a mistake because we received so little value in return for all the money we spent.

It was the consensus of the Streetscape Committee that both the parking lot and the possible expenditure of monies on the bike trail were wise expenditures. These expenditures were justified with vague references to bringing people to the downtown, improving the aesthetics, providing an economic driver, and other factors which, in my opinion, are neither justified by the evidence nor common sense.

Since that time, I have contacted Griff Wigley to see if I could write a blog piece on Locally Grown. He obliged me and there is now a discussion regarding these same issues on Locally Grown. In addition, I appeared on the Locally Grown radio broadcast and voiced a similar concern.

In an effort to add something positive rather than simply to criticize, I have attached hereto what I consider to be reasonable questions that should be answered and procedures that should be in place before additional expenditures are made of the \$1,200,000.090 from the streetscape fund.

I thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,



David Ludescher

## DECISION RUBRIC FOR STREETSCAPE FUNDS

In evaluating any specific project connected with streetscape expenditures, the following decision-making procedures should be followed:

1. Internal project valuation.
  - A. Determine the cost
  - B. Determine the projected value to be received.
    - i. Economic value and how calculated.
    - ii. Non-economic value and how calculated.
2. Streetscape comparative evaluation – how does this project compare to other Streetscape projects?
  - A. What is the projected economic return of this project as compared to other streetscape projects?
  - B. What is the non-economic return compared to other streetscape projects?
3. Comparative value to other government spending.
  - A. What other Northfield government expenditures could be funded with this portion of the money?
  - B. How would the other taxing entities use this money if the money were returned to them?

The evaluation of number 3 would be similar, if not identical, for each one of the streetscape projects. Furthermore, the analysis could be accomplished by using the \$1,200,000.00 projected to be spent versus each entity's request now. (It is anticipated that the evaluation would remain relatively constant through 2013.)

Further, overall streetscape evaluation (#2 above) would best be conducted at one time. In other words, it is difficult to compare the expenditure of \$240,000.00 for a bike trail without knowing what other projects the Streetscape Committee may approve or recommend.

It is recommended that the committee issue written findings which can be presented to the City Council for review and evaluation.

