

August , 2014

Dane County Board of Supervisors
Dane County Specialized Transportation Commission

To:
The Honorable Members of the Wisconsin State Legislature and the Wisconsin State Senate

Wisconsin State Capitol
2 E. Main Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

RE: Biennial Funding for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Dear Legislators and Senators,

The Dane County Specialized Transportation Commission has authored this letter to request that the State of Wisconsin restore funding for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to levels that allow for the immediate repair and sustainability of key transportation programs. Funding requires the raising of revenues necessary to pay for the cost of goods and services. We favor a fuel tax and other public use fees to meet these needs. This includes all facets of transportation, as funding cuts over the last several years have caused severe financial deficits to all critical public transportation programs and money for repairs to local roads.

The State Transportation budget must focus on more than just major highway projects. The cost of road repair at a local level is prohibitive due to the lack of a reliable revenue stream to pay for the expense. As matters now stand, suggestion is being made that some roadways could be de-paved and reverted to gravel surfaces. The loss of infrastructure impairs the economic development of communities and limits the flow of new resources into businesses. Development of new and improved infrastructure would create jobs and allow Wisconsin to progress into the 21st century rather than regress.

Transportation funds also allow counties and municipalities to fund economic development through provision of transportation of residents to and from work. Consider the needs of people with disabilities, the elderly, and economically disadvantaged who rely on specialized services to maintain their quality of life, take care of personal errands, receive daily meals, go to medical appointments, and attend social events.

Perhaps most importantly, funding of public transportation faces a dire challenge due to years of inadequate capital funding. The capital crisis means that the equipment used for public transportation has worn out and needs to be replaced now, so any new influx of money will first be spent in offsetting the shortfall of previous years. More funding is required than usual to overcome this gap and to create sustainable public transportation resources in future years.

Sincerely,

Members of the Dane County Specialized Transportation Commission