

**RESOLUTION
ROCK COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Transportation Coordinating
Committee
INITIATED BY



Terry Nolan/Joyce Lubben
DRAFTED BY

Transportation Coordinating
Committee
SUBMITTED BY

March 25, 2015
DATE DRAFTED

**Opposing the State Budget Proposal for Transportation Alternatives Program
Grant Funds and "Complete Streets" Legislation**

1 **WHEREAS**, the Transportation Alternative Program Grant funds non-motorized transportation
2 infrastructure, including trails. Many Rock County communities have benefited from trail grants,
3 including Milton's Glacial River Trail, Janesville's Ice Age Trail and Peace Trail and Beloit's
4 Powerhouse Trail. Rock County's urban trails provide a safe off-road transportation option to connect
5 residents to employment, education and community services; and,
6

7 **WHEREAS**, the proposed 2015-2017 state biennial budget proposed to cut two million dollars
8 (\$2,000,000) from the Transportation Alternatives Program, amounting in a 14% reduction of the
9 program; and,
10

11 **WHEREAS**, a "Complete Streets" law was passed by the Wisconsin State Legislature in 2009 directing
12 the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to "ensure that bikeways and pedestrian ways are established
13 in all new highway construction and reconstruction projects funded in whole or in part from state or
14 federal funds," which provides for safe accommodations for all users; and,
15

16 **WHEREAS**, the proposed 2015-2017 state biennial budget proposes to repeal the "Complete Streets"
17 law.
18

19 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Rock County Board of Supervisors duly assembled
20 this 14 day of May, 2015 does hereby authorize that this resolution be sent to the
21 Wisconsin State Legislature requesting that 1) the two million dollar (\$2,000,000) budget cut to the
22 Transportation Alternatives Program and 2) the "Complete Streets" legislation be restored.

Respectfully submitted,

COUNTY BOARD STAFF COMMITTEE

J. Russell Podzilni
J. Russell Podzilni, Chair

Sandra Kraft
Sandra Kraft, Vice Chair

Eva Arnold
Eva Arnold

Henry Brill
Henry Brill

Betty Jo Bussie
Betty Jo Bussie

Mary Mawhinney
Mary Mawhinney

Louis Peer
Louis Peer

Alan Sweeney
Alan Sweeney

Terry Thomas
Terry Thomas

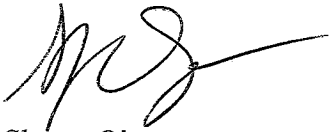
15-5A-307

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"Complete Streets" Legislation

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FISCAL NOTE:

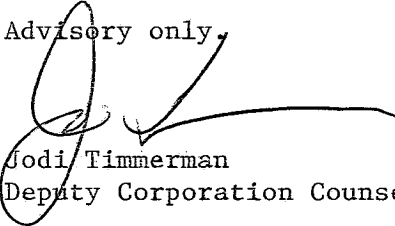
This resolution has no direct fiscal impact on Rock County operations in and by itself.



Sherry Oja
Finance Director

LEGAL NOTE:

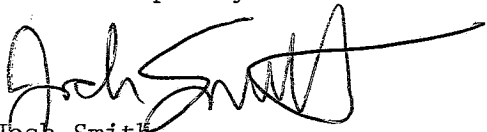
Advisory only.



Jodi Timmerman
Deputy Corporation Counsel

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE:

Matters of policy.



Josh Smith
County Administrator

Executive Summary

The Rock County Transportation Coordination Committee (RCTCC), a sub-committee of the Rock County Board of Supervisors, submitted this resolution providing recommendations to the Wisconsin State Legislature regarding two transportation related items in the Governor's proposed 2015-2016 biennial budget. The Governor's proposed 2015-2016 biennial budget contains several transportation related fiscal and policy items that will negatively impact transportation disadvantaged populations in Rock County. Each of the recommendations in the resolution is tied to the goals stated in the in the Rock County Public Transit – Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan), adopted in 2013.

Repeal of Wisconsin's Complete Streets Law (Trans 75):

The law requires bicyclists and pedestrians to be taken into account whenever a road is built or reconstructed with state or federal funds. The law provides for commonsense exceptions, such as if a road does not have sufficient right-of-way to add bike lanes, or if there is an absence of need due to low traffic volumes. This law applies to both local governments using state or federal funds as well as Wisconsin Department of Transportation projects.

Rock County communities have benefited from the inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations in street and highway projects. For example, the I-39/90 reconstruction will improve connectivity and accessibility for non-motorized users along the heavily traveled Milton Avenue/Humes Road corridor by providing trail or sidewalk along the streets and under the highway. The RCTCC recommends the Complete Streets legislation be restored.

\$2 Million Reduction to Transportation Alternatives Program:

The Transportation Alternatives Program funds a range of activities and projects, including trails, sidewalks, planning, education and encouragement. The federal portion of the program is \$14 million per biennium and the Governor's proposed budget cuts the \$2 million state contribution, which amounts to a 14% cut. Although the Wisconsin Department of Transportation estimates 9% of trips are made by bicycling or walking, less than 1% of the transportation budget is dedicated to supporting bicycling and walking as forms of transportation. The RCTCC recommends the Legislature restore the \$2 million reduction.

JANESVILLE AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION MEMORANDUM

Date: May 4, 2015

To:

From: Terry Nolan, MPO Coordinator

Re: Rock County resolution supplemental information

This memo serves to address questions and issues raised at the County Staff Committee meeting held on April 14, 2015. During the meeting, County Staff Committee reviewed proposed resolution "Opposing the State Budget Proposal for Transportation Alternatives Program Grant Funds and "Complete Streets" Legislation. Questions were raised regarding fiscal impact of the legislation on Rock County.

To clarify, the current legislation applies only to road projects that are funded with state or federal funding *and* only to projects that are reconstruction or new construction. Most locally sponsored road projects do not meet both criteria. However, a reconstruction or new construction project presents a once-in-several-decades opportunity to upgrade a facility. For example, the reconstruction of CTH G will have 10ft. shoulders for the majority of the project, and 8-10ft. of the shoulder will be paved. This is the standard shoulder width for this classification of roadway.

The benefits of on-road bike accommodations extend beyond improved bicycling conditions. The following is a partial list of benefits to bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists:

1. Increased travel area is provided for bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists. Safety is improved for bicyclists being passed by overtaking motorists and for motorists who will not have to travel out of the travel lane in order to pass bicyclists.
2. Highway capacity is improved collectively for both bicyclists and motorists through provision of separate travel space and increased clearances.
3. Space is provided for motor vehicles to stop partially or completely out of the travel lane to prepare to park or because of mechanical difficulty, a flat tire, or other emergency.
4. Space is provided to escape potential crashes or reduce their severity and for motorists who have left the travel lane to return to the lane.
5. Emergency vehicle access through congested areas is substantially improved, as motorists are able to pull into the bike lane, wider curb lane, or shoulder to allow emergency vehicles to pass.

6. Bike lanes, wide curb lanes, and paved shoulders improve the ability for all users to drive the roadway. Signed and marked bike lanes communicate to bicyclists and motorists their position in the road.
7. Increased safety is provided for vehicles turning right from a side street onto the main street that has bike lanes. There is increased maneuverability for vehicles to avoid hitting the curb or hitting vehicles in an adjacent lane.
8. Increased space is provided for roadway work such as, maintenance of utilities.
9. Increased space is provided to discharge storm water from the travel lanes, increasing safety for users and capacity of the roadway. There is also space for temporary snow storage.
10. Pavement life is increased due to structural support given to the pavement edge, reducing the raveling effect caused by heavy trucks and other motor vehicles traveling on the edge of pavement or traveling immediately adjacent to the gutter pan.
11. Space is provided for bus stops, particularly if the lanes or shoulders are widened at the stops.
12. Increased safety is provided for motorists to avoid fixed objects such as, telephone and signal poles due to provision of additional clear zone area.
13. Improved space is provided for motorists to pass on the right of left-turning vehicles.
14. Environmental benefits (air quality, reduction in petroleum use, etc) are more likely to be realized due to improved bicycling conditions.
15. Safety is improved for pedestrians due to the buffer space provided by bike lanes or wide curb lanes between sidewalks and traffic. Pedestrian safety is also improved because bicyclists are more likely to ride in bike lanes rather than on sidewalks.

Sources: Wisconsin Bicycle Facility Design Handbook, WisDOT 2004; Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020, WisDOT 1998; Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, AASHTO 1999. Advantages of Bike Lanes by Matthew Zoll, Tucson-Pima County Bicycle Advisory Committee.

In my professional opinion, the greatest benefits of the WI Complete Streets Law come from State Highway and Interstate Highway projects that must consider non-motorized users. For example, the Glacial River Trail provides a continuous regional non-motorized connection between Fort Atkinson and Janesville. This project was funded as part of the HWY 26 Bypass.

Public Works Director Summary

The Department of Public Works supports reasonable spending on alternative modes of transportation. Accommodation of bicycles and pedestrians has merit and enhances the quality of life.

The Department is responsible for a highway system as well as a bicycle/pedestrian trail system. There appears to be a shift in focus and use of the trails from simply recreational use to recreational and travel routing.

The Department struggles financially to construct and maintain the County's system of 215 miles of mostly rural County Trunk Highways (CTH's). These federal and state mandates to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians put financial stress on already tight budgets for road construction. In many cases, bicycle lanes and separate pedestrian paths or sidewalks are required. In urban areas where travel speeds are generally lower, these facilities can be combined, thus reducing cost impacts. Placing these separate facilities often dictates added project width and the purchase of additional road right-of-way.

The Department has determined that adding paved bicycle lanes to a rural CTH paving project can add 25% to the cost of the project. Adding separate pedestrian paths or sidewalks can add another 5 to 15% to that project cost, especially if additional right-of-way is needed. At current costs for pulverizing and paving a CTH, these increased costs could be from \$75,000 to \$105,000 per mile, or \$625,000 to \$875,000 per year for a typical budget year of \$2.5 million for road construction.

Staff is not aware of the Department of Public Works funding any Transportation Alternative type projects on CTH's in the last 10 years. This project seems to be focused on urban areas. Likewise, most major road or bridge projects sponsored by DPW utilize federal funding sources and their mandates are not affected.

The major remaining project type with state funding that Rock County uses is the County Highway Improvement Program (CHIP). Occasionally, bicycle/pedestrian accommodations have been mandated on those projects, yielding the overall increases stated above. The State participates in these amenities, thereby reducing the local match to 50% of the total additions for the CHIP projects.