Resolution No. 57 - 03/17
Urging Elected Officials to Direct the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to Complete the USH 12 Environmental Impact Study

Moved: Sponsored by: Public Works Committee

WHEREAS, a four lane US Highway 12 between Whitewater and Elkhorn and bypassing around the Lauderdale Lakes area, known as the Red Line Route, was proposed and mapped in 1967, and included in the 2035 Jurisdictional Highway System Plan for Walworth County (hereinafter called “the Project”);

WHEREAS, despite a dramatic increase in the population of Walworth County since the 1960s and the number of vehicles traveling on US Highway 12, the Project was never constructed; and,

WHEREAS, the absence of a four lane connection to the City of Whitewater negatively impacts the economy and quality of life in Walworth County (“County”); and;

WHEREAS, the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater is the only four-year state university not served by a four lane highway; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Whitewater’s business/technology park has been designated as a site that is “shovel-ready” for development; however, the most important feature of attracting businesses is transportation accessibility; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Whitewater has made a substantial investment in its infrastructure to attract manufacturing and technology businesses, but that effort is hampered by an inadequate state highway system; and,

WHEREAS, as part of the 2013-2015 biennial budget, the State Legislature directed the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (“WisDOT”) to “commence the preparation of an environmental impact statement, as defined in s. 13.489(1c)(b), for a proposed major highway project involving US 12 from the city of Elkhorn to the city of Whitewater;” and,

WHEREAS, in July of 2016, WisDOT decided to suspend the study citing a variety of reasons including a lack of overall need, financial constraints and overall WisDOT system needs; and,

WHEREAS, the Walworth County Board of Supervisors (“County Board”) disagrees with the WisDOT’s conclusion that there is a lack of need for the Project and with WisDOT’s conclusion that its effort satisfied the statutory mandate of commencing the preparation of an environmental impact statement; and,

WHEREAS, had WisDOT invested more effort into this matter, the need for the Project would have been readily apparent; such effort should have included:

- Obtaining accurate and recent traffic counts.
Following through with WisDOT’s commitment to meet with area businesses, County
government and the 1300 members of the Highway 12 Red Line Group;

WHEREAS, the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) has
concluded that the Project is warranted and has included the Project in its Vision 2050 Plan as well
as Walworth County’s jurisdictional highway system plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Walworth County Board of Supervisors
hereby supports the completion of the Environmental Impact Study for the USH 12 Extension
Project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Walworth County Board of Supervisors urges the
appropriate elected officials to make the Project a priority and direct WisDOT to make a good faith
effort to complete the study as originally directed in the state budget.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County Clerk is hereby directed to forward a copy of this
resolution to Governor Scott Walker, Congressman Paul Ryan, Assembly Speaker Robin Vos,
Assembly Minority Leader Peter Barca, Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald, Senator Minority
Leader Jennifer Shilling and Secretary of Transportation Dave Ross as well as assembly members
and senators representing Walworth County.

Nancy Russell
County Board Chair

Kimberly S. Bushey
County Clerk

County Board Meeting Date: March 14, 2017

Action Required: Majority Vote ___ X Two-thirds Vote ____ Other ___

Policy and Fiscal Note is attached.
Reviewed and approved pursuant to Section 2-91 of the Walworth County Code of Ordinances;

David A. Bretts
County Administrator Corporation Counsel

Nicole Andersen
Deputy County Administrator - Finance

If unsigned, exceptions shall be so noted by the County Administrator.

Resolution/Ordinance was:
Passed: Roll Call/U.C./Voice
Referred/Ejected/Laid Over
Ayes: Noes: Absent:
Date March 14, 2017
Policy and Fiscal Note
Resolution No. 57 - 03/17

I. Title: Urging Elected Officials to Direct the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to Complete the USH 12 Environmental Impact Study

II. Purpose and Policy Impact Statement: The purpose of this resolution is to support the completion of the environmental impact study for the USH 12 Extension Project and urging the State of Wisconsin that this project be included in the Transportation Improvement Program for Southeastern Wisconsin: 2017-2020.

III. Budget and Fiscal Impact: Passage of this resolution will have no impact on the County budget.

IV. Referred to the following standing committees for consideration and date of referral:

   Committee: Public Works Committee  Meeting Date: February 20, 2017
   Vote: 3-0
   County Board Meeting Date: March 14, 2017

Policy and fiscal note has been reviewed and approved as an accurate statement of the probable policy and fiscal impacts associated with passage of the attached resolution.

David A. Bretl  Date
County Administrator Corporation Counsel

Nicole Andersen  Date
Deputy County Administrator – Finance

If unsigned, exceptions shall be so noted by the County Administrator.