

Wisconsin Counties Association

2025 ANNUAL ***GAME DAY***
CONFERENCE

8:00 – 9:00 AM

The Road Goes on Forever, or Does it?



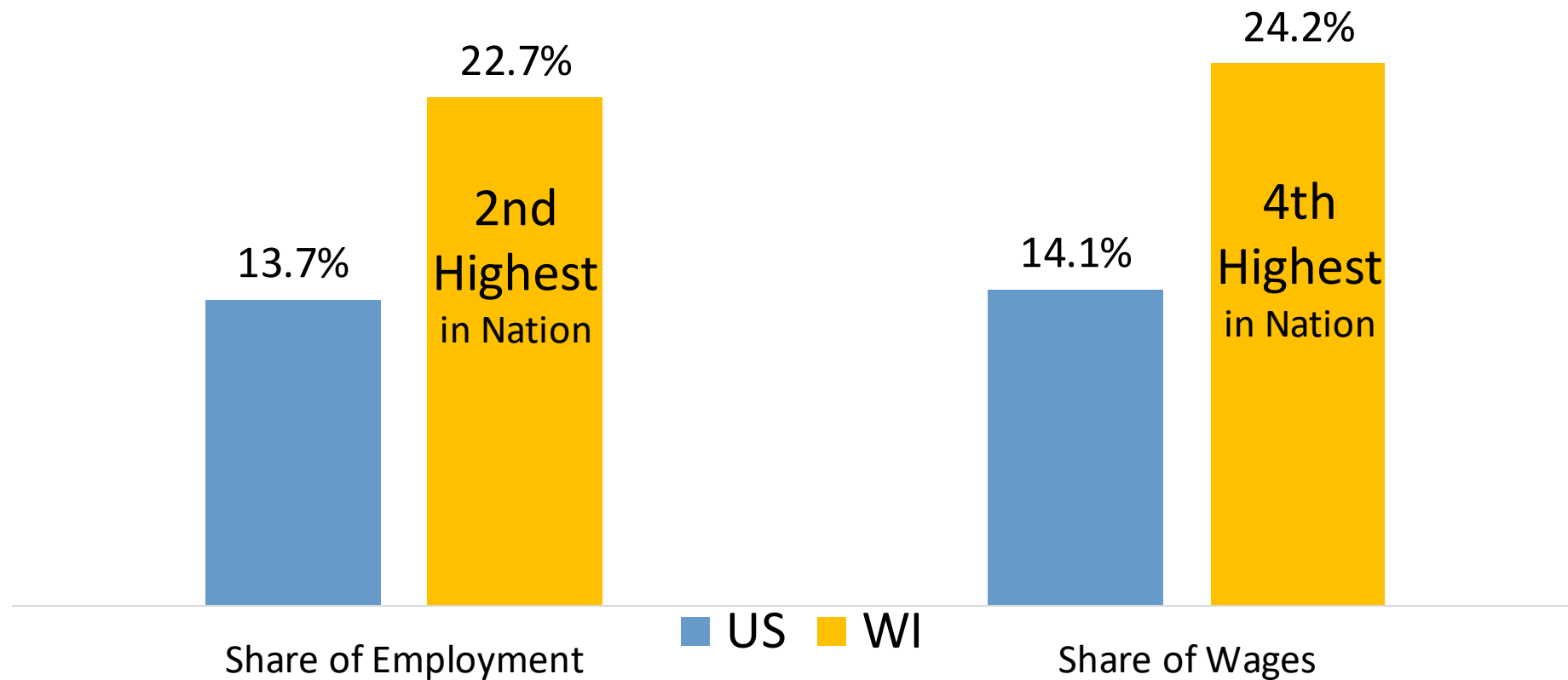
Wisconsin Counties Association

The Road Goes on Forever, or Does It?

September 23, 2025

Transportation-Dependent Industries Critical for Wisconsin

Employment & Wage Shares, Manufacturing, Trucking, Agriculture, & Mining, WI & US, 2023

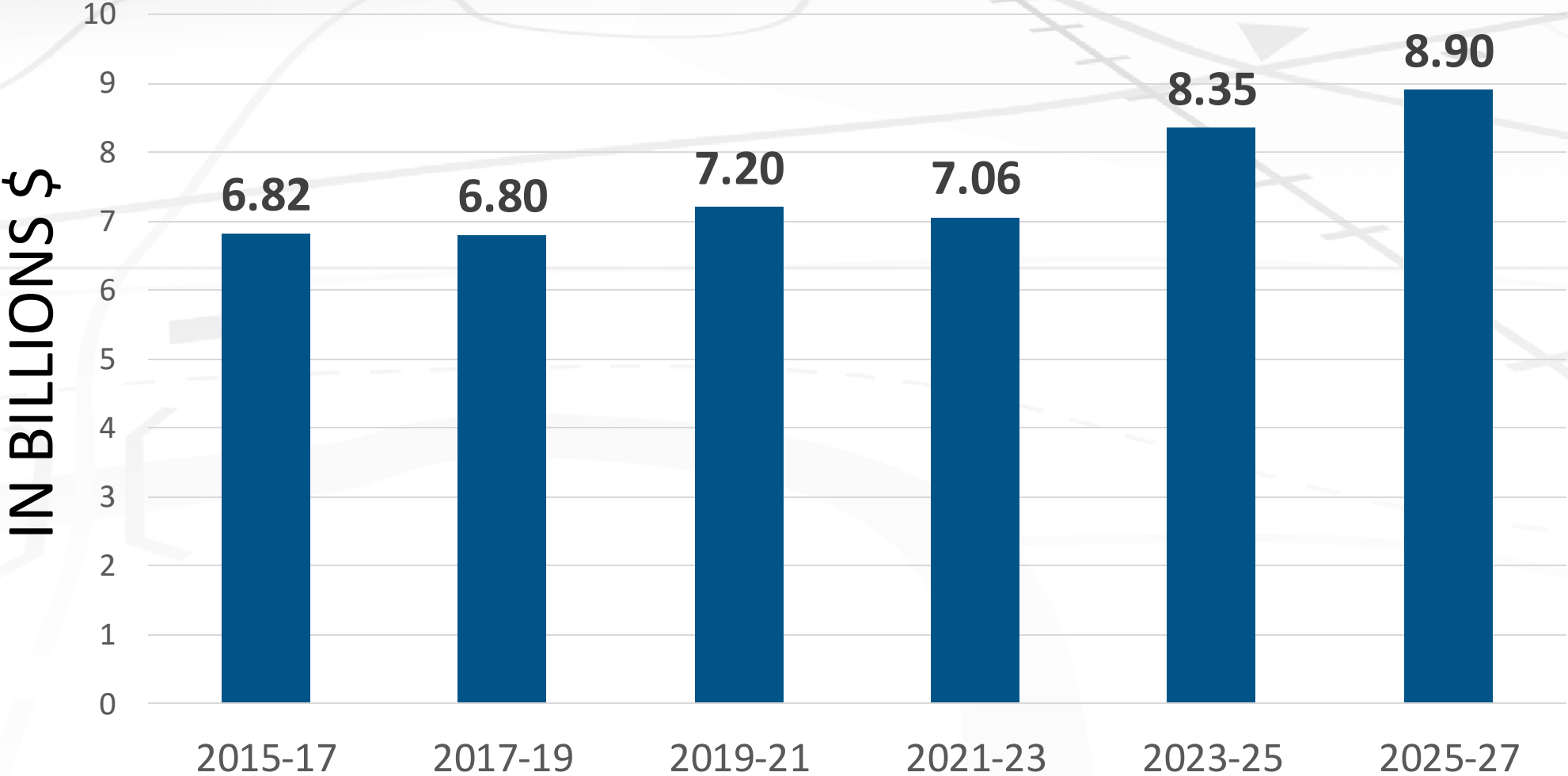


100 Million+ Tourism Visits Each Year

- **114 million visits generate \$16.3 billion in direct sales**, resulting in:
 - \$1.7 billion in state and local taxes.
 - \$1.4 billion in federal taxes.
- Each Wisconsin household would need to pay **\$678 in taxes** to maintain the current level of government services generated by tourism spending.



Significant Investment In Current Biennium

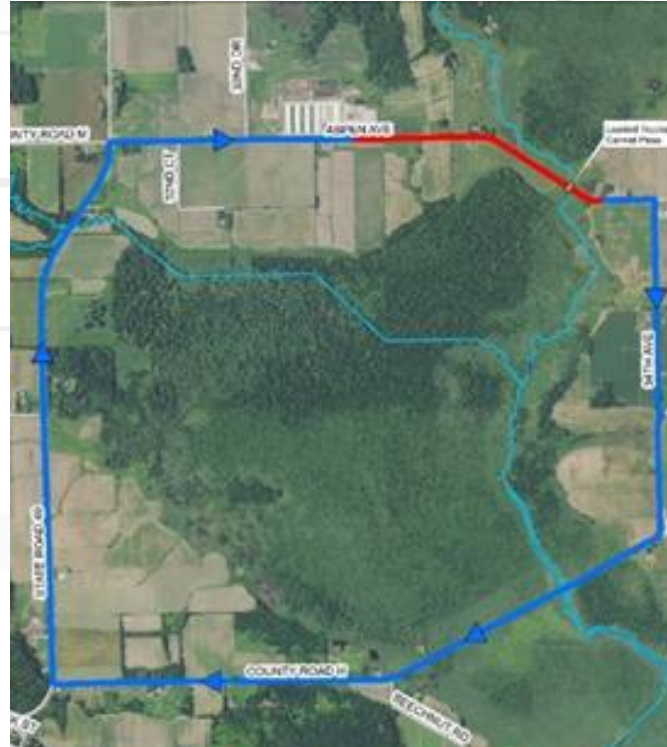


Source:
WisDOT

Projects & Programs Moving Forward



LRIP-S

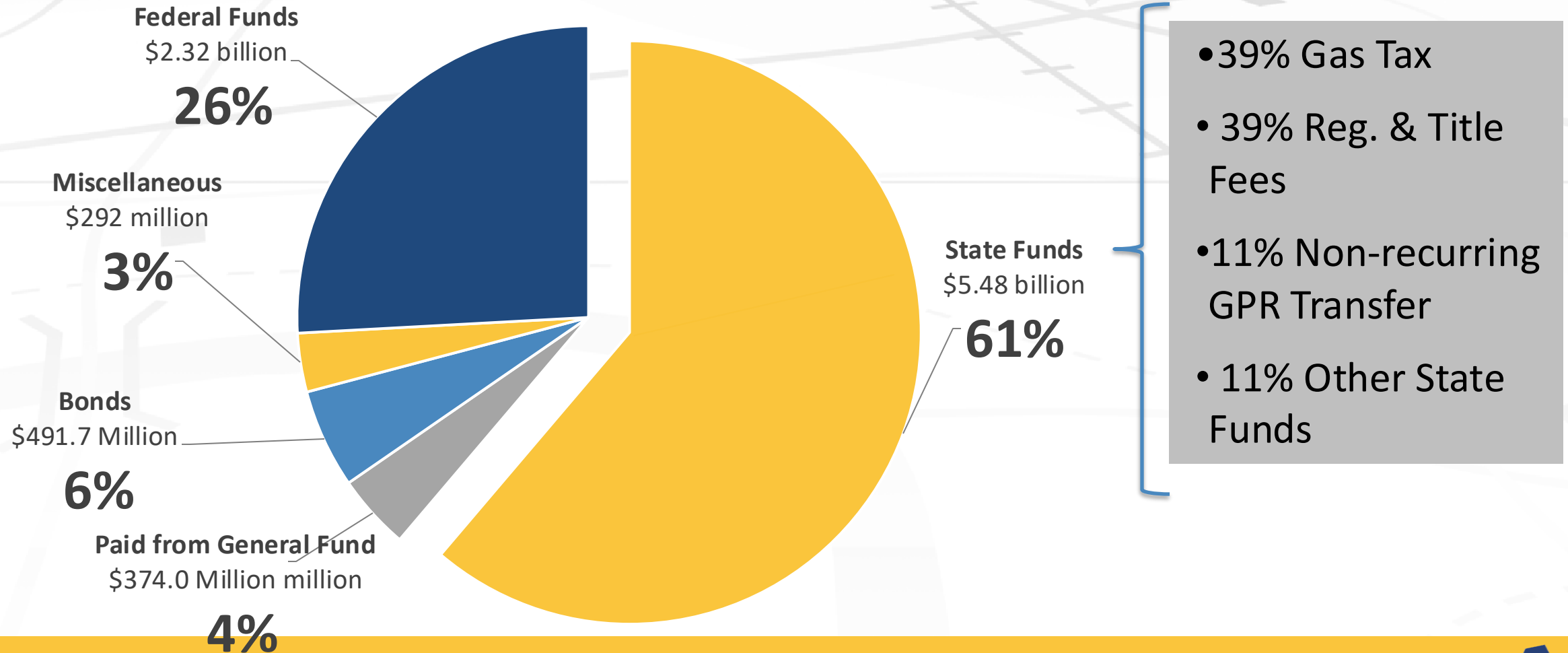


ARIP



Interstate Projects

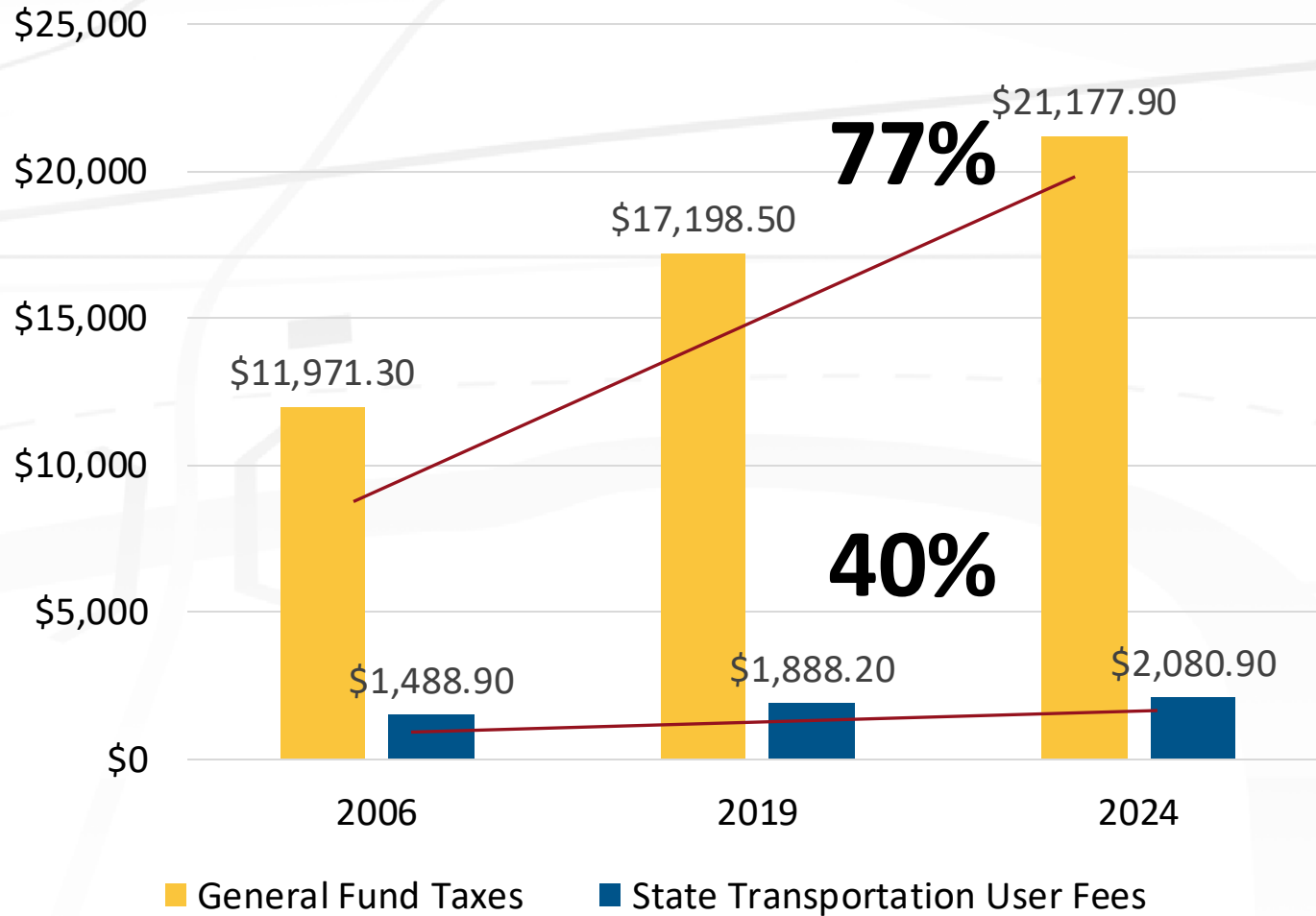
Federal Funds & State Gas Tax Vie for Single Largest Source



Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Transportation User Fees Don't Grow with the Economy Like General Fund Taxes

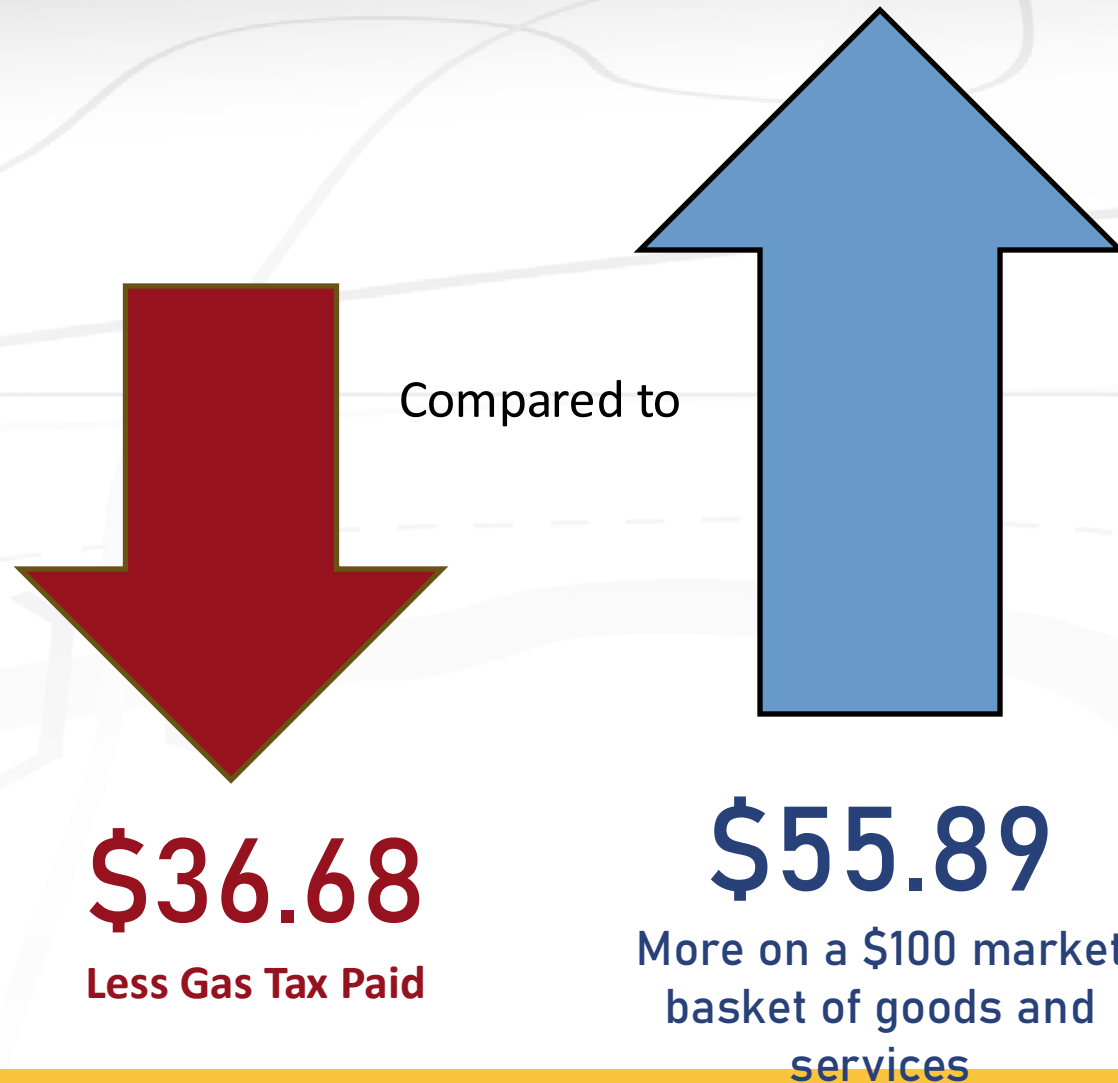
IN MILLIONS



- General Fund tax collections increased almost 80%, despite tax cuts, with growing incomes, prices, and consumer spending buoying the fund.
- Transportation user fee revenue grew about 40% with some fee increases.

Graph Sources: Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports, WisDOT (excludes transfers, PECFA, misc. revenue, and investment income).

Motorist Are Paying Less in Gas Tax



- Average fuel efficiency increased from 20.3 MPG in 2006 to 25.4 MPG.
- Motorists driving 12,000 miles/year buys 118.7 fewer gallons than in 2006.
- And pays **\$36.68 less in today's dollars.**

Source: Legislative Fiscal Bureau Paper, Jan. 2025, TDA calculation.

Fuel-Efficient Vehicles Equal Gas Tax Break

Fuel Efficiency's
Gas Tax Cut

7.8¢

per gallon

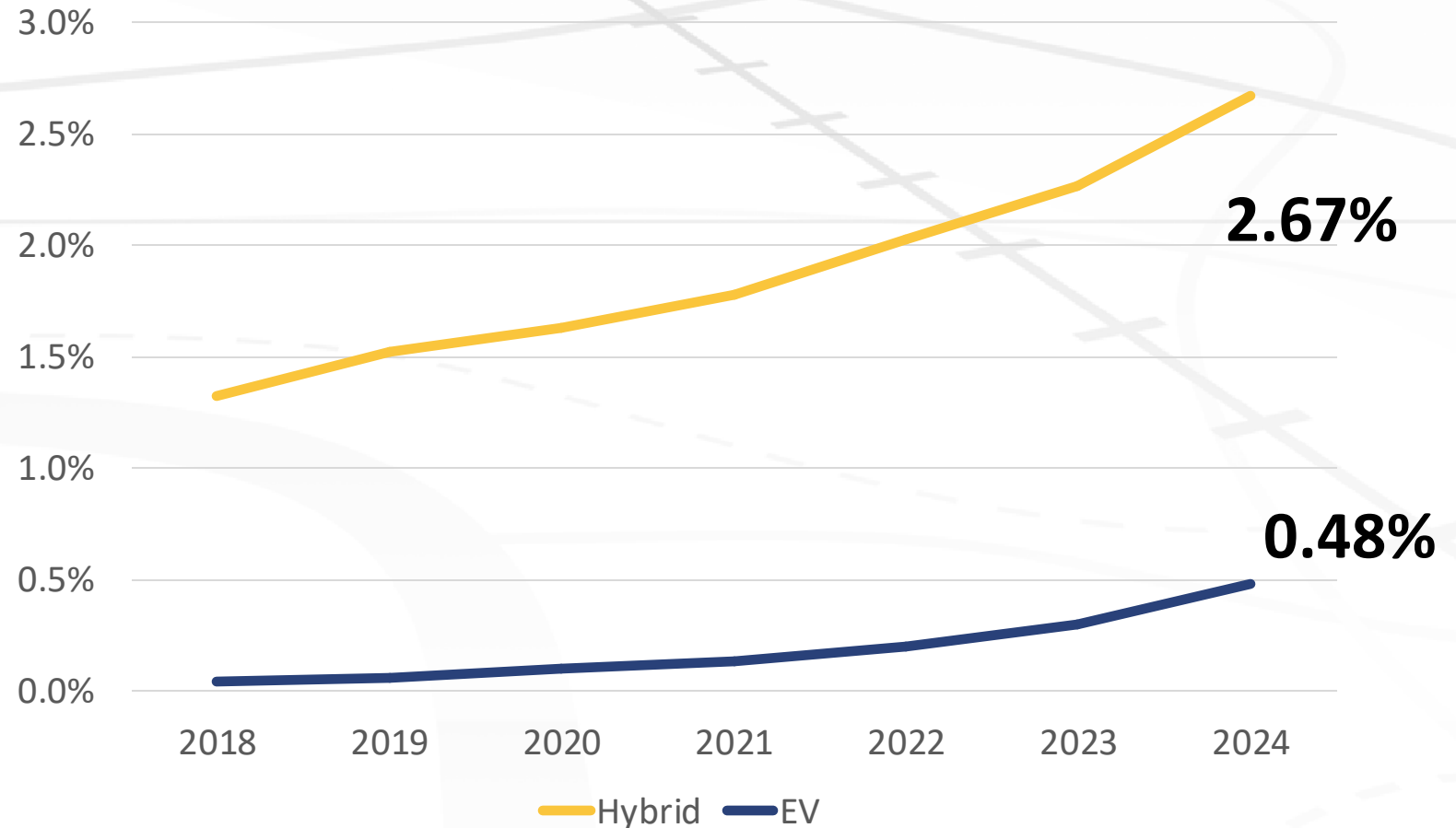
- The **25% increase in fuel economy** since 2006 results in reduction for the average motorist equal to about 7.8 cents per gallon.
- Or an estimated **\$267 million in gas tax revenue annually**.

Source: Legislative Fiscal Bureau Paper, Jan. 2025

Gas-Powered Vehicles Are Not Going Away Soon

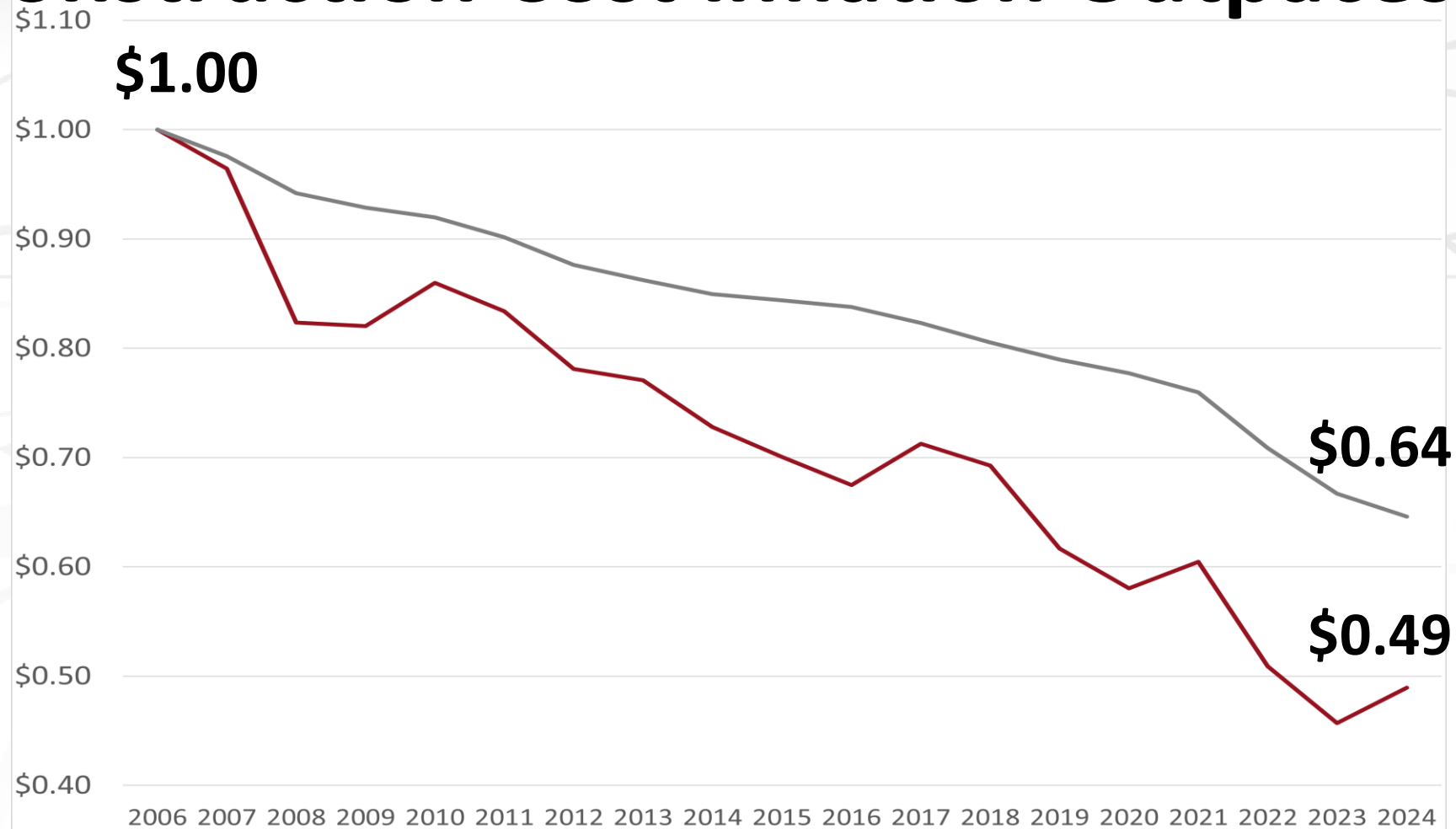
Registered Hybrid and EV Percentages of
Wisconsin Passenger Vehicle Fleet

Nearly 97%
of Wisconsin's 4.8M
passenger vehicle fleet
are non-hybrid, gas-
powered vehicles.



Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Gas Tax Purchasing Power Declines, Construction Cost Inflation Outpaces CPI

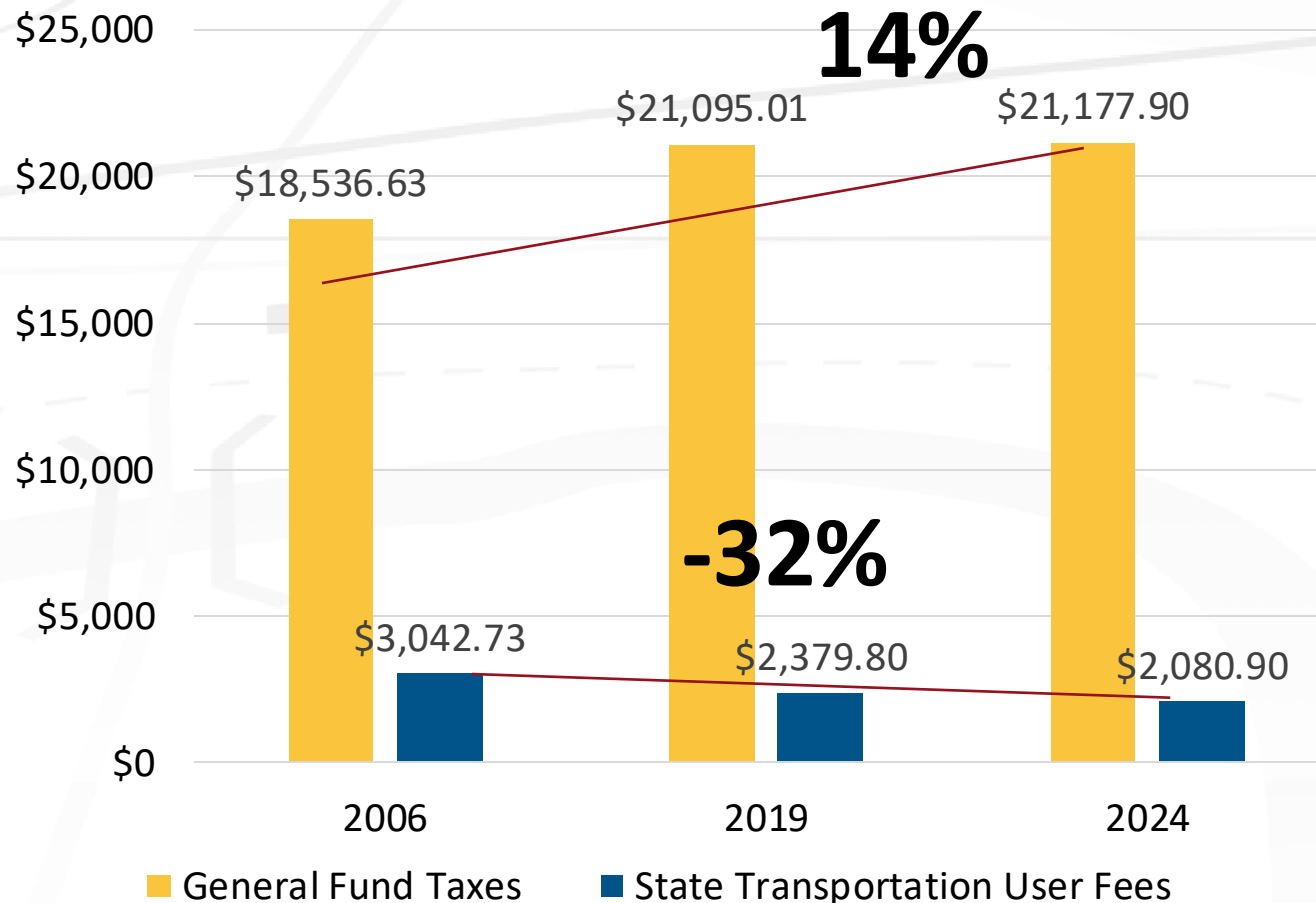


CPI: >30%
decrease in
purchasing power

**Wis. Construction
Cost Index: 50+%**

Transportation User Fees Don't Grow with the Economy Like General Fund Taxes (Constant \$)

IN MILLIONS

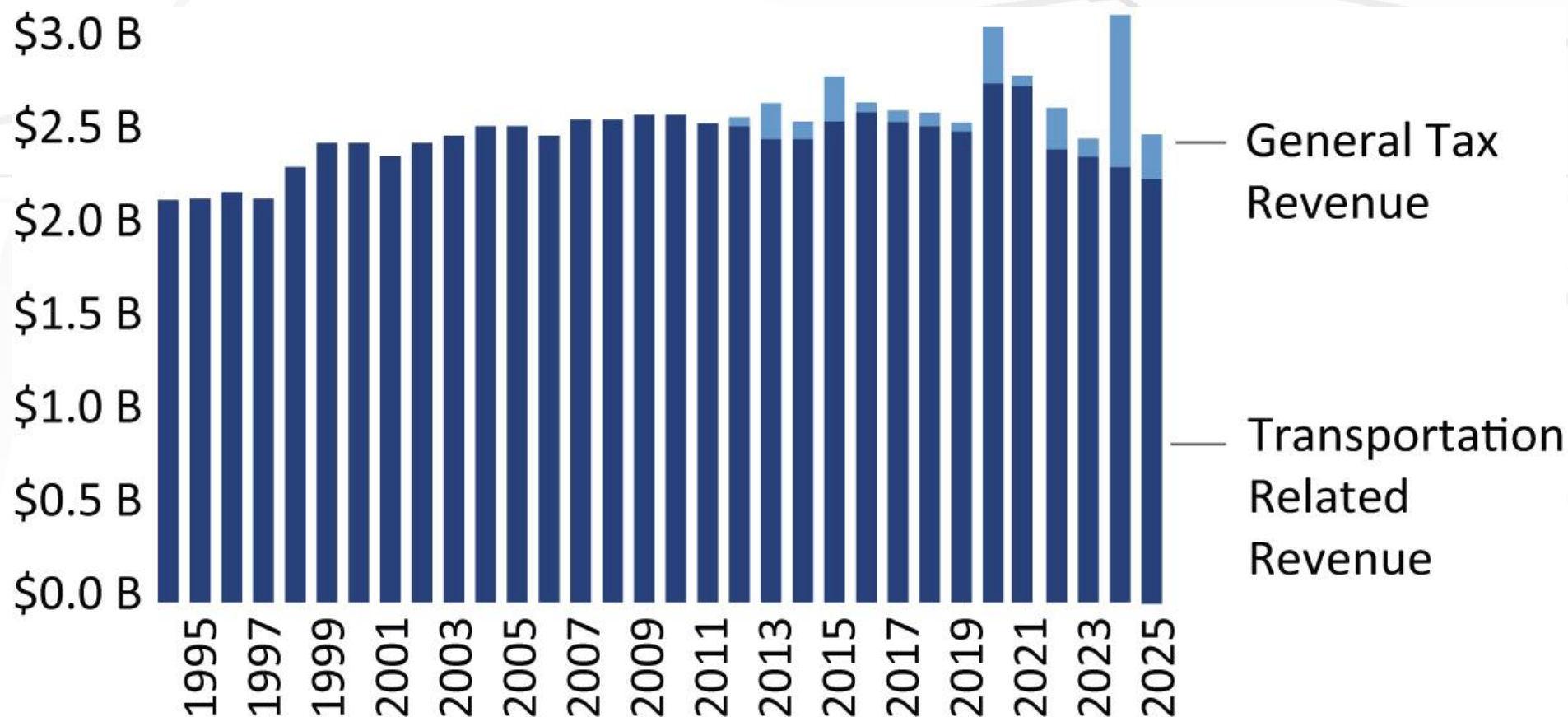


- General Fund tax collections in 2024 dollars (CPI) increased 14%, despite tax cuts, with growing incomes, prices, and consumer spending buoying the fund.
- Transportation user fee revenue (in 2024 \$s, WCCI) **decreased 32%** despite some fee increases.

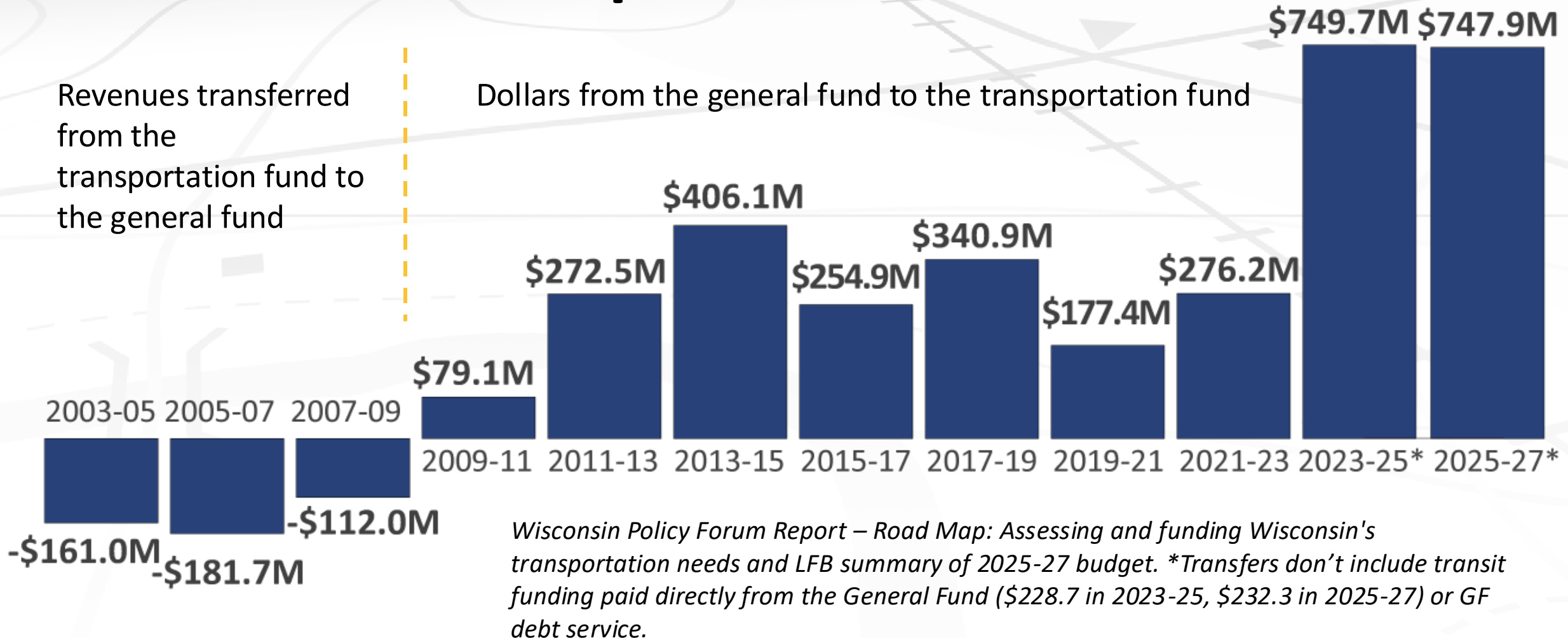
Graph Sources: Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports, WisDOT (excludes transfers, PECFA, misc. revenue, and investment income). Adjusted for inflation General Fund taxes using CPI and Transportation Fund User fees with Wisconsin Construction Cost Index.

Inflation Adjusted Transportation Revenue Lowest Since 1998

Total transportation revenue by fiscal year 1994 to 2025, 2023 \$s (CPI)

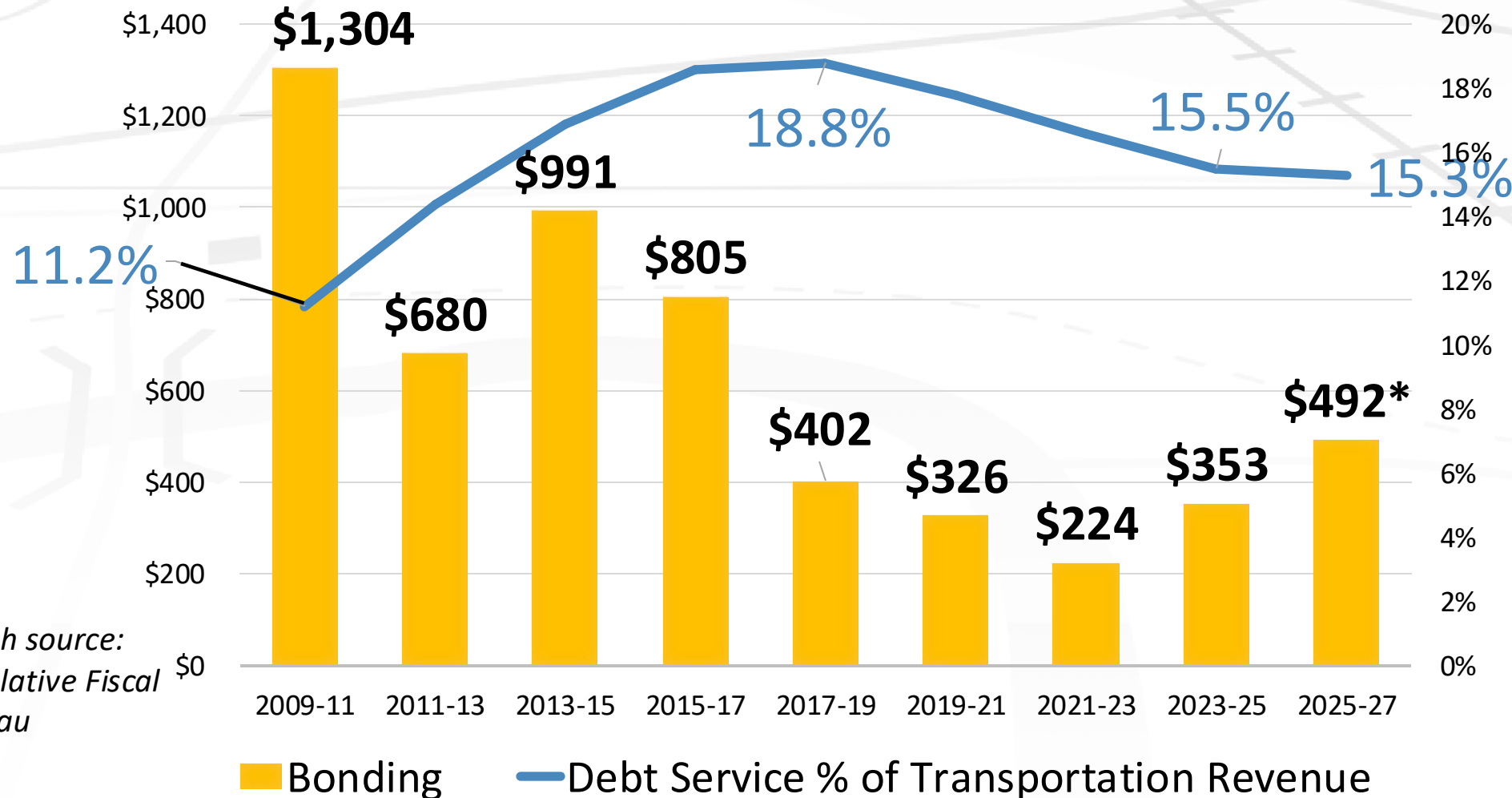


Wisconsin Increasingly Relies on General Fund Revenue for Transportation



Wisconsin Debt Service Levels Off

IN MILLIONS



Graph source:
Legislative Fiscal
Bureau

* Includes \$185.7M in
general fund-supported
general obligation
bonds.

\$1+ Billion 2027-29 Challenge

1

Replace the one-time GPR funding

2

Provide resources for generational projects in the hopper

3

Maintain program purchasing power

Transportation Delivers

- Jobs
- Connections
- Economic Opportunity
- Safety

Wisconsin's Transportation System

104,000 miles of county highways, town roads, municipal streets



12,000 miles of state and interstate highways



81 public transit and shared-ride taxi systems

8

commercial service airports and



90 diverse general aviation (GA) public-use airports



3,300 miles of railroad tracks

29

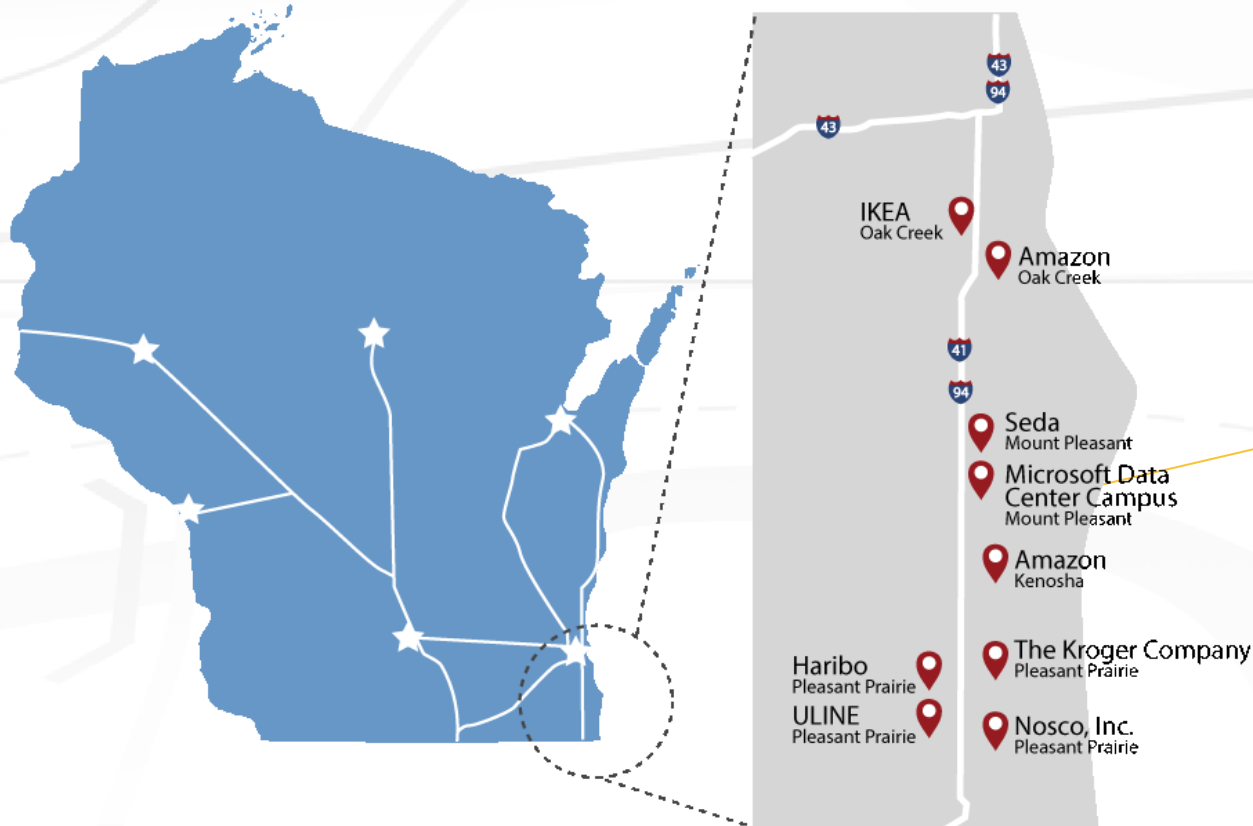


commercial ports



Strategic Investment Drives Economic Opportunity

Case Study: Business Booms Along Improved I-94 N-S



\$2 billion investment = \$11 billion (108%) increase in assessed property values along the corridor since 2015, compared to 30% in the rest of Milwaukee, Kenosha, and Racine counties.

Source: Analysis of assessed property values within three miles of the modernized corridor versus the rest of properties within the counties.

The Stories are Unlimited



LRIP strengthens Taylor County's logging industry

August 14, 2024

Over the last five years, the county has spent over \$1 million on pavement preservation in and around the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, and with a little more help, the county can further preserve these roadways for decades to come ...

[Read More](#)



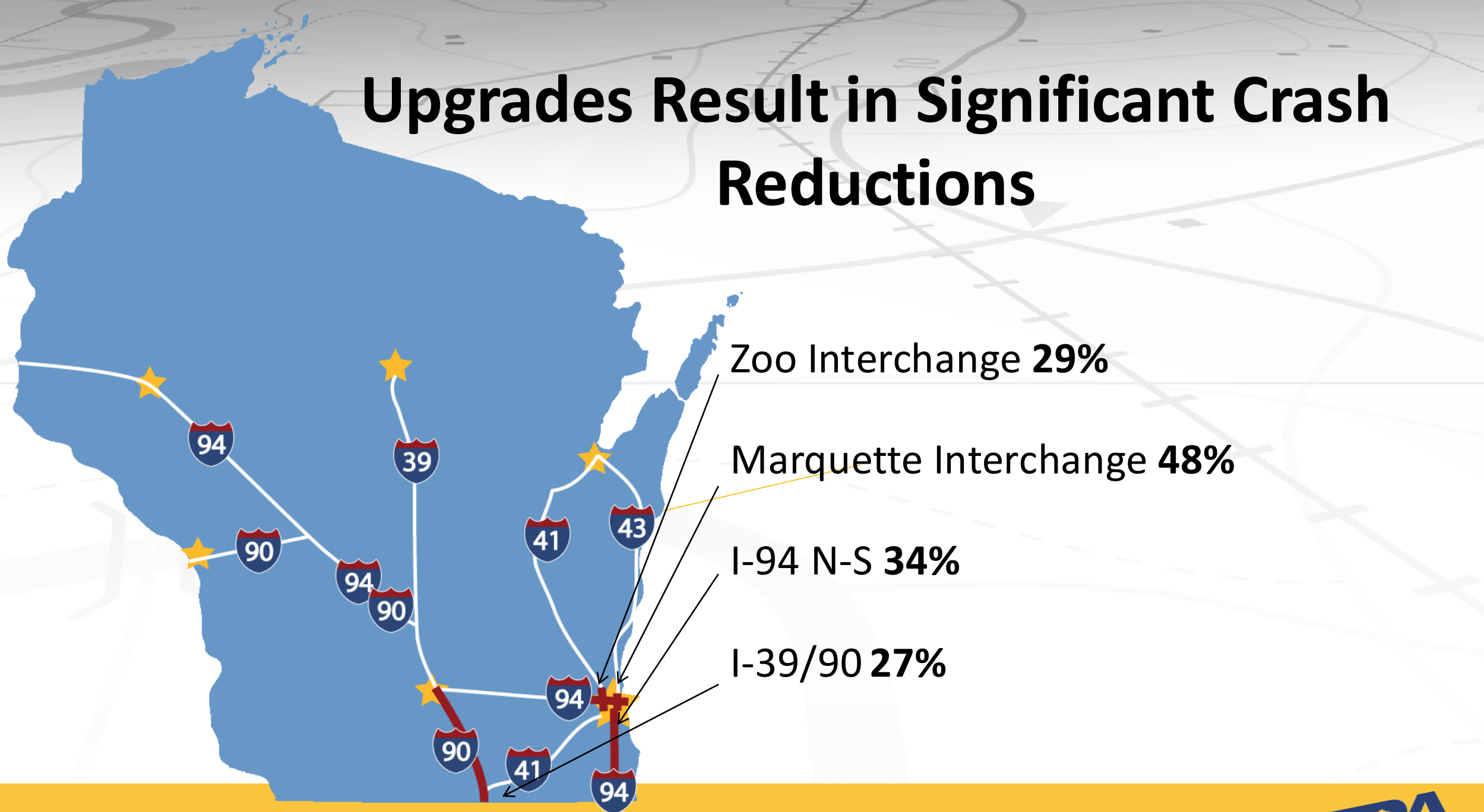
Forestry industry stakeholders to gain efficiencies from road improvements in Lincoln and Price Counties

August 30, 2024

A \$4 million project to upgrade the structural integrity of CTH YY will eliminate the need for posted weight limits and allow year-round transport of the more than 220 million pounds of timber deliveries that occur annually to the PCA mill ...

[Read More](#)

Upgrades Result in Significant Crash Reductions



Transportation investment – at every level – delivers.



Marathon County upgrades safety-challenged intersection with LRIP-S grant

May 30, 2024

Without LRIP-S funding, the county may have ended up with a pavement replacement project, which would not have addressed the intersection's safety issues ...

[Read More](#)

Keep and Build on Momentum



Working with Partners, Growing the Tent



BRIDGES

- Ag groups
- Timber
- Towns
- Counties
- Motor Carriers



COMMUNITY HIGHWAYS

- Businesses
- Chambers of Commerce
- Economic Development Orgs
- Local Governments, Mayors
- Law Enforcement & Other Safety Advocates



LARGE PROJECTS

- Businesses
- Chambers of Commerce
- Economic Development Orgs
- Local Governments, Mayors
- Law Enforcement & Other Safety Advocates
- Labor

First Inventory for Small Bridges Finds Aging Structures



- 2023-25 budget includes \$12.5 million to inventory and assess structures between 6'-20'.
- About 17.5k structures identified.
- Assessments underway.



REVITALIZE

Community Highways

WISCONSIN



REVITALIZE

Hwys 89 & 19

WATERLOO

Waterloo, Wisconsin, a charming city in Jefferson County, blends small-town life with convenient access to Madison and Milwaukee.

The city is home to about 3,500 residents and a diverse mix of businesses, including manufacturing and food production companies as well as local shops. Some notable businesses include Trek Bicycle, McKay Nursery, Sussek Machine, Van Holten Pickles, and Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese.

State Highways: The Lifeline of Wisconsin Communities

Like many small Wisconsin communities, Waterloo is linked to the state's transportation network through state highways. These roadways, which often take on local street names and characteristics within city limits, become integral connections to neighboring communities and businesses. Although state-owned, these roads significantly influence the cities they traverse, either fostering safety and growth or hindering progress. Community leaders must advocate for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) to prioritize improvement projects for these roadways in its six-year plan, as the WisDOT State Highway Rehabilitation budget struggles to meet the demands of an aging state highway system.

Waterloo's Road to Progress: Possibilities and Hurdles

Waterloo is better positioned than many cities, with two sections of its aging state highway system—State Highways 89 and 19—slated for reconstruction within the next decade. Upgrading these highways will allow the city to address the up to 75-year-old water and sewer infrastructure beneath the pavement, enhancing water pressure for residents, reducing the potential for system failures, and improving stormwater management.

Waterloo's Crossroads: Balancing Infrastructure and Funding Challenges

However, these opportunities come with trade-offs. The local share of these projects—covering pavement for parking, lighting, signage, sidewalks, and more—means that other urgently needed road improvements will be delayed. For instance, the local share for one of the projects, excluding subsurface infrastructure, equates to approximately one year of Waterloo's annual road budget, while the other represents three years.

To manage these competing priorities, the City of Waterloo requested that WisDOT reschedule the Highway 89 project from 2031 to 2033. This decision was made with the understanding that funding uncertainties could potentially delay the project beyond 2033.

Section of Highway 89 scheduled for reconstruction.

Local road potentially taking a back seat.

Waterloo's Transportation Funding Reflects Statewide Challenges

Wisconsin has long grappled with funding critical investments in state highways and local roads. Waterloo's experience reflects this statewide issue, viewed through a local lens. Without a sustainable, long-term transportation funding solution, both the state and its communities will remain trapped in a cycle where improvements to one system come at the expense of the other.

Learn more at www.facebook.com/RevitalizeWisconsinCommunityHighways

LEAGUE OF WISCONSIN MUNICIPALITIES

TDA Transportation Development Association

August 2025



centralwia.org



[About Us](#) [Wisconsin's Commerce Corridor](#) [The Project](#) [Contact](#)





It's how we get there

[TDAWisconsin.org](https://tdawisconsin.org)

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