SHEBOYGAN COUNTY RESOLUTION NO. 26 (2025/26)

Re: **Request for Sustainable Transportation Funding**

WHEREAS, local units of government in Wisconsin own and maintain approximately ninety percent (90%) of the public road miles in the state, including county highways, town roads, and city and village streets; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin's economy – rooted in agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism – relies on a safe, reliable, and well-maintained transportation network; and

WHEREAS, local governments greatly appreciate the one-time infusions of General Purpose Revenue, primarily sales and income taxes, and other revenue provided in recent state budgets, which have enabled the initiation and continuation of the successful and popular Local Roads Improvement Program Supplemental (LRIP-S) and Agricultural Roads Improvement Program (ARIP); and

WHEREAS, despite modest increases from the state over the years, transportation aids to local governments remain insufficient to keep pace with inflation and rising construction costs, leaving many communities funded below 2000 levels in real dollars; and

WHEREAS, local governments throughout Wisconsin continue to struggle to perform even routine maintenance, pavement preservation, and safety improvements, resulting in deteriorating roads and bridges; and

WHEREAS, the inaugural inventory and assessment of small bridges between six (6) to twenty (20) feet found about ten percent (10%) of the nearly seventeen thousand (17,000) structures to be in poor or severe condition; and

WHEREAS, levy limits and other fiscal constraints prevent local governments from independently filling the funding gap created by inadequate state transportation aids; and

WHEREAS, absent sustainable state funding, many communities have been forced to address their shortfalls by significantly increasing borrowing, deferring essential projects, or imposing local vehicle registration ("wheel") taxes; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin motorists currently pay among the lowest transportation user fees in the Midwest, while neighboring states and dozens of others nationwide have enacted long-term revenue measures to keep their transportation systems competitive; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin is increasingly relying on General Purpose Revenues to make needed investments, potentially pitting transportation against other vital services, such as education; and

WHEREAS, continued lack of growing, dedicated, and predictable revenue places Wisconsin at a growing economic disadvantage by threatening the efficiency of freight movement, the safety of travelers, and the attractiveness of our state to businesses and residents; and

WHEREAS, both Wisconsin's aging Interstate highway system – largely constructed in the 1950s and 1960s – and our extensive network of state and local roads require predictable, adequate, and sustainable funding to meet current and future needs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Sheboygan County Board strongly urges the Governor of Wisconsin and the State Legislature to enact a comprehensive, sustainable transportation funding solution that:

1. Provides adequate and reliable revenue growth for the efficient long-term planning and execution of state and local transportation programs;

2. Includes responsible and prudent use of General Purpose Revenue and bonding;

3. Adjusts any new and existing transportation user fees and other revenue mechanisms to sustain purchasing power in order to maintain and improve Wisconsin's transportation infrastructure; and

4. Ensures the state of Wisconsin adequately provides funding for reconstruction, preservation, and safety investments on the state and local systems.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County Clerk is hereby directed to transmit a copy of this resolution to the Governor's office, all members of the Wisconsin State Senate and Assembly representing districts within Sheboygan County, and the Wisconsin Counties Association.

Respectfully submitted this 17th day of March, 2026

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Thomas Wegner, Chairperson

Jacqueline Veldman, Vice-Chairperson

Jon Kuhlow, Secretary

Vern Koch

Jay Vander Weele

Opposed to Introduction: