

Gov. Evers, Dept. of Transportation Secretary-designee Thompson: Highlight transportation investments in video message with local leaders

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The governor and secretary-designee are joined by Wausau Mayor Katie Rosenberg, La Crosse County Highway Commissioner Ron Chamberlain, Brown County Executive Troy Streckenbach

MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers and Department of Transportation (DOT) Secretary-designee Craig Thompson highlighted the governor's investments in Wisconsin's roads and infrastructure over the 2019-21 biennium and in the governor's Badger Bounceback agenda in a video message with local leaders. They were joined by Wausau Mayor Katie Rosenberg, La Crosse County Highway Commissioner Ron Chamberlain, and Brown County Executive Troy Streckenbach, all of whom highlighted the impact these critical state funds have had on their local infrastructure and communities.

The video message is available [here](#).

"Many of the state's most important industries—such as agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism—rely on our transportation system to move raw materials, products, and people. And as Wisconsin begins to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, we will depend on our transportation system to boost our economic recovery," said Gov. Evers in the video message. "[Our 2021-2023 budget proposal] includes increases in local road improvement programs that will help communities across Wisconsin, helps local transit systems buy new vehicles and expand their service areas, and makes it easier for communities to build the bicycle and pedestrian facilities that do so much to improve our quality of life. That's what we're really investing in when we invest in transportation—improving the quality of life for all the people of Wisconsin."

"In the previous budget it included really an historic investment in transportation—revenue that hadn't been increased to that level in over a generation," said Secretary-designee Thompson. "So, in the budget we're proposing this time around, there isn't the same level of increase in new revenue, but we did want to make sure that we didn't lose ground on all the projects we made in the last budget and that we would still be able to make some strategic investments in this budget."

"Any increases that we can get in the general transportation aids really goes a long way toward helping us maintain our current system, making sure that folks can get from point A to point B, and that the economic engine that is Wisconsin can keep moving and flowing," said Highway Commissioner Chamberlain.

"We certainly have plenty of infrastructure projects in Brown County that would certainly be eligible candidates for those dollars," said County Executive Streckenbach. "And infrastructure is the number one concern of our residents not only here in Brown County, but statewide."

"For so many years local government has heard that we're going to be cutting this, so it really does matter. We're able to plan a little bit better. We're able to get our teams out there fixing things," said Mayor Rosenberg. "I love that you're talking about multimodal. When I think about transit that's really the important part so we can get people where they need to go, to jobs, to tourism— all of that. It's really important for us."

The governor's 2021-23 biennial budget proposal includes a 4 percent increase over the biennium in general transportation aids for cities, villages, towns, and counties. This builds on the previous budget's historic investment of 10 percent and brings the amount of dollars allocated to this program to the highest level ever. The Badger Bounceback agenda also invests more than \$565 million in the major highway program, provides \$15 million to support floodproofing local roads and infrastructure, increases operations funding for local transit systems by 5 percent over the biennium, and supports electric vehicle charging stations, among several other proposals. More on the governor's budget proposal is available [here](#).