



The Transportation Development Association of Wisconsin is a statewide nonprofit organization that advocates building and maintaining an efficient, reliable and interconnected transportation system that addresses our state's needs for safe mobility and economic growth.

December 2009

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Reauthorization Essential for Jobs

A survey conducted by the Transportation Construction Coalition (TCC) of road and transit contractors paints a gloomy picture for next year if the federal government fails to act on the multi-year transportation reauthorization bill.

Nearly 70 percent of the over 500 respondents said they received stimulus money this year. Despite that fact, 63 percent said they laid off employees and 44 percent expect to lay off additional workers.

According to the TCC, one of the reasons for these numbers is the requirement that stimulus-funded projects had to be "shovel ready". This requirement discouraged larger, long-term projects that can sustain long-term equipment or

personnel needs.

The survey also found that less than 20 percent of the respondents said they planned to purchase new construction equipment or trucks next year and only 5 percent anticipated hiring new, non-seasonal personnel.

In a prepared statement TCC officials said the survey results "underscore the need for quick passage of a robust, six-year surface transportation package".

To aid in this effort, the TCC requested state organizations sign on to a letter urging Congress to act on reauthorization. On December 2nd the TCC delivered those letters to each state's

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Executive Perspective

By Craig Thompson, TDA Executive Director

Thank You & Happy Holidays

As we find ourselves in the middle of the holiday season I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the members of TDA for your continued dedication and support.

2009 has been many things, none of which was uneventful. Interacting with difficult economic realities in both the private and public sector certainly causes us to make difficult choices and prioritize our resources. That is why I appreciate that so many groups across Wisconsin continue to make participation in TDA a priority.

Our continued ability to advocate for an interconnected multimodal transportation network with a unified voice is going to be more important than ever in 2010.

From reauthorization of the federal surface transportation and aviation legislation to increasing state investment in Wisconsin's transportation network to moving forward with Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) to protecting Wisconsin's segregated transportation fund – 2010 looms large.



With that in mind,

TDA Staff Wishes You and Your Family a Safe and Happy Holiday Season. Let's work together to make 2010 a productive new year.

Three-Month FAA Extension Likely

As the deadline for the current extension of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) programs draws near, it is likely another short-term extension will be in the works. House and Senate aides say the most likely course would be a three-month extension for the agency through the end of March.

The House passed its version (H.R. 915) of the bill in May, and the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee approved its version (S.1451) in July. However, the bill has been unable to move forward in the Senate as

the Finance Committee has yet to approve the revenue portion of the bill.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) taxing authority and programs, including the Airport Improvement Program, are currently operating under a short-term extension which expires on December 31, 2009. The last FAA authorization expired September 30, 2007.

More Projects Ready to Go

In the midst of the White House's jobs summit, the American Association of Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) announced that there are approximately 9,600 highway, transit, rail, port and aviation projects that are "ready-to-go". These job-creating projects are valued at nearly \$70 billion. Wisconsin reported 58 projects valued at \$350 million.

AASHTO executive director John Horsley released the following statement regarding the announcement. "...The unemployment rate in the construction trades today exceeds 18 percent. There is still a need to invest more in transportation projects if that's what it takes to create jobs and bring unemployment down. What the state DOTs have done over the past eight months to put economic recovery dollars to work shows there is no better way to create jobs and long-lasting benefits in every part of the country."

In addition, the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) completed a new survey of public transit systems nationwide which identified more than \$15 billion in public transportation capital projects that can be started in 90 days. The vast majority of public transit systems also identified additional needs beyond \$15 billion for federal assistance to avoid employee layoffs and service cuts.

As members of Congress contemplate what is being hailed as a "jobs bill", Congressman Oberstar, chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee said that the transportation sector's good showing under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) should be a good argument in designating a significant share of that legislation to transportation projects.

Visit www.transportation.org and www.apta.com for more information.

LaHood Suggests Gas Tax Debate

At a summit in Fort Worth, Texas, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood suggested Congress debate next year whether to increase the federal gasoline tax to pay for a long-term transportation authorization bill. While the Obama Administration still opposes an increase in the gas tax at this time, the Secretary's call for a debate on funding options including indexing the federal gas tax is new.

LaHood also pledged to work with Congress on passing a long-term reauthorization bill in 2010. The secretary and the administration had previously pushed for postponing reauthorization until 2011 after the mid-term elections. However, House and Senate leadership have said they are determined to complete the bill next year.

"The problem we have is, Congress wants to pass a very robust transportation bill in the neighborhood of \$400 billion or \$500 billion, and we know the highway trust fund is just deficient in its ability to fund those kinds of projects," LaHood said. "The highway trust fund was substantial at one time, but now with people driving less, and driving more fuel-efficient cars, it has become deficient. To index the federal fuel tax, that's something Congress is going to have to decide."

The previous surface transportation authorization, SAFETEA-LU, expired September 30, 2009 and has been extended twice with short-term continuing resolutions. The current continuing resolution expires December 18th.

Visit <http://www.star-telegram.com/local/story/1800830.html> to view the Star-Telegram article.

Poll Finds Support for Toll Roads

A poll of people living in Milwaukee and surrounding counties found that at least 50 percent of respondents in three of four counties say they are in favor of toll roads to fund transportation improvements.

The poll was conducted by the People Speak Poll, a collaborative effort of the Center for Urban Initiatives and Research at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, the Public Policy Forum and The Business Journal Serving Greater Milwaukee. These partners plan to administer a public opinion poll for metropolitan Milwaukee - Milwaukee, Waukesha, Washington and Ozaukee Counties - three to four times a year.

According to Anneliese Dickman, research director with the Public Policy Forum, the organization has done several transportation polls in the past and this is the first time toll roads have gotten support. Not surprisingly during the current economic conditions, an increase to the gas tax to fund transportation was not popular.

The poll also asked about three new public transportation options currently being debated in the region – high-speed rail connecting Chicago, Milwaukee and Madison; commuter rail connecting Kenosha, Racine and Milwaukee (KRM); and a downtown Milwaukee streetcar line. The high-speed rail proposal garners the most support in the region with over 50 percent of those polled in three of the four counties in favor of the project.

Visit www.peoplespeakpoll.org to view the more information on the poll.

Zoo Interchange in Need of a Quick Fix

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) announced in November that three bridges in the Zoo Interchange are in such bad condition that they must be replaced before next Memorial Day. WisDOT proposes to replace the bridges over a weekend in a barn-raising fashion using pre-constructed replacement spans. The cost of the project is estimated to be between \$12 million and \$22 million. This will be the first use of this accelerated construction approach in Wisconsin.

The new bridges will be removed and replaced again during reconstruction of the interchange, which is projected to start between 2014 and 2016. This temporary fix is giving ammunition to those who always felt the Zoo Interchange should have been ahead of reconstruction of I-94 south of Milwaukee on the state's freeway repair priority list.

Three Wisconsin companies, Edward Kraemer & Sons, Inc.; Lunda Construction; and Zenith Tech, Inc., joined together as Milwaukee Constructors LLC to submit the only proposal for the replacement project. This is the same team that formed Marquette Constructors LLC and won three major contracts on the Marquette Interchange reconstruction.

In August, WisDOT announced weight limits on the Zoo Interchange to “decrease wear and tear on the bridges and preserve the integrity of the structures until they can be rehabilitated or replaced.”

The Zoo Interchange was built in 1963 and is the busiest interchange in Wisconsin carrying over 350,000 cars each day.

DNR to Regulate Ballast Water

Effective February 1, 2010, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will issue general permits to regulate ballast water discharges from commercial vessels that enter the state's waters.

Ballast water is carried in unladen ships to provide stability on the open seas and is discharged in exchange for cargo once at port. Contaminated ballast water has been blamed for the spread of invasive species which leads to the decline of native fish, an increase in algae and a host of other environmental problems. The Great Lakes are currently home to more than 180 foreign species.

Under the DNR's new general five-year permit:

- Effective February 1, 2010, large commercial vessels are prohibited from discharging ballast tank sediment, seawater, and certain other substances. They must adopt best management practices for handling these substances to reduce the risk of releasing new invaders into the Great Lakes.
- By the end of 2010, DNR, with advice from a stakeholder committee, will determine if commercial treatment technology is available to meet Wisconsin's numerical ballast water discharge standards that will apply to oceangoing ships. Wisconsin's standard is proposed to be 100 times more restrictive than the proposed standard for the International Maritime Organization (IMO). If the DNR determines the technology is not feasible, the Wisconsin standard will change to the IMO standard.
- Effective January 1, 2012, any oceangoing vessels built on or after that date must treat their ballast water to reduce the number of live plants, animals and organisms in it to meet specific numerical standards that DNR regards as appropriate protection against introducing new invasives.

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TDA Congratulates WisDOT

TDA congratulates the Wisconsin Department of Transportation on adopting *Connections 2030*, Wisconsin's long-range statewide multimodal transportation plan. The department acknowledges that the system's needs continue to exceed available resources. However, as part of the implementation phase "WisDOT will seek funding to fully implement the plan." TDA looks forward to working with WisDOT to achieve this goal.

Visit <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/state/connections2030.htm> to view Connections 2030.

Interesting News Coverage

[Milwaukee Journal Sentinel November 27, 2009](#)

– "Working through hard times: for road worker, stimulus funds translate to vital job" <http://www.jsonline.com/news/wisconsin/75356962.html>

[USA Today November 30, 2009](#) – "Rush is on for stimulus's high-speed rail dollars" http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2009-11-30-high-speed-rail-stimulus_N.htm

[Milwaukee CBS 58- "Zoo Interchange repairs"](#) <http://www.cbs58.com/index.php?aid=10054>

[National Public Radio November 22-29](#), "On the road to safety", a week-long series on highway safety <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=120593843>

[The New York Times November 6, 2009](#) – "Stimulus sparks scuffle among high-speed rail boosters" <http://www.nytimes.com/gwire/2009/11/06/06greenwire-stimulus-sparks-scuffle-among-high-speed-rail-16795.html>

Transportation in the News

Colorado – Colorado Governor Bill Ritter is asking the legislature for a 6 percent increase in transportation funding for next year. The funding will come from new fees on vehicle registrations. The new fee program is called FASTER or Funding Advancements for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery.

“As we all know, federal and state transportation revenue has been declining for years, while at the same time transportation demands and construction costs have been increasing. Our system of bridges, highways and roadways is rapidly deteriorating and becoming a greater and greater safety concern,” said Governor Ritter.

Under the new fee schedule, owners of cars and SUVs will pay an extra \$32 the first year, \$36.50 the second year and \$41 the third year.

Opponents to the FASTER plan say that now, in the middle of a recession, is just not the right time to raise fees.

Freight Rail Fuel Efficiency – The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) recently released a study showing significant improvements in freight rail fuel efficiency over the last two decades, approximately 22 percent between 1990 and 2006.

“While all types of transportation are vital to the distribution of goods across the country, this study shows that utilizing America’s freight rail system can lead to significant fuel savings,” said FRA Administrator Joseph Szabo. “The environmental benefits of these positive changes over the last two decades are enormous.”

Several factors have led to this increased fuel efficiency including improvements in diesel-electric locomotives, increased use of double stack trains, track and signal improvements, and longer trains.

Visit http://www.fra.dot.gov/Downloads/Comparative_Evaluation_Rail_Truck_Fuel_Efficiency.pdf to view the complete study.

The Netherlands to Move to a Fee for Kilometers Driven – Drivers in the Netherlands, which is often called Holland, will soon pay a tax for every kilometer on the road in an attempt to break chronic traffic congestion and cut carbon emissions. The transition will occur in 2012 when existing taxes on vehicle purchases and registration will be repealed and replaced with the new fee per kilometer of travel, which is roughly equivalent to 7 U.S. cents per mile. Higher charges will be levied during rush hour and travel on especially congested roads. Trucks, commercial vehicles and bigger cars emitting more carbon dioxide will also be assessed a higher rate.

Opponents have raised privacy concerns regarding the GPS monitoring device required in every vehicle to track the time, hour and movement of each car. However, the government has said the information collected will be “legally and technically protected” and will not be accessible to the government for any other purpose.

Vehicle Miles Traveled Up Again - Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in September increased 2.5 percent over 2008 levels, the largest increase since travel started to pick up earlier this year. September is the sixth consecutive month with an increase in VMT after five quarters of decline. VMT for the first nine months of the year is up .3 percent compared to the same time period in 2008.

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congressional delegation. Visit the TDA website, www.tdawisconsin.org, to see a copy of the letter sent to the Wisconsin delegation.

The Transportation Construction Coalition (TCC) is a partnership of 28 national associations and construction unions representing hundreds of thousands of individuals with an interest in federal transportation programs.

Association Notes

2010 TDA Fly-in

March 10th-11th

Every year, we present our case for transportation and express appreciation for the efforts of our delegation.

Taking our message to Washington will be particularly important in 2010.

Jobs and the economy dominate the public's interest right now. There is no close second. The current jobless rate has made the country uncommonly single-minded on this point. We must illustrate to Congress the connection between transportation investment and jobs.

Please join the TDA Fly-in to thank members of the delegation for their work and to encourage them in their efforts to strengthen Wisconsin's infrastructure and put Wisconsinites back to work.

Reservations are due by January 8, 2010 and full payment by January 15th.

Visit the TDA website, www.tdawisconsin.org, for TDA event details and any future changes in the schedule.



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- Effective January 1, 2014, existing oceangoing ships must meet these same standards for the number of organisms remaining in the ballast water they've treated before discharging.
- Lakers will not be required to treat their ballast water to meet standards under the current general permit. The department may impose discharge standards on Great Lakes vessels in the next reissuance of the general permit.
- If the U.S. Coast Guard or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) adopts numerical standards that Wisconsin regards as adequately protective, Wisconsin will examine whether a state permit is still necessary.

Wisconsin joins New York, Michigan and Minnesota in regulating ballast water. Along with New York, Wisconsin will have some of the toughest standards in the Great Lakes.

TDA and shipping interests have long acknowledged the serious problem of invasive species and have advocated for federal legislation establishing consistent national standards - rather than a patchwork of state laws and regulations - and a federal research program to develop ballast-water treatment technology. However, Congress has been slow to act.

Visit www.dnr.wi.gov for more information.

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