

**BARRON COUNTY RESOLUTION NO. 2026 - 11**

**Resolution in Support of Sustainable Transportation Funding**

**TO THE BARRON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

1           **WHEREAS**, local units of government in Wisconsin own and maintain  
2 approximately 90% of the public road miles in the state, including county highways, town  
3 roads, and city and village streets; and  
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5           **WHEREAS**, Wisconsin’s economy—rooted in agriculture, manufacturing, and  
6 tourism—relies on a safe, reliable, and well-maintained transportation network; and  
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8           **WHEREAS**, local governments greatly appreciate the one-time infusions of  
9 General Purpose Revenue, primarily sales and income taxes, and other revenue provided  
10 in recent state budgets, which have enabled the initiation and continuation of the successful  
11 and popular Local Roads Improvement Program Supplemental (LRIP-S) and Agricultural  
12 Roads Improvement Program (ARIP); and  
13

14           **WHEREAS**, despite modest increases from the state over the years, transportation  
15 aids to local governments remain insufficient to keep pace with inflation and rising  
16 construction costs, leaving many communities funded below 2000 levels in real dollars;  
17 and  
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19           **WHEREAS**, local governments throughout Wisconsin continue to struggle to  
20 perform even routine maintenance, pavement preservation, and safety improvements,  
21 resulting in deteriorating roads and bridges; and  
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23           **WHEREAS**, the inaugural inventory and assessment of small bridges between 6  
24 to 20 feet found about 10% of the nearly 17,000 structures to be in poor or severe condition;  
25 and  
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27           **WHEREAS**, levy limits and other fiscal constraints prevent local governments  
28 from independently filling the funding gap created by inadequate state transportation aids;  
29 and  
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31           **WHEREAS**, absent sustainable state funding, many communities have been forced  
32 to address their shortfalls by significantly increasing borrowing, deferring essential  
33 projects, or imposing local vehicle registration (“wheel”) taxes; and  
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35           **WHEREAS**, Wisconsin motorists currently pay among the lowest transportation  
36 user fees in the Midwest, while neighboring states and dozens of others nationwide have  
37 enacted long-term revenue measures to keep their transportation systems competitive; and  
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39           **WHEREAS**, Wisconsin is increasingly relying on General Purpose Revenues to  
40 make needed investments, potentially pitting transportation against other vital services,  
41 such as education; and  
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43           **WHEREAS**, continued lack of growing, dedicated, and predictable revenue places  
44 Wisconsin at a growing economic disadvantage by threatening the efficiency of freight  
45 movement, the safety of travelers, and the attractiveness of our state to businesses and  
46 residents; and

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48           **WHEREAS**, both Wisconsin’s aging Interstate highway system—largely  
49 constructed in the 1950s and 1960s—and our extensive network of state and local roads  
50 require predictable, adequate, and sustainable funding to meet current and future needs;

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52           **WHEREAS**, this resolution was recommended for approval by the Executive  
53 Committee on February 4, 2026 on a vote of 9 to 0 with Anderson, Bartlett, Cook, Kusilek,  
54 Okey, Olson, Rogers, Thompson & Wenzel voting in favor and none voting in opposition;  
55 and

56  
57           **WHEREAS**, this resolution was recommended for approval by the Highway  
58 Committee on February 5, 2026 on a vote of 5 - 0 with Effertz, Jenkins, Mosentine, Olson  
59 and Thompson voting in favor and no members voting in opposition.

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61           **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Barron County Board of  
62 Supervisors strongly urges the Governor of Wisconsin and the State Legislature to enact a  
63 comprehensive, sustainable transportation funding solution that:

- 64           1. Provides adequate and reliable revenue growth for the efficient long-term planning  
65 and execution of state and local transportation programs;  
66           2. Includes responsible and prudent use of General Purpose Revenue and bonding;  
67           3. Adjusts any new and existing transportation user fees and other revenue  
68 mechanisms to sustain purchasing power in order to maintain and improve  
69 Wisconsin’s transportation infrastructure; and  
70           4. Ensures transportation continues to deliver for Wisconsin by adequately funding  
71 reconstruction, preservation, and safety investments on the state and local systems.

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73           **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the clerk is hereby directed to transmit a  
74 copy of this resolution to the Governor’s office, all members of the Wisconsin State Senate  
75 and Assembly representing districts within Barron County, and the Wisconsin Counties  
76 Association.

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78           **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that publication of this resolution may occur  
79 through posting in accordance with Section 985.02 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

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**OFFERED THIS 16<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2026.**

<p>Number of readings required: One (X) Two ( )</p> <p>Vote required for passage: Majority ( X ) 2/3 Entire Board (20) ( )</p> <p>Source of funding: Budgeted ( ) General Fund ( ) Grant ( ) Contingency ( ) Other ( X ) Details: N/A</p> <p>Fiscal impact: - Current year total amount: \$ 0 - Future years total amount: \$ 0 - Effect on tax levy – current year - \$ 0 - Effect on tax levy – future years - \$ 0</p> <p>Fiscal impact reviewed by County Finance Department</p> <p>_____ Michelle Drury, Finance Director</p> <p>Approved as to form by:</p> <p>_____ Jeffrey French, Administrator</p> <p>_____ John Muench, Corporation Counsel</p>	<p>_____ Louie Okey, Executive Committee Chair</p> <p>_____ Marv Thompson, Highway Committee Chair</p> <p>(The Committee Chair signature verifies the action taken by the Committee.)</p> <p>Board Action: Adopted (X) Failed ( ) Tabled ( )</p> <p><b>Motion: (Nelson/Moen)</b> to approve. Chair Okey reviewed the resolution request from the Wisconsin Counties Association and noted the resolution will be requested by all 72 Counties. Discussion. <b>Motion: (Vaughn/Kohnen) to remove Lines #67, 68 &amp; 69 and Line #70 from #4 to #3.</b> Failed with 20 No and 6 Yes (Cook, Effertz, Krug, Mosentine, Kohnen &amp; Vaughn) and 3 Absent (B. Anderson, Ploetz and Thompson). Main motion carried with 23 Yes, 3 No ( Krug, Kohnen &amp; Vaughn) and 3 Absent (B. Anderson, Ploetz &amp; Thompson.)</p>
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