

SAMPLE LETTER TO EDITOR

DATE

Transportation Funding Needs to be a Higher Priority

Minnesota may have a historic budget surplus in the state general fund, but the highway trust fund is facing a huge deficit. Revenue from transportation user fees is not keeping up and the results can be seen in pothole-riddled streets, increases in safety problems on roads and growing numbers of structurally deficient bridges.

While freight shipments increase, delivery trucks multiply and traffic problems grow, cost increases are making it ever more challenging to solve these problems.

Resurfacing two miles of roadway has increased 25% in the last two years. The cost of a snowplow was \$260,000 in 2020, and now it's \$340,000. That traffic signal on your corner? The price has gone from \$207,000 in 2019 to \$335,000 today.

As the Legislature and governor debate how to invest a historic state budget surplus, they should commit to dedicating more of the surplus to repairing basic infrastructure like local roads, bridges, and transit systems. These investments create opportunities for more careers in engineering and construction, helping to support local economies.

In addition, the transportation user fees that are dedicated to fixing our transportation system need to be updated to generate the higher funding levels needed. Ongoing, dedicated revenue will allow the state to catch up and keep up on our transportation system.

One easy change: finish dedicating the sales tax already collected on auto-repair parts to transportation. A full dedication would provide stable funding that can be directed specifically to local infrastructure. More state assistance can go a long way to reducing the pressure on local taxpayers.

The bottom line is that legislators need to make our transportation system a higher priority. Everyone relies on our roads, bridges and transit systems every day in order to live their lives. Now is the time to invest in our future with new revenue for our transportation system.

NAME

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