



Wisconsin Department of Transportation

TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT 6
718 West Clairemont Avenue
Eau Claire, WI 54701-5108

May 4, 1994

Mr Donald Norrell City Manager
City of Eau Claire
203 S Farwell Street
Eau Claire WI 54701

RECEIVED
MAY 9 1994
CITY MANAGER

Dear Mr. Norell:

Your municipality has in the past, expressed an interest in the US Highway 53/Eau Claire Freeway project. In July 1992, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation selected its preferred alternative for this project (the "Inner corridor"). The Final Environmental Impact Statement for this project has been approved by the Federal Highway Administration, and is now available to the public.

The state Transportation Projects Commission (TPC) will meet this summer to hear public testimony on candidate Major highway projects from throughout the state. The Governor, ten State Legislator's and three citizen members make up the TPC. The Highway 53/Eau Claire Freeway project, as proposed by DOT, ranks high on the cost benefit ranking system which is used by DOT and the TPC to evaluate such proposals because:

- 1.) It provides a critical FREEWAY link in the state Corridors 2020 highway network to northwestern Wisconsin.
- 2.) It reduces existing and future traffic congestion along US Highway 53 - Hastings Way in the Eau Claire area.
- 3.) It reduces existing and future high accident rates on US Highway 53 - Hastings Way.

The TPC recommends to the State Legislature which projects should be funded.

As we move forward with this important project, your municipality may be considering taking a position regarding the funding decision. We would be happy to present you with a project update and answer any questions you may have regarding this proposal and how it would be of benefit to your community. You may contact Marty Beekman, Chief of Planning, or Terry Pederson, Planning Supervisor at (715) 836-2891 to arrange a visit by DOT.

Enclosed please find an updated fact sheet on the project. Feel free copy and distribute it as you see fit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas McCarthy".

Thomas McCarthy, P.E.
District Director
Enclosure

The USH 53 Outer Bypass and Hastings Way Improvement *Action Committee*

MEDIA RELEASE

May 4, 1994

TOWN OF SEYMOUR ENDORSES THE OUTER BYPASS

At its regularly scheduled meeting on May 3, 1994, the Seymour Town Board passed a resolution endorsing the USH 53 Outer Bypass.

With this action, Seymour joined the Town of Hallie and the City of Altoona in support of the outer route and in opposition to the Inner Bypass (now called the Eau Claire Freeway).

The associated opposition to the Inner Bypass (Freeway) by Seymour, Hallie, and Altoona is significant because more than six (6) miles of the 7.5-mile inner route (Freeway) would be located in those three communities.

The action of the Seymour board resulted from a thorough and lengthy consideration of the long-range environmental and economic effects on the township.

- END -

Co-Chairmen:

Carlyn L. Malom 682 Meadow View Dr., Chippewa Falls WI 54729 • 723-6638

Robert D. Sather 2120 Moonlight Bay Dr., Altoona WI 54720 • 835-5020 (home) 836-3373 (work)



Press Release
May 4, 1994
For more information, contact
Anne Keller (608) 266-1194

State Representative

**MIKE
WILDER**

67th Assembly District

WILDER WILL URGE TPC SUPPORT OF INNER BYPASS

State Rep Mike Wilder (D-Chippewa Falls) today urged the Transportation Projects Commission to approve the Eau Claire inner bypass. Wilder said there's no clear consensus on this issue "Individuals, local leaders and the communities they represent have been pulled in many different directions and have many different opinions on this important issue."

Wilder says that leaders are most needed when the different sides can't agree on a solution. "I want to be clear about my position in support of the inner bypass and my reasons for supporting it. It's time to start building consensus."

"Originally, I supported the outer bypass because it was less expensive to build, the shortest of the three routes and would have had a 65mph speed limit" Wilder stated. But after many months of careful consideration, Wilder says he's adopted a new position on the Highway 53 outer/inner bypass dilemma.

Wilder based his decision to support the inner bypass on numerous factors. He said the environmental impact statement, approved by the Federal Highway Administration on April 7, had an effect on his decision to take a new position. "The evidence was very clearly in support of the inner bypass as the least environmentally damaging alternative." Wilder said "I personally believe that the inner bypass will also help contain urban sprawl."

Stalled negotiations with the Department of Transportation also contributed. "I think we've hit the wall as far as the DOT is concerned. They've indicated that the inner bypass is the only option they can consider." Wilder said "If the TPC doesn't approve the project this year, it will be another two years before it receives consideration again."

Wilder noted Hastings Way is heavily utilized by travelers within the Chippewa Falls/Eau Claire Metropolitan area. According to DOT figures, by the year 2010 it's estimated that 20,000 vehicles daily would use the inner bypass as opposed to only 7,000 users on the outer bypass. Wilder found himself asking, "Why spend millions of dollars building a bypass fewer local drivers will use in their everyday travels?"

"I can understand and sympathize with the residents of Altoona who do not want the bypass to go through their city, but I think we can all agree that something must be done now" stated Wilder. It is important to note that by 2010 an estimated 60,00 cars per day would use Hastings Way unless the bypass is built.

Finally, Wilder adds "There have been questions raised about the accessibility of Highway 93 as well as potential congestion at the southern terminus, and so I will ask the TPC and the DOT to review the current design for that portion of the inner bypass to ensure that these will be efficient and safe interchanges."

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State Capitol
P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708
(608) 266-1194

Toll-free Hotline
1-800-362-9472

Wilder: Build inner corridor

By Rod Stetzer
Leader-Telegram staff

5-4-94

In a switch of a position he took two years ago, State Rep. Michael Wilder, D-Chippewa Falls, today endorsed an inner corridor route for a U.S. 53 bypass.

He also urged the state Transportation Projects Commission to approve the route running west of Lake Altoona.

"I think we have to build roads for the vast majority of people who are trying to use them," Wilder said.

Most people using U.S. 53 are going to and from Eau Claire, Wilder said. The inner bypass would best serve them, he said.

Wilder was among seven lawmakers to endorse an outer bypass in December 1992. That was when there was a chance the state Department of Transportation could endorse an outer bypass and before the final environmental impact statement was written, Wilder said.

That report said the inner route would be the least environmentally damaging alternative.

Wilder said he's spent months in coming to a new

decision on the bypass. He said talked to officials in Chippewa Falls, Altoona, Eau Claire and the DOT.

Many people are using emotional arguments instead of facts, Wilder said.

"There's a lot of emotion in it, too. People drag out what happened 30-40 years ago. That's not relevant to me," he said.

The outer bypass would be a nice road for people trying to bypass Eau Claire, he said. But most drivers want to go to Eau Claire, he said.

The DOT estimates 20,000 vehicles would use the inner bypass by the year 2010, while 7,000 would use an outer bypass, Wilder said.

"I do think my constituents will be able to use the inner bypass better than the outer, and I think it's better for the region," he said.

"I can understand and sympathize with the residents of Altoona who do not want the bypass to go through their city, but I think we can all agree that something must be done now," Wilder said.

It's time to develop a consensus for an inner bypass, he said.

Inner bypass needed now

By Charles Kunz

For many years, I have been involved in the discussion and debate about the Highway 53 bypass. During this time, I have seen the traffic and safety problems continue to get worse with each passing year.

A number of years ago, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation initiated a study of freeway route alternatives to examine ways to decrease traffic and the accident levels on Hastings Way. This study cost taxpayers over \$1 million and is one of the most comprehensive Environmental Impact Statements completed for a highway project in the state of Wisconsin.

I believe that the state Department of Transportation engineering staff, along with the consulting engineers, did an excellent job for the taxpayer in identifying an alternative that will solve the congestion and safety problems on Highway 53.

Based on the findings of this study, the Department of Transportation has recommended that a new freeway be built on an inner corridor alignment. The Department of Transportation has determined that this is the only viable solution that will reduce traffic levels on Hastings Way to an acceptable level.

One of the issues that we continue to hear in this debate is that we should build a highway that will direct the tourists and truckers around the Eau Claire area. Some people say that this is the reason for the traffic congestion.

The tourists and the truck traffic are not the major cause of traffic and congestion on Hastings Way. The

It Seems to Me

E.C. Leupke
Telegram 6/1/94

real traffic problem is created by all of us living in the Chippewa Valley who use Hastings Way for going back and forth to our jobs, taking children to school, going shopping and doing other day-to-day activities.

As you can see on any weekday, most of the people traveling on existing Hastings Way are local people using this highway for local needs.

The Department of Transportation recommended the inner corridor alternative because it will move 21,000 vehicles from existing Hastings Way to a new bypass that has freeway interchanges at Highway 12, Birch Street, the North Crossing and Van Dresser Street.

These interchanges will make it easy for local traffic to access destinations within the local area and provide an option to using the congested Hastings Way.

The inner corridor will provide local residents, who now use Hastings Way daily, an easy and accessible alternative to using a very busy Hastings Way. Travelers from outside the area will be able to move through the area quickly by using the new freeway.

This project must be built! To continue to debate this issue will only result in more accidents and increased congestion on Hastings Way. We cannot afford to wait any longer!

Charles Kunz is a member of the Eau Claire City Council

PROGRESS REPORT
USH 53 BYPASS RESOLUTIONS

The following municipalities have taken action regarding the USH 53 bypass project in Chippewa and Eau Claire Counties:

PASSED RESOLUTIONS TO SUPPORT THE OUTER BYPASS

Barron County Board	Altoona School District
Sawyer County Board	Fall Creek School District
Barron County Highway Department	Town of Cedar Lake, Barron Co.
City of Altoona	Town of Chetek, Barron Co.
City of Barron	Town of Hallie, Chippewa Co.
City of Chetek	Town of Wascott, Douglas Co.
City of Chippewa Falls	Town of Fairchild, Eau Claire Co.
City of Rice Lake	Town of Lincoln, Eau Claire Co.
Village of Cameron	Town of Ludington, Eau Claire Co.
Village of Fairchild	Town of Otter Creek, Eau Claire Co.
Village of Fall Creek	Town of Seymour, Eau Claire County

REJECTED RESOLUTIONS TO SUPPORT THE INNER BYPASS
(NOW CALLED THE EAU CLAIRE FREEWAY)

Chippewa County Board	Eau Claire County Board
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PASSED RESOLUTIONS TO SUPPORT THE INNER BYPASS
(NOW CALLED THE EAU CLAIRE FREEWAY)

City of Eau Claire	Town of Brunswick, Eau Claire County
City of Superior	Town of Washington, Eau Claire County
Town of Delmar, Chippewa County	Douglas County Board

INDEFINITE POSITIONS

A number of municipalities have passed resolutions to support a bypass without identifying a route. This fails to aid in making a decision.

Copies to Council
5/12/94

HWY 53 RESOLUTIONS (as of 5/9/94)

Support Outer

Barron County	(38,667)
Rice Lake	(Barron Co.)
Chetek	(Barron Co.)
Barron	(Barron Co.)
Chippewa Falls	(12,838)
Hayward	(1,899)
Altoona	(6,145)
T. of Chetek	(Barron Co.)
T. of Cedar Lake	(Barron Co.)
V. of Fall Creek	(1,102)
V. of Fairchild	(506)
T. of Fairchild	(313)
T. of Hallie	(4,553)
T. of Lincoln	(955)
T. of Otter Creek	(451)
T. of Seymour	(2,767)

Others supporting OUTER

Altoona School Board
Fall Creek School Board
Barron Co. Econ. Dev. Corp. (new)

total population (70,196)

Support Freeway (no stated route) *

Douglas County (new)	(41,923)
Superior (new)	(Douglas Co.)
Bloomer (new)	(3,191)
Eau Claire	(57,404)
Menomonie (new)	(13,608)
Cumberland (new)	(2,188)
T. of Sarona (new)	(393)
V. of Solon Springs (new)	(Douglas)
V. of Haugen (new)	(304)
V. of New Auburn (new)	(476)
V. of Minong (new)	(514)

Support Inner

T. of Washington	(6,252)
T. of Delmar	(997)
T. of Brunswick	(1,521)
Chippewa County Highway Committee	
total population	(128,771)

Others supporting INNER

EC Chamber of Commerce
Chippewa Chamber of Commerce
C.F. Industrial Development Corp.
E.C. Area Industrial Development Corp.
E.C. Area Convention Bureau
Chippewa Valley Sierra Club
Momentum Chippewa Valley

* Resolutions acknowledge route has been selected and route is no longer the issue.

Inner corridor ^{5/16} logical choice

The U.S. 53 project was conceived to slash the heavy traffic congestion on Hastings Way by providing an alternate corridor for commuters, travelers and truckers.

But something happened on the way from conception to construction: NIMBY struck with a vengeance. Not in My Backyard is a common syndrome that is aroused when projects necessary for the benefit of society as a whole must be located in the home turf of a few.

Soon, NIMBY takes on a life of its own, spreading its negativism far beyond the confines of the proposed project.

Editorial

That's why opposition to the inner corridor, proposed to safely speed traffic between Eau Claire, Chippewa Falls and points north, is sprouting and being nourished as far north as Rice Lake and even beyond.

Town boards, city councils and county boards that have thrown their support to the outer bypass cite the speed and ease of travel for tourists, vacationers and truckers. That route is east of the city of Altoona, through farm land and a portion of the county forest.

Those boards ignore, or perhaps don't know, the fact that only a very small percentage of the traffic that would use an Eau Claire bypass is through-traffic. The Environmental Impact Statement completed by the state Department of Transportation reports that only 6 percent of the typical year 2010 traffic starts and ends outside of the Chippewa Valley region.

The computer analysis shows that the remaining 94 percent of the traffic flow has both an origin and destination in the Chippewa Valley area.

A special traffic count taken in 1993 shows traffic on Hastings Way at the Eau Claire River had increased to 50,150 vehicles per day on a roadway designed for a capacity of 35,000 vehicles per day.

The inner corridor on the west side of Altoona would lift 21,000 vehicles per day from Hastings Way; the outer corridor would account for only 7,000.

Add to that the enormous savings in lives and property damage resulting from motor vehicle accidents. By 2010, it is expected that accidents would cost \$6.02 million and kill two people - every year. The inner corridor would cut the expected accident rate of 530 per year to 245; the outer corridor would cut only 40 accidents.

The environmental impact report is the most thorough such report ever made by the DOT. It has been approved by the state Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Department of Interior, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Sierra Club.

Six alternative routes were studied in the report and only the inner corridor survived. Rejecting the inner route and starting over with the same criteria would not alter the result - except that no route would survive.

The political atmosphere is changing. There's a chance the project will be funded. But the ship is leaving the dock, and it's time to get aboard.



1303 LYNN AVENUE
P.O. BOX 8
ALTOONA, WI 54720-0008

File in file

715-839-6092
FAX 715-839-1610

May 23, 1994

Representative David A. Brandemuehl
Rm 317 N., State Capitol
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Representative Brandemuehl,

I am writing you on behalf of myself and my colleagues who visited with you in Madison on Wednesday, May 18.

We appreciated the time and attention that you gave to us, in allowing us to air our concerns for an outer bypass for our metropolitan area.

The people of this area need this final link to complete the plan for Highway 53. We see the outer bypass as the only solution, both economically and feasibly in completing the highway in our area.

Sincerely yours,

Larry Sturz - Mayor, City of Altoona
Robert Sather - Eau Claire County Board
Mark Dickensen - Eau Claire County Board
Carl Schwoch - Board Member, City of Fall Creek

ROB KREIBICH
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
NINETY THIRD ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

MADISON OFFICE
(608) 266-0660



DISTRICT OFFICE
(715) 839-1064

May 25, 1994

Representative Dave Brandemuehl
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Representative Brandemuehl:

Thank you again for attending meetings last week concerning the Highway 53 bypass. As you know, this issue has been a hot one for the past eight years in the Chippewa Valley. Your willingness to take time out of your busy schedule and talk with supporters of both the inner and outer bypass options was not only appreciated by them, but myself as well. Hopefully some sort of consensus will be reached and a bypass will be built for our area.

Best Wishes,

Rob Kreibich
State Representative
93rd District

RK:dk

Stat. Rep David Brandemuehl
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708

DOT
Free

May 25, 1994

Dear Senator Brandemuehl,

It now is abundantly clear that the DOT conducted a charade from day one in selecting the Inner Corridor for U.S. Hwy 53 in the Eau Claire area. They never intended to listen to, or consider any other option than the Inner Corridor. All that money spent on so-called public hearings, some on the eastern side of the state to make it difficult for area people to attend. A "cooked" study to support only the Inner Corridor. And finally the public statement by the DOT director, "There is only one option, the Inner, and the DOT will build no highway if the Inner route isn't selected."

I believe the DOT and their cohorts are guilty of improper, if not illegal activities, in the way they have conducted the siting of a federal highway location.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, and the Chippewa Valley have been cheated, and deserve, and should demand proper treatment.

Although I am from Altoona, my comments and observations would be the same regardless of where I might reside. It is a matter of appropriate use of transportation tax dollars, and public input in the highway selection process.

1. Between the period of 1971-1974, I represented the City of Altoona on a Chippewa Valley Metropolitan Planning Committee. The cities of Eau Claire, Chippewa Falls, and all other Chippewa Valley government entities were represented. Our task was to plan for the future development of the area. At that time the DOT presented the by-pass location east of Altoona. All members agreed on this location. The first phase would be the completion of 4 lanes of Hwy 12 extending eastward to the proposed by-pass location. The 4 lane segment has been completed for Hwy 12. What happened to this plan? Why has this not been discussed?

2. Consider 12 lanes of concrete and 4 bridges within two to three blocks of one another with short congested ramps in between if the inner route is selected. At completion of the inner route we will then have to start planning the true outer by-pass route east of Altoona. Is this the proper way to expend federal and state tax dollars?

3. From experience in other cities we know that federal highways should not be constructed through urban areas. This has not been done for many years. The DOT knows this. They by-passed Chippewa Falls, Rice Lake, and Spooner. These cities could have used the same arguments as the special

interests in Eau Claire. In this area the DOT is currently constructing a by-pass around Neillsville to eliminate congestion. Pick up a map of Wisconsin or any other state and you'll readily see where the by-passes are routed. One must ask, "What's going on with this situation in the Eau Claire area?"

4. Nothing has been done to upgrade traffic flow on the current Highway 53. There are many adjustments and improvements that could accomplish this. Why hasn't this been done, or even discussed?

5. The inner corridor route would abolish the last "Greenbelt" through this metropolitan area. Along Otter Creek we have a nice mix of aquatic, and upland flora and fauna. This would be obliterated. This area should be preserved for orderly planning and development for the benefit of the entire metropolitan area. For more information on the value of Greenbelts, contact **Dr. Phillip Lewis, U of W Madison, Wisconsin.**

6. The so called Blue Butterfly occurs in both route areas. Should we give up all that is good along Otter Creek for an ill-defined butterfly habitat? Most people believe this to be a reuse.

7. The inner route, with the ramps, and local streets, along with sound barriers would use up valuable single-housing land.

The outer route would pass through low value rural lands that are ideally suited to highway construction. It would allow for great flexibility in planning an efficient route, and access roads. It would allow spreading of traffic, avoiding the short congested ramps of the inner route. Many, if not most, landowners would be willing to sell land for the outer route.

8. The inner route is a short term costly fix, and seems to be designed only for people in the city of Eau Claire. No consideration is given to long term transportation needs. How about the truckers, campers, and all the other through traffic? A federal highway corridor is a land use decision for all time, and for all people. It permanently impacts on people and resources in and out of the Chippewa Valley. It should be determined by transportation needs, and not by land developers and fast-buck artists. The corridor east of Altoona has much greater potential for moving large volumes of traffic at a greater speed as traffic volumes increase.

9. If one is to consider long-term development potential, the outer corridor encompasses much greater resources for a larger number of communities.

10. The inner corridor will work hardships on the communities involved. It would split them into two parts, and form a permanent barrier between them for development and services. Real estate taxes will have to be raised to finance added police, fire, public works, and environmental concerns.

11. It is folly to believe that people will not drive a couple miles to use the outer corridor. They do it in every other by-pass in the United States, and think nothing of it. It has been a long-accepted modernized concept in transportation.

12. Just released, May 21, is an impartial WEAU-TV conducted local survey. Fifty-five percent of the respondents preferred the outer corridor east of Altoona, while only 34 percent favored the inner corridor. Since this was a local telephone number, it can be assumed that the majority of calls came from the city of Eau Claire. Add to this calls that would require long distance from further up the Chippewa Valley, truckers, and other through travellers, I believe the numbers preferring the east of Altoona by-pass would be much greater.

This same survey reported that the majority of respondents felt that the Inner Corridor would not be of significant benefit to local business.

13. When one considers the above, and that 6 local legislators in 1992 said the route east of Altoona was the proper route, along with most local governments voting to support the outer route, why is the DOT, and the special interests running rough-shod over the wishes of the majority?

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

1. Either the legislature, or special counsel, should investigate the conduct of the DOT. Concerns that should be examined:

- a. Did the DOT subvert the intent of the law and state procedures in the siting process?
- b. What deals or commitments were made prior to, and during, the siting process?
- c. What are the conflicts of interest with, or within the DOT? The appearance is there.

- d. Who authorized a DOT official to state that there was one option only, their option, and no highway would be built if their option wasn't selected?
- e. Can the DOT over-ride the oversight authority of state legislators? Does the DOT have to cooperate with, and work with local governmental bodies?
- f. Who or what influences were brought to bear on the DOT in the site selection conduct?

2. All action on this By-Pass issue should be stopped until:

- a. The DOT is forced to redraw the Outer By-Pass route east of Altoona so that it makes some sense. For example the south end of the route could be pulled westward to the existing Hwy 53 route.
- b. An unbiased and impartial study should be made of the newly drawn route east of Altoona. This study should be monitored by an impartial commission. Honest and fair hearings should be held on the outer route, and also for the existing Hwy 53 route.

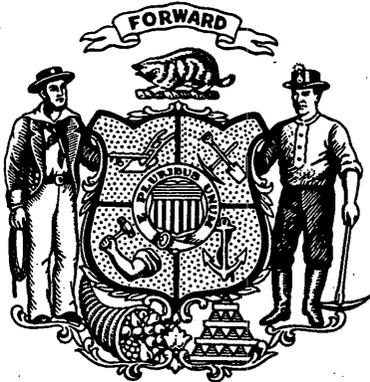
If the above is not done, the cohesiveness of the Chippewa Valley will be shot for a long time. It is also needed to restore the confidence in our governmental institutions.

Sincerely,



Delbert D. Thomas
1911 Garfield Avenue
Altoona, Wisconsin 54720

END



END

Dave Plombon

STATE REPRESENTATIVE



68TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Representative David Brandemuehl
Room 317 North, State Capitol
Madison WI 53702

*Dot
File*

May 25, 1994

Dear Rep. Brandemuehl,

As a member of the Transportation Projects Commission, you will be charged this summer with enumerating the major highway projects for the State of Wisconsin. I'm sure that you are already receiving correspondence from the different areas of this state that are in competition for our limited resources.

As the Representative from the Eau Claire area where most of the proposed Highway 53 project will go through, I would like to offer you some thoughts.

This project has been as controversial as any major highway project in the history of Wisconsin. Charges and counter-charges have flown fast and furious from both sides of the issue. I would urge you to reserve all judgement on this issue until you hold your hearings this summer so that facts, not rhetoric will be the deciding factor.

In order to best hear from all sides on this project which has great importance to all of Northwest Wisconsin, I would request that when you meet to discuss the location of your hearings, you would seriously consider holding one of them in Eau Claire. There are many citizens that would like to offer you their opinions and thoughts on Hwy 53. Holding one hearing in the Chippewa Valley will afford you with the best opportunity to hear all sides.

I would be happy to discuss the issue further with you if you wish. Please feel free to contact me anytime. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely;

Dave

Dave Plombon
State Representative



Eau Claire County
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Eau Claire County Courthouse, Room 2560
721 Oxford Avenue
Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54703-5481



(715) 839-4835
Fax: (715) 839-6243

*Dot
file*

May 26, 1992

Representative David A. Brandemuehl, Member
Transportation Projects Commission

Dear Representative Brandemuehl:

This is to thank you for your very kind attention to our presentation on May 18, urging you to support a USH 53 Outer Corridor Bypass.

Altoona Mayor Larry Sturz, Fall Creek Village Trustee Karl Schwoch, Eau Claire County Supervisor Mark Dickensen, and I appreciated that opportunity. You were a good listener.

As you know, an overwhelming number of area municipalities reject the Department of Transportation's recommended Inner Corridor Bypass (also called the Eau Claire Freeway). These municipalities strongly support the Outer Bypass. We are asking that you sustain the will of the people.

If you wish additional information/documents that support the case for the USH 53 Outer Bypass, please contact me at your convenience.

Again, thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Sather
First Vice Chair, Eau Claire County Board
and
Chair, County Transportation and Public Works Committee

c Rep. Rob Kreibich

The USH 53 Outer Bypass and Hastings Way Improvement Action Committee



MEDIA RELEASE

May 26, 1994

file

USH 53 OUTER BYPASS PREFERRED BY 55% TV 13 ANNOUNCES SURVEY RESULTS

On May 21, TV 13 Eau Claire announced that 55% of the people responding to their telephone survey preferred the Outer Bypass for the USH 53 project. The complete results are as follows:

Outer Bypass	55%
Inner Bypass	34%
Upgrade Hastings Way	5%
Do Nothing	5%

These results are consistent with other polls taken during the past four years, and they bring a decisive and persistent consensus for the Outer Bypass to the Transportation Projects Commission and Wisconsin legislators.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF SOME PAST BYPASS POLLS (Inner Bypass is also called the Eau Claire Freeway or Bypass)

<u>Leader-Telegram</u> Referendum	December 1993	Outer 52.1%	Inner 42.5%
Barron County Highway Committee	April 1993	(Major Resorts & Campgrounds) Outer 88%	Inner 11%
	March 1993	(Major NW Wis. Businesses) Outer 84%	Inner 15%
DOT Public Hearing	February 1992	Favor Outer or Oppose Inner 56%	Favor Inner or Oppose Outer 36%
<u>Leader-Telegram</u>	October 1991	Inner?	
		No - 84%	Yes - 16%
Major Truckers	March 1990	Outer 80%	Inner 0%
		Hastings Way 20%	
(Few of the percents above calculate to 100% because other options received minor support.)			

- END -

Co-Chairmen:

Carlyn L. Malom 682 Meadow View Dr., Chippewa Falls WI 54729 • 723-6638
Robert D. Sather 2120 Moonlight Bay Dr., Altoona WI 54720 • 835-5020 (home) 836-3373 (work)

Wisconsin State Senate



RODNEY C. MOEN

Senator - 31st District

May 27, 1994

*P 8 T
file*

Governor Tommy G. Thompson
115 East
STATE CAPITOL

COPY

Dear Governor:

The Transportation Projects Commission, charged with the enumeration of the major highway projects for the State of Wisconsin, will be meeting next week to schedule hearings around the state on the planned projects.

I respectfully request that the Transportation Projects Commission schedule a hearing to be held in Eau Claire. The Highway 53 project will have a major impact on the traffic flow in the Eau Claire area and northwest Wisconsin.

I believe it is imperative that area residents have the opportunity to share their concerns and opinions on the Highway 53 project. A hearing in Eau Claire would afford them this opportunity.

I would be pleased to discuss this matter with you at your convenience.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rod".

Rodney C. Moen

cc: Transportation Project Commission Members

DOT
file

June 3, 1994

Re: Highway 53 bypass

The Honorable David A. Brandemuehl:

I am looking forward to the upcoming public hearings on the highway 53 project and sincerely hope you will support the DOT selected route.

This project is badly needed and critical for the Chippewa Valley and northwestern Wisconsin. The traffic will simply be unbearable ten years from now, your decision at this point in time is vital to getting the funding to build the highway by the year 2004.

As we approach the TPC's decision on this project, I hope you will keep the following facts in mind.

The highway 53 bypass is not being built for Eau Claire or Altoona. It is being built to move traffic throughout the Chippewa Valley. It provides a critical FREEWAY link in the state Corridors 2020 highway network to northwestern Wisconsin. It reduces existing and future traffic congestion along US Highway 53 (Hastings Way) in the Eau Claire area. It reduces existing and future high accident rates on US Highway 53.

The final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is completed and is the most extensive EIS done for a highway project in Wisconsin. The EIS reviewed six options, including the Outer Corridor option. The Inner Corridor was chosen by Wisconsin DOT because it was the only option which met the project goals stated in the previous paragraph.

The Outer Corridor provides a freeway link, but would not significantly reduce existing or future traffic on US Highway 53, nor would it reduce existing and future high accident rates. Only the Inner Corridor meets all project objectives. Remember that about 80 percent of traffic on US Highway 53 is local or regional. As a city resident for 20 years, I believe people in this area will only use a bypass that is convenient. What a waste of taxpayer money it would be to build an Outer Corridor that few would use and would not resolve the traffic snarl on US Highway 53!

It has been stated by Inner Corridor opponents that this is a special interest project. I want you to know that the Inner Corridor will go right next to my sisters home. Obviously, her family is against this project. My parents as well oppose the Inner Corridor. If I was to be persuaded by special interests, I surely would oppose this project because my family is the most important and special interest I have. I support the Inner Corridor and realize that it is the only option that relieves us of our problem.

Another argument the Inner Corridor opponents use is that "someone" is really going to profit from this. I do not know, nor do I care, who owns property along either route. I simply say this, no matter what route is chosen "someone" will profit and "someone" will suffer loses as a result. I believe my sisters family will indeed suffer property value loses if the Inner Corridor is chosen.

If you listen carefully to Outer bypass supporters, I believe you will hear alot of emotion and few facts to support their side. I simply ask you to consider the facts on this project and am sure you will come to the proper recommendation to the legislature. We need your vote to support the DOT's selected project for highway 53. It's time to get on with this critical highway project.

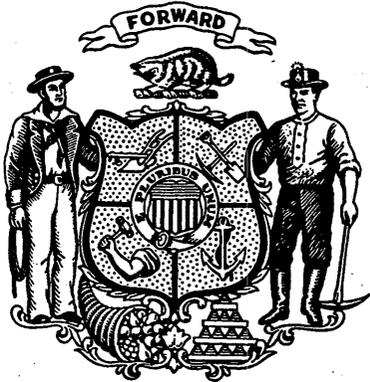
Thank you for your thoughtful consideration on this project.

Sincerely,



Randall DeMars
3006 Deerfield Drive
Eau Claire, WI 54703
Eau Claire City Council - District 1

END



END



June 3, 1994

Mr. Mark Lewis, President
Eau Claire City Council
Call Box 5148
Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54702

Dear President Lewis:

Please note the enclosed article from a recent issue of the Eau Claire Leader. I raise a point about mentioning the City of Menomonie and the fact that the article states that the City of Menomonie endorses the inner bypass.

This is an error and must be corrected. The City of Menomonie endorsed the funding of a bypass, but we made a point of not endorsing either route.

This places me in an awkward position with the Menomonie City Council, and also the citizens of Menomonie. I made it a point, when I placed the resolution before the Council, that this was an endorsement for funding and not a particular route!

Also, I have actively pursued positive relations with the City of Altoona, along with all cities in the Chippewa Valley. This certainly puts the City of Menomonie in a compromising position with Altoona.

I must ask for a correction of the newspaper article error by the particular reporter. In its present form the newspaper will incorrectly use it over and over again. This must not be.

Sincerely,

Chuck Stokke
Chuck Stokke
Mayor

CS/ak
Enc.

Lewis says many back inner U.S. 53 bypass

By Thomas B. Pfankuch
Leader-Telegram staff

Mark Lewis has met the opposition head on, and the Eau Claire City Council president feels he's been victorious.

During the past three months, Lewis has driven hundreds of miles north of Eau Claire trying to drum up support for the proposed U.S. 53 inner corridor freeway that would carry traffic through the Eau Claire area just west of Lake Altoona.

During some of his visits, Lewis said, he was confronted by supporters of the outer corridor east of Lake Altoona, including a group of 15 people who rode in a pair of vans.

"They followed me from meeting to meeting," Lewis said.

But Lewis returned from his trips with a feeling of success.

During a news conference today at the Birch Street fire station, Lewis said many municipalities north of Eau Claire have approved resolutions that support construction of the U.S. 53 freeway.

"During the past three months, the project has been endorsed by almost every community from Superior to Eau Claire," he said.

Among the governmental units that now support the inner corridor: Superior, Douglas County, Solon Springs, Gordon, Minong, Hayward, town of Saron, Haugen, Cumberland, New Auburn, Bloomer, town of Delmar, Eau Claire, Menomonie, town of Washington and town of Brunswick.

"That's a clear majority of northwestern Wisconsin," Lewis said.

Supporters of the outer route say they also have the support of many communities north of Eau Claire. At least two communities visited by Lewis — Rice Lake and Barron — did not endorse the inner corridor that has been studied and chosen as the best route by the state Department of Transportation.

Some of Lewis' expenses for his trips, including mileage and some meals, were reimbursed with city money, he said. Lewis was reimbursed \$311 for those expenses from February to April.

Lewis tried to deflect criticism by outer corridor supporters who call him a "snake oil salesman" who is pitching an inner freeway hard sell.

"My interest was ... to make sure (the municipalities) had the facts and knew where this project is going," Lewis said. "They (outer supporters) don't argue on merits of the highway — they chose to attack me personally."

May 31, 1994

False

False

END



END

June 5, 1994
Fall Creek, WI. 54742

Dear Rep. Brandemuehl,

I am writing to you concerning the upcoming vote on the Highway 53 inner or outer bypass in Eau Claire County.

I would like to list the reasons to vote in favor of the outer bypass-----

1. Back in the 70's West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission did an urban area plan for the years 1975-2000 and the projected growth was east of Eau Claire and the proposed US Highway 53 corridor is designated as the outer corridor route. Altoon ultimately used this plan when planning their sewer and water mainlines.
2. The outer bypass corridor favors thru traffic, it is the shortest route and would be the cheapest to build, the cheapest to maintain. \$11 million less to build.
3. The inner route will terminate at a congested area on old U.S. 53 and U.S. 93 where it competes with heavy local traffic from the mall areas. It uses old, existing highway from there to I-94.
5. The inner corridor will have poorly placed interchanges---How can you construct a freeway with two of the major interchanges---53 and 12 and 53 and 93 are within a half mile of each other?
6. When exiting the proposed inner route to go west on Clainemont, there are three stop signs within 1,400 feet-----where are 20,000 cars a day going to fit into that space?
7. Gov. Thompson has placed a spending cap on the school districts of Wis.. He has stated, "The State of Wisconsin is going on a slim-fast diet." If our school systems have spending caps----is it too much to ask that the Highway Department be made to follow the most appropriate---the right----and yes the cheapest route?
8. The environmental statement is a big joke---I refuse to believe that little butterfly can't make it a few feet to the left or right! Does this environmental statement mean that absolutely no home or roads, or business' will even be allowed to be built in the outer bypass area? Let's get real!

It has been said, nothing will be done, until there is a consensus---well there is a consensus---only the special interest groups are on the outside. Take a look at all the townships and cities that have voted in favor of the outer bypass. Let's see this committee do the right thing!!!!

Sincerely
Barbara J. Bergin



CHIPPEWA HERALD TELEGRAM

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Mark Baker
Editor



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Advertising Manager

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Arlls Holmes
Production Manager

Ray Horvatin
Press Forman

LuAnn Oldenberg
Business Manager

With questions on the Opinion Page, call 723-5515

Bible verse for today

Through faith and patience inherit the promises. — Hebrews 6:12

Doublespeak on Hwy. 53 bypass

6/7/94

We don't often take the president of the downriver city council to task. After all, he's got his hands full trying to run affairs in his own community. But when his questionable tactics affect surrounding areas, he leaves himself open to criticism.

Mark Lewis, president of the Eau Claire City Council, propagated a smokescreen of half-truths in an attempt to influence public opinion in favor of the Hwy. 53 inner bypass.

In recent weeks, Lewis traveled to communities up and down Hwy. 53 to enlist support for the Eau Claire bypass

Editorial

project. Everyone knows there's a problem with traffic on Hwy. 53. But as of yet, one solution has not won a consensus. Some think the inner

bypass is the best solution. Others feel an outer bypass, tied to an upgrade of Hastings Way, is a much better idea.

Lewis is in the inner bypass camp. As is his prerogative, he appeared before various councils and town boards and asked them to pass a resolution supporting immediate action on the Hwy. 53 bypass.

According to public officials we've talked to, Lewis vowed his resolution was not site specific — in other words, it favored neither the inner route nor the outer route. It only pointed out, he would say, that it is essential to fund the Hwy. 53 bypass project as soon as possible.

The trouble is, Lewis wasn't entirely truthful.

Halfway down the resolution, a provision notes that passage of the measure meant the public body favored the DOT's recommended route for the project.

What the resolution doesn't say — in plain English — is that the DOT had already gone on record in support of the inner bypass, and was doing all it could to push it.

So, thinking they were passing a simple resolution to support funding of a Hwy. 53 bypass, many councils and boards approved Lewis' resolution.

Days before the Chippewa Falls City Council was to vote on the resolution, a story quoting Lewis appeared in the downriver newspaper and on a local television newscast. Using a big map, Lewis claimed the inner bypass had won support from a number of communities, from Superior to Bloomer.

Officials in those two communities, however, made it clear: "We did not support the inner bypass. We passed a resolution which — we were told — was not site specific. We specifically wanted to avoid getting entangled in a local decision. But we definitely did *not* go on record in favor of the inner bypass."

In his zeal to influence other communities, Lewis may have misrepresented his intentions — and the resolution. Perhaps that's why some officials from governments which do not favor the inner bypass — such as the Altoona City Council, the Hallie Town Board, the Chippewa Falls Common Council, and the Chippewa County Board — say they are tired of the manipulation of information on the bypass issue.

This is not a presidential debate, where spin doctors twist the truth to make their side look good and sell their "product." This multi-million dollar project needs community support — from many communities — before it can be built. Deliberately twisting information to serve one's political ends does not serve the people. It only poisons the process.

Before the first yard of concrete is poured, the solution to the Hwy. 53 bypass controversy must first and foremost be built upon truth — the full truth — and trust.



GARVEY & BAUER
Legal Services

15. South Blair Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53703
Phone 608/256-1003
FAX: 608/256-0933

Edward R. Garvey
Michael R. Bauer
Heidi L. Luehring
Tim Paterick, M.D.

*Sally A. Stix**
Of Counsel

*Also admitted in Illinois

MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Projects Commission

FROM: Ed Garvey, Mike Bauer and Heidi Luehring

DATE: June 8, 1994

RE: EIS Discussion of Outer Corridor Alternative for U.S. Highway 53 and Potential for Supplemental EIS

The question has arisen what additional work would be needed for the U.S. Highway 53 project if the TPC chooses the Outer Corridor.

While the Inner Corridor Freeway (Alternative 3) receives the primary focus of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Highway 53, IH94 to USH 53/STH 124 Interchange, the statement does give consideration to the Outer Corridor.

Because the Outer Corridor Freeway remains a viable option and continues to garner considerable community support, the TPC or DOT may want to request a supplement to the EIS focusing on the Outer Corridor Freeway Alternative. Pursuant to Wisconsin Administrative Code NR 150.22 (4) and 40 C.F.R. §1502.9, a supplemental EIS shall be required where there are substantial changes in the proposed action or where there is significant new information relative to the environmental impacts of the project. A supplemental EIS may be prepared when it is determined that the purposes of the National Environmental Protection Act will be furthered by doing so. 40 C.F.R. §1502.9.

In any event, despite the Department of Transportation's contention to the contrary, the fact that the EIS focuses on the Inner Corridor does not prevent a closer look at the Outer Corridor. If you or the DOT conclude that the present EIS is not sufficient as it pertains to the Outer Corridor, the DOT has the authority to order a supplemental EIS.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact us.

HL:slo

1: hltr/tpc.mem

cc: Larry Sturz
Barbara Pautz



3801 Fairfield Road
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

June 9, 1994

Representative David Brandemuehl
13081 Pine Road
Fennimore, WI 53809-9619

Dear Representative Brandemuehl:

I have been following the Highway 53 Bypass issue since its inception. I've attended 99% of the meetings and hearings from Appleton to Spooner.

I am appalled at the insensitivity of the DOT on their adamant stance of the Inner Bypass. If this project is allowed to be built it will destroy three communities: Altoona, Seymour and Hallie. In Hallie, at the widest point, the Inner Bypass would be approximately one mile from existing Highway 53. For half its length, it will be only a few hundred yards from existing businesses creating a "no man's land."

I cannot believe when they say the Inner Bypass is environmentally the best route. How can you put a four lane roadway through residential neighborhoods, especially deep valleys, and not create a smog and noise filled environment? The building of five bridges across Otter Creek and the Eau Claire river would be enough to pollute the river just from salt runoff. The outer route would have only two bridges.

The EIS states over three times as much farmland would be used on the outer route. This is true because all the land on the outer is zoned agriculture. The farmland north of the Eau Claire river to a great extent has already been sold off into smaller parcels, and much of these are being broken up into yet smaller plots. To the south of the Eau Claire river, there are really only two farms that would classify as prime and the outer route could be moved west to miss these two farms. The rest of the farms are basically marginal.

The inner route would also displace over forty homes; the outer route only eight.

At the DOT's presentations they have stated over and over the problem on Hastings Way is only the 1 1/2 miles from the Eau Claire river south to Clairemont Avenue. Why then isn't it more feasible to build an Outer Bypass to take the through traffic and use the savings to add to the money that supposedly has already been earmarked for improving Hastings Way and upgrade it to a workable street for local traffic?

The DOT must not be entirely convinced the Inner Bypass is the total solution to the problem or Mr. Tom McCarthy of District 6 would not make statements such as: yes, people are creatures of habit and they will still use Hastings Way, or, yes, in ten years we will probably still have to build an outer bypass.

One other thing is the proximity of the interchanges on the Inner Bypass, some within 1/2 mile of each other. Yet, the DOT says 90% of the accidents on a limited access freeway happen within a few hundred yards of an interchange. Here they are creating hazards rather than avoiding them. The interchange on Clairemont Avenue will really be a traffic hazard when directly upon exiting the freeway you encounter three stoplights within 1400 feet.

There is another concern I haven't seen addressed and that is the runoff

water area in Hallie. I will present pictures of this area at the TPC hearings. This area is not considered wetlands as defined by the DNR but creates a problem here frequently. This area is under water for days to weeks at a time, basements are flooded and septic systems backed up. I think this is of grave concern; four lanes of concrete runoff will only exacerbate the existing problem. I realize the new roadway itself would not be affected, but what of the homeowners in the area?

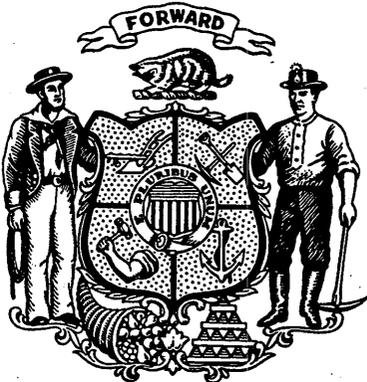
I beg you as a member of the TPC, do not allow this fiasco to continue. Make an amendment to the Outer Bypass. Vote for the Kriebech, Moen, Roshell, Zien compromise. We don't need special interest bleeding the taxpayers with more waste.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gene Bartz". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Gene Bartz

END



END



NEWS

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
P.O. Box 7910
Madison, WI 53707-7910
(608) 266-3581

June 9, 1994 #387

For more information, contact: Robert St. Clair, WisDOT,
608/266-9495

WisDOT Presents 1994 List of Candidate Major Highway Projects to Transportation Projects Commission

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) today unveiled three major highway project candidates for enumeration at a meeting of the Transportation Projects (TPC) Commission in Madison.

"A good highway system is just one of the many great things Wisconsin has going for it," said Governor Tommy Thompson, chair of the TPC. "Good highways play a key role in supporting our economy by providing safe, reliable and efficient connections to our businesses, communities and citizens.

"These candidate projects will help Wisconsin improve on an already quality system that supports our economy, provides mobility and respects the environment," the Governor said.

Major highway projects construct new routes, or provide new lanes to existing routes, where growing traffic levels can no longer be safely handled by current facilities. Candidate projects are brought to the TPC based on WisDOT recommendations, their status in the long-range Corridors 2020 highway and economic development plan, or legislative and public support. more ...

"This year a new step in the selection process has been fully implemented to help all of us measure the costs and benefits of these candidate projects," said WisDOT Secretary Charles H. Thompson. "We now conduct an environmental impact statement on all potential projects before they are recommended to the TPC -- ensuring that commission members and the public have the accurate and detailed information they need to select the right candidates for enumeration."

The 14-member TPC's responsibility is to make its recommendations to the Governor and Legislature on which projects to enumerate.

The three major highway project candidates presented by WisDOT at Thursday's meeting include:

1) WIS 16/67, Oconomowoc North Bypass. Urban/rural bypass on a new location, part two-lane and part four-lane with access control. Project length and cost: 7.4 miles, \$46.8 million.

2) US 53, Eau Claire Freeway. Create a multi-lane freeway beginning in southeast Eau Claire and extending just north of the city limits. Project length and cost: 7.5 miles, \$79 million.

3) US 151, Belmont to Dodgeville. Create a four-lane divided expressway on the existing facility, with bypasses of Belmont and Mineral Point. Project length and cost: 18.2 miles, \$59 million.

The total funding level available for major highway project planning and construction, as recommended by the TPC in 1992 and included in the current state biennial budget is \$161 million for 1995.

more ...

Also on Thursday, WisDOT reported on the eight potential major highway projects currently under study as part of the new selection process:

- 1) US 12, Ski Hi Road to Interstate 90/94. Four-lane expressway on the existing alignment. Project length: 10.1 miles.
- 2) WIS 11/36, Burlington Bypass. Two-lane highway on a four-lane right-of-way in a new location. Project length: 12 miles.
- 3) US 141, WIS 22 to WIS 64. Four-lane expressway with possible bypasses at Lena, Coleman and Pound. Project length: 16.2 miles.
- 4) WIS 26, Jefferson Bypass. Two-lane highway on a four-lane right-of-way in a new location. Project length: 7 miles.
- 5) US 151, Belmont to Dickeyville. Four-lane expressway on the existing location with bypasses of Platteville and Dickeyville. Project length: 18.2 miles.
- 6) US 12, Elkhorn to Whitewater. Two-lane highway on a four-lane right-of-way in a new location. Project length: 11.6 miles.
- 7) US 41, Oconto to Peshtigo. Four-lane expressway on the existing location with possible bypasses of Oconto and Peshtigo. Project length: 19.2 miles.
- 8) WIS 57, Dyckesville to WIS 42. Improve to a four-lane expressway with possible bypasses at Namur and Brussels. Project length: 17.3 miles.

The TPC will hold public hearings this summer on the three major project candidates before the commission for possible enumeration. Hearings are tentatively scheduled for July 19 in Eau Claire and July 26 in Madison. Specific times and locations will be announced by WisDOT.

Following this summer's TPC public hearings, WisDOT must present its final list of major projects for enumeration to the TPC by Sept. 1. Recommendations from the TPC must then be submitted to the Governor and Legislature by the end of 1994, so that projects can be enumerated by statutory action in 1995.

The TPC consists of 14 members, including Governor Thompson (who chairs the commission), ten legislators and three private sector representatives appointed by the Governor. The WisDOT Secretary serves as an ex-officio, non-voting member.

The TPC holds meetings and public hearings during every even-numbered year.

###

END



END

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS COMMISSION

MINUTES OF JUNE 9, 1994
ROOM 115 EAST, STATE CAPITOL
MADISON, WISCONSIN

9:30 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Governor Tommy Thompson
Senator Joseph Andrea
Senator Roger Breske
Senator Joanne Huelsman
Senator Alan Lasee
Senator David Zien
Representative David Brandemuehl

Representative John Gard
Representative Donald Hasenohrl
Representative Antonio Riley
Representative John Ryba
David Bugher
Jack Pelisek
Secretary Charles Thompson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Herman Ripp

DOT STAFF PRESENT

Sue Bethke
Barb Brazeau
Deb Buechner
Dave Dettmann

Barb Jurewicz
Fred Ross
Bob St. Clair
Tom Walker

Governor Thompson called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

1. Governor Thompson welcomed the members of the Commission and charged them with their responsibilities. He stated that there is a clear link between the major highways projects and programs and a strong and vibrant economy. He declared that in addition to our economic priorities, we are committed to protecting our natural resources. Under a new process begun in the 1992 Majors program cycle, the DOT selects projects for extensive study of cost/benefits analysis and environmental impacts. All projects brought to the TPC have undergone a comprehensive environmental review.
2. The Governor introduced and welcomed the new members of the Commission--Senators Breske, Huelsman, and Zien and Representatives Gard, Riley, and Ryba.

3. The minutes of the December 11, 1992 meeting were approved.
4. The Governor pointed out that for the first time in a decade Cletus Vanderperren would not be the Vice Chairperson of the Commission. Governor Thompson nominated Senator Alan Lasee of De Pere to be the new Vice Chairperson. Senator Andrea seconded the nomination and the motion carried unanimously.
5. Secretary Thompson was then called upon to brief the Commission on the current schedule of the Majors Program, an overview of the evaluation and enumeration process, projects DOT selected for study, and candidates for enumeration.

The Secretary expressed concern that declining Federal highway dollars coupled with increased Federal legislative requirements for use of the remaining dollars have required a complete review of the corridors and projects that have been Legislatively approved as a part of our Majors Program. Nevertheless, he renewed the DOT's commitment to complete the backbone system by 2005.

Bob St. Clair, Director of the Office of State Highway Programs, furnished a graphic illustration of the Majors Program and Corridors 2020 for the years 1994-2005. He related that the majority of the \$1.6 billion of highway improvement projects are on the C2020 system. Mr. St. Clair provided an overview of the Majors evaluation and enumeration process and then reviewed the projects that the DOT currently has under study. They are:

HIGHWAY	PROJECT NAME	STUDY STATUS
STH 11/36	Burlington Bypass	EIS Consultant Selected
USH 12	Ski HI Road- IH 90/94	EIS Underway
USH 12	Whitewater - Elkhorn	Beginning Preliminary Corridor Study
STH 26	Jefferson Bypass	Beginning Preliminary Corridor Study
USH 41	Oconto - Peshtigo	Start EIS in 1995
STH 57	Dyckesville - STH 42	Start EIS in 1994
USH 141	STH 22 - STH 64	EIS Underway
USH 151	Dickeyville - Belmont	Start EIS in 1995

Senator Lasee expressed concern with the accident rates listed for STH 57. Representative Ryba said USH 141 was also of concern due to recent fatalities. Mr. Pelisek requested preliminary costs for the projects under study by DOT. Secretary Thompson cautioned that in the past these preliminary costs have proved to be unreliable because of unknown factors such as environmental problems, which can only be estimated after the EIS is completed. The DOT will provide information on the accident rates and preliminary cost ranges for study projects for the TPC.

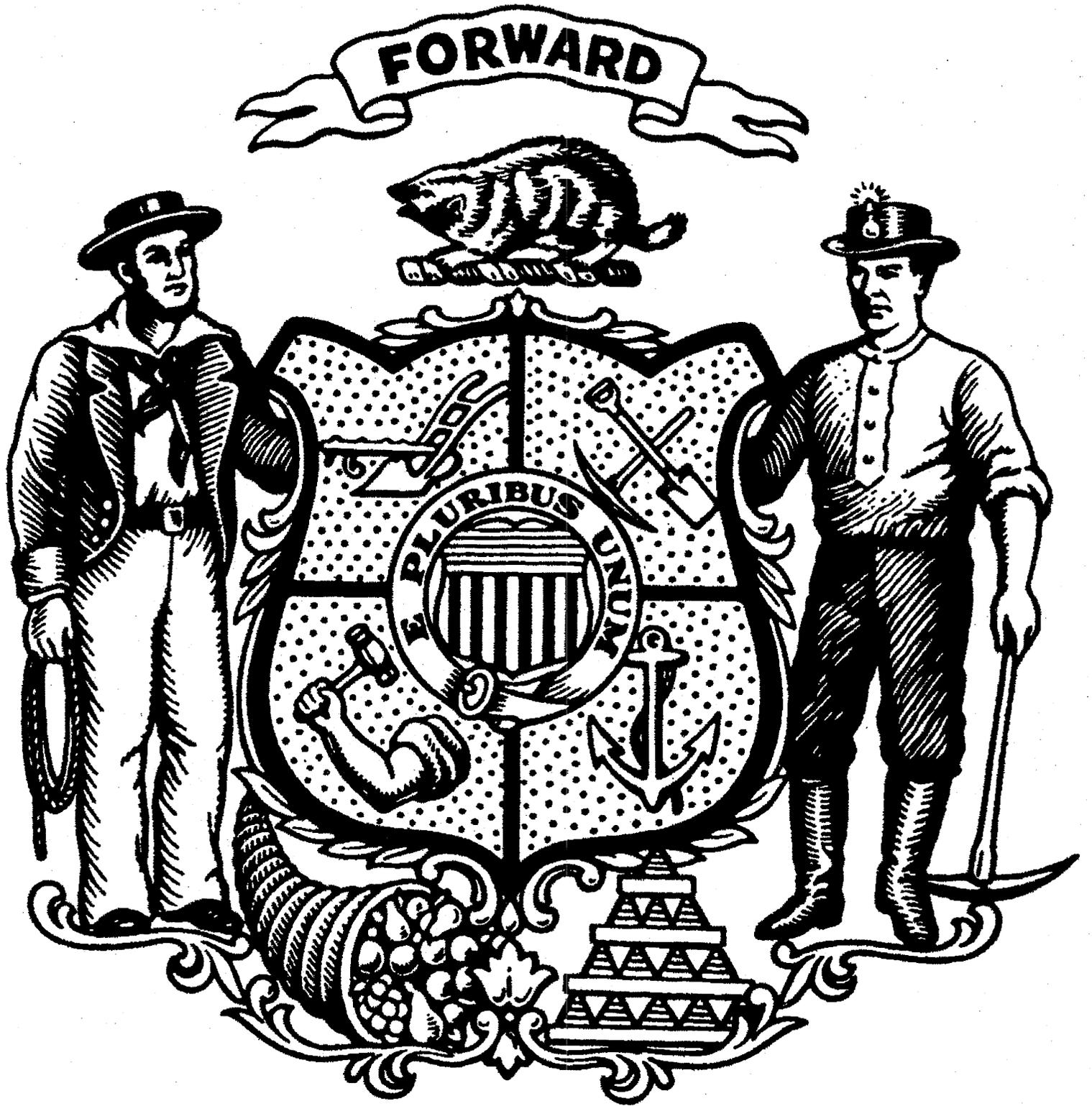
Mr. St. Clair then briefly described each of the candidates for enumeration during the current cycle. The following table lists the candidates.

HIGHWAY	PROJECT NAME	MILES	COST*
USH 151	Belmont - Dodgeville	18.2	\$59.0
STH 16/67	Oconomowoc Bypass	7.4	\$46.8
USH 53	Eau Claire Freeway	7.5	\$79.0

* Millions of 1994 Dollars

6. Senator Zien asked if another alternative could be selected by the TPC. Secretary Thompson stated that the TPC's statutory role is to recommend a project as brought forth and not an alternative corridor for the project. Fred Ross, Administrator Division of Highways, elaborated that the environmental process used for determining the project corridor is distinct from the TPC process and is legally binding on project development.
7. Secretary Thompson reviewed the calendar of events for the TPC which includes a hearing on the USH 53 Eau Claire Freeway on July 19 in Eau Claire and hearings on USH 151 from Belmont - Dodgeville and the STH 16/67 Oconomowoc Bypass on July 26 in Madison. Following the hearings, the DOT will complete its analysis and recommend projects for enumeration no later than September 1. The TPC will in turn make its recommendations to the Governor, Legislature, and Joint Committee on Finance no later than December 1, 1994.
8. Governor Thompson adjourned the meeting after charging the Commission to make the best use of the limited funds to support the growing economy and healthy environment we have in Wisconsin.

END



END



FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT
Ronald W. Brown, Chief

Emergency Calls 911
Administration 715/839-5012
Inspections/Investigation 715/839-4825
After Hours 715/839-5013

CITY OF EAU CLAIRE — 216 SO. DEWEY ST. EAU CLAIRE, WISCONSIN 54701-3702.

June 9, 1994

Dear Transportation Projects Commission Members:

This summer you will be reviewing for funding several road projects for the State of Wisconsin. Included among these projects is the Highway 53 Bypass proposal for the Eau Claire area. With this letter, I am urging you to take action to fund the proposed Highway 53 project this year.

A review of the Department of Transportation information to support the project heightened my concern about the area's emergency service agencies' ability to expeditiously travel on the present Highway 53 system. There are times now when the ambulance and fire units of the City of Eau Claire avoid using the current Highway 53 system because of traffic delays when responding to calls or when transporting patients to hospitals in emergency situations. The DOT report leads me to believe this problem may further escalate in severity in the years to come.

I urge you not to delay in funding this project, in hopes that the traffic load on the present Highway 53 will be reduced as quickly as possible so that we can continue to use that roadway as a north/south corridor for emergency vehicles. Your action to fund this project this year is very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Ronald W. Brown
Fire Chief
Eau Claire Fire & Rescue

cjt



CITY OF BARRON

715-537-5631

307 East La Salle Avenue, Barron, Wisconsin 54812

June 10, 1994

Gene Ringhand, Editor
Eau Claire Leader Telegram
Eau Claire, WI 54701

Enclosed please find a letter to your paper regarding the "Inner - Outer" Bypass of Highway 53.

A copy of this letter has been sent to Governor Thompson, D.O.T. Secretary Thompson and all Transportation Project Commission Members, plus Mary Hubler and Bob Jauch.

Sincerely,

Bard Kittleson
Mayor

BK/pf

Encl

With the Transportation Project Commission's decision forthcoming in July, we believe it is time to put in perspective, how this issue will directly effect the area's north of Eau Claire, as well as Eau Claire area residents.

First Question to be addressed: (Q) Why should areas north of the Chippewa Valley be concerned? The super interstate highway systems in Wisconsin and nationally, have all been designed to move traffic the most direct, safest and efficient way as possible and to benefit all of the wide areas that the highway serves. That is the reason that Highway 53 bypasses all the cities to the north. If the inner route is selected, Eau Claire would be the lone exception where freeway traffic would be required to travel through an urban area from Beloit to Superior. It is our conviction, that the inner route is short sighted planning of a 75-100 year freeway to deal with an Eau Claire urban traffic problem.

The outer bypass at Eau Claire is really the only location that is truly a bypass. The Eau Claire Inner Corridor is not a bypass, because instead of running as a south easterly direction like the outer bypass, it runs in a south westerly direction for half the distance.

The outer bypass has many advantages over the Eau Claire Inner Corridor wide area to the north of Chippewa Falls that it serves. They are:

- 1- A more direct route. 1 1/2 miles shorter traveling distance.
- 2- A 65-miles-per-hour potential vs only 55 miles per hour for the entire inner corridor.
- 3- Less traveling time.
- 4- Two fewer interchanges--this improves the safety factor for freeway traffic.
- 5- Lower cost construction (11-19 million dollars). Lower maintenance costs.
- 6- More permanent--If the Eau Claire inner corridor was south now, the outer probably would have to be built in another six to ten years anyway. That would be spending the taxpayers' dollars twice.
- 7- The Eau Claire area residents would be much better off by having the air pollution and noise from large trucks much farther to the east then it would be if the Eau Claire Inner Corridor was built. Air pollution from traffic in many cities is a major problem today. I would think that the Eau Claire area residents would insist on the outer bypass.

Mr. Lewis and others have stated that the inner bypass is needed for Eau Claire and the Chippewa Valley to remain competitive in industry, etc. Such statements clearly indicate where concerns lay and they certainly don't reach to the north of Eau Claire, where Highway 53 remains our life blood.

Being able to travel the outer bypass would enhance the competitiveness of all industry to the north.

All of the advantages listed for the outer bypass would be worth millions of dollars more per year over that of the Eau Claire Inner Corridor.

Just one example would be for Jerome Foods of Barron. Most of the turkey meat products, which their 1,500 employees at Barron produce, are shipped fresh. Time is of the essence in getting their products to the markets as fast as possible. Jerome Foods has well over 2,000 trucks a year of finished product going out of the Mississippi River. In addition to this, Jerome Foods probably has even more trucks of supplies coming in, food ingredients coming in and finished feed going out and live haul trucks.

Jerome Foods is just one industry north of Eau Claire that would benefit immensely by having the outer bypass. There are many other industries in the north that would benefit likewise.

In the first place, it is understandable that if the Eau Claire Inner Corridor was built, that the "thru" traffic would have no alternative but to use it.

The official map indicates that almost all of the residential areas of Eau Claire are on the west side of Highway 53-Hastings Way. The shopping centers are mostly to the west side, except for a few along both sides of Highway 53.

As you look at this map, simple logic will tell you that with the residence and shopping areas to the west, the local shoppers are not going to travel over to the Eau Claire Inner Corridor to go shopping. Most everyone prefers to travel the shortest distance. It is possible that some local shopper traffic to the north of Eau Claire could use the Inner Corridor part way. Most of them would likely follow Highway 53-Hastings Way all the way.

The outer bypass has the greatest advantages for all commercial and tourist traffic. It would be a major mistake for the "thru" trafficker, the taxpayers and the residents of Eau Claire to build the Eau Claire Inner Corridor.

In your decision making process, please consider the above and remember there is life, industry, tourism and thousands of recreational home owners who travel to their properties in counties north of Eau Claire, so please consider the impact that your decision will have at the present time, as well as the next 25-50 and 75 years.

Respectfully Submitted for
Your Consideration

Wallace H. Jerome, Founder &
Chairman of Bd. Jerome Foods

Bard Kittleson, Barron Mayor
Barron Co. Board Supervisor