



Madison Area Bus Advocates

P.O. Box 260156

Madison, WI 53726-0156

email: info@busadvocates.org

Website : www.busadvocates.org

Listserve: groups.yahoo.com/group/mabaaa

IDEAS FOR A “GREEN” TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IN WISCONSIN

As transportation accounts for almost a third of our greenhouse gas emissions and is also a major source of air pollution, federal economic stimulus policies should discourage the development and expansion of new roads and bridges while encouraging the maintenance of existing ones as well as the use of more economical and sustainable forms of transportation (e.g. bicycling, walking, public transit).

Unfortunately, Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle's economic stimulus wish list emphasizes highway construction. Madison Area Bus Advocates instead suggest the following to help guide the choice of projects that could be part of an economic stimulus package:

1. **FIX WHAT'S BROKEN** Wisconsin's priority should be to restore our crumbling highways, bridges and transit systems, not to build new roads or expand existing ones, roads that will themselves have to be maintained. Furthermore, road and bridge maintenance and repair create 9 percent more jobs than construction of new road capacity, according to a 2004 analysis of the U.S. Department of Transportation. WisDOT should not be rewarded for its current insufficient attention to local efforts to maintain existing roads and bridges. It provides less and less each year (in real terms) for the maintenance of our current infrastructure while planning major additional highway projects such as with I-94. And of course, extra funds for the I-94 project is at the top of Doyle's wish list for transportation.

2. **HELP AMERICANS BALANCE BUDGETS** Provide more travel and housing options that are affordable and efficient by encouraging in-fill and other developments that include sidewalks, bicycle paths and good access to transit. Construction of new public transportation facilities creates nearly 19 percent more jobs than does new road construction according to the 2004 analysis of the U.S. Department of Transportation's job-creation model while operating those facilities provides long-term good-paying local jobs. A person can achieve an average savings of \$9,499 per year by taking public transportation instead of driving and can obviously do even better by walking or bicycling. At present, even new State of Wisconsin office buildings in urban areas are often located where people are forced to drive to work. Doyle's project wish list should give higher priority to WisDOT's inadequate but existing projects for bicycle ways, pedestrian paths and transit (they can be found at www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/bicycles.htm, www.dot.wisconsin.gov/modes/bus.htm, and www.dot.wisconsin.gov/modes/pedestrian.htm). They could be wish list priority.