



To: Wisconsin Joint Finance Committee Members
From: [Your Name/Bike or Trails Organization Here]
RE: Support Additional Transportation Alternatives Funding

I am a cycling and trails advocate from [YOUR TOWN/CITY HERE] and I want to profess my support for increased pedestrian, cycling, and trails funding in the 2023-2025 state budget. It is important to continue to push for positive change on behalf of the Wisconsin bike and trail communities.

Once the second most bicycle-friendly state in the country, according to the League of American Bicyclists, Wisconsin has dropped to #29 in recent years. The biggest reason for this drop: compared to other states, a relative lack of funding for non-motorized transportation alternatives. Wisconsin ranks second-to-last in the country for funding in this category. Meanwhile despite this funding, the cycling industry brings in around \$2.5 billion to Wisconsin's economy each year, underscoring the importance of walking, biking and trail infrastructure to our state's prosperity.

Signed in November 2021, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) provides states with more resources to build a robust Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). This past year, WisDOT issued the Supplemental 2022-2023 TAP program solicitation to deploy the additional BIL funds in CY2022. In addition, in the Department's 2022-23 budget request, WisDOT proposed utilizing \$18 million FED in SFY24 and \$18.2 million FED in SFY25 for TAP. Along with the organizations at the top of this page, I support this increase of federal funds to support TAP and would love to see additional investment in the program in the future. According to the federal information available, it is estimated that Wisconsin could be eligible for up to \$31.9 million FED annually through TAP. There is certainly no shortage in demand and opportunity from communities across the state!

More TAP funds are needed across the state to advance long-awaited projects. This is true in all sized communities, but regularly, rural communities (under 5,000 population) struggle to meet the 20% local match requirement for a project. During last year's supplemental TAP solicitation, all five population categories - except for under 5,000 - were oversubscribed. This underscores that while there is still an exceptional need for even more funding in TAP, the smallest communities need additional technical support to complete the project application process and meet the financial match requirements.

To help communities meet this requirement, I am asking that you support a "small population TAP match program" to be included in the 2023-25 state budget, funded at \$1.2 million annually. Utilizing the federal information available, this level of matching funds will help to support these communities in meeting the 20 percent match requirement, moving forward these important projects.

In recent years, Wisconsin has only been spending about 0.6% of its federal transportation budget on non-motorized transportation. That equates to about \$0.85 being spent per person on non-motorized transportation alternatives. The national average is about 2.2%, or about \$3.12 per person. I believe

that making further investments in transportation alternatives will ensure that Wisconsin maximizes the economic, health, safety and other quality of life benefits of trail, walking and biking infrastructure.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.