



KEITH RIPP

STATE REPRESENTATIVE ★ 42ND ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Mark Gottlieb
Secretary of Transportation
Hill Farms State Transportation Building
4802 Sheboygan Avenue
Madison, WI 53705.

Secretary Gottlieb,

On Tuesday, December 6th, 2016, I will be convening the Assembly Transportation Committee's first transportation informational hearing to examine the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's 2017-19 Biennial Budget proposal. During this hearing, committee members will be given the opportunity to ask invited speakers about the future ramifications of this budget request.

I would like to extend an invitation to you and your department to attend this hearing. Specifically, I ask that you prepare testimony for the questions attached. Please note that this list is not exhaustive and that members are free to ask their own questions during the hearing.

Your testimony will be vital to the legislature in moving forward on an alternative plan that meets Wisconsin's long-term infrastructure needs. I look forward to working together with you, your department, and Governor Walker on this essential task.

I would also like to encourage the public to participate in this process. The following email address, DOTbudgetcomments@legis.wi.gov, will be available for citizens to give their feedback on the Transportation budget request, or citizens can contact their legislators directly.

Sincerely,

Keith Ripp
Chairman
Assembly Committee on Transportation

Wisconsin Department of Transportation Questions

I. WisDOT Budget Submittal

A. Revenues

What is the department's estimate for available revenues (total state revenues minus debt service) for the period fy18-fy23? How does this compare to fy17? What is the projected growth rate in state revenues?

B. Highway Improvement Program

1. Southeast Freeway Megaprojects

- i. Describe the department's long-term plan for modernization of the southeast Wisconsin Freeway system. If the funding levels in the proposed budget are continued, when will that modernization program be completed?
- ii. What are the economic and system preservation consequences of delay?

2. Major Highways

- i. What future major highway development projects is the department currently studying?
- ii. If proposed funding levels continue, what will be the ability to begin new major highway projects in the future?
- iii. What are the economic and system preservation consequences of not approving future major projects?

3. SHR

- i. If proposed funding levels continue, what will the condition of the 3R and Backbone systems be in 10 years? How does that compare to today?

4. St. Croix Crossing

- i. You have not requested funding for the St. Croix crossing project. Do you anticipate any further costs to the state of Wisconsin for this project? What are they?
- ii. If funds are needed in this biennium for St. Croix Crossing, where will the department get them from?

C. Highway Maintenance and Operations

What are the department's priorities for how the additional funding in maintenance and operations will be spent?

D. Other Modal Programs

1. Freight Rail

- i. What impact will the reduced funding in the Freight Rail Preservation Program have on the condition of state owned rail lines, and the ability to provide continued rail service?

2. Public Transit

- i. In your 2015 budget submittal, you proposed the creation of a state capital program for transit. What sources of non-state funding currently exist for busses and bus facilities? How successful has the state been at accessing those funds?
- ii. Do you still have concerns about the condition of transit infrastructure?

3. Local Aid Programs

- i. The department maintains a database of local road conditions as reported by local units of government. What has been the recent trend in the average condition rating of local roads and streets?

II. Past and Ongoing Studies

- A. Transportation Finance and Policy Commission
Allowing for inflation, what would the 2013 TFPC recommended investment levels be for the various modes, and how does this compare to the department's budget proposal?
- B. Fund Solvency Study
What will the department be including in the Fund Solvency study ordered by Act 55 and when do you anticipate it will be completed?
- C. FHWA Return on Investment
The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) estimates that each dollar spent on road, highway and bridge improvements results in an average benefit of \$5.20 in the form of reduced vehicle maintenance costs, reduced delays, reduced fuel consumption, improved safety, reduced road and bridge maintenance costs and reduced emissions as a result of improved traffic flow. Does the Wisconsin Department of Transportation agree with FHWA's methodology for calculating return on investment (ROI) for transportation spending, or do you have your own methodology for calculating ROI?

III. Department Operations

- A. Performance Improvement
Describe the department's performance improvement program.
- B. Innovation and Cost Efficiencies
What can you share about the department's efforts to become more innovative and improve cost-efficiency, specifically in the delivery of the highway program?
- C. Construction Costs
How does the department track the changes in construction costs, and what have those changes been in recent years? To what do you attribute the increase in cost?

IV. Other Policy Considerations

- A. Prevailing Wage
What analysis has the department done about potential cost savings that would result from repeal of the state prevailing wage law on highway projects?
- B. Fed/Seg Swap
Why did you not include the removal of federal funds from the local facilities improvement program in your budget proposal?
- C. Interstate Tax/Fee Comparison
Under the proposed budget, how will the typical cost of vehicle operation (state taxes and fees) compare with our neighboring states?
- D. CM/GC Pilot
Explain the Construction Manager/General Contractor pilot project request and what the Department hopes to accomplish with it. Is this approach, or other alternative methods of contracting, commonly used in other states?