



Thursday, June 1, 2017

Dear Honorable Members of the Wisconsin State Legislature:

We are writing to you today in strong support of enumerating the Interstate 94 East-West Freeway project, between 16th and 70th Streets in southeastern Wisconsin, in the 2017-2019 state budget. We appreciate the opportunity to share our thoughts with you on this very important issue.

One of the most economically significant, and heavily traveled roads in our state is the stretch of Interstate 94 connecting the Marquette Interchange to the Zoo Interchange. Known as the East-West Freeway, this 3.5-mile road carries roughly 160,000 cars per day, \$23 billion in freight annually, and not only serves the tens of thousands of people traveling between Waukesha and Milwaukee counties, but the thousands more that will end their journeys in Appleton, Green Bay, La Crosse, Eau Claire, Wausau and elsewhere. The East-West Freeway is the state's connection to the Port of Milwaukee, home to State Fair Park and Miller Park, and it bisects an area home to thousands of businesses, employing tens of thousands of people. In fact, according to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, 197,784 jobs are located within just two miles of the East/West corridor.

In order to ensure this critical road remains eligible for future federal funding, this project must be enumerated in the 2017-2019 State Budget. We are asking you to support allocating approximately \$30 million, in existing money, to keep this project moving forward and ensure we do not waste the money the Wisconsin Department of Transportation has already invested in completing the planning, initial design and environmental clearance. **We are not seeking funds to pay for the entire East-West project**, we are advocating for money that will protect the investment the state has already made and preserve the important "Record of Decision" approved by the Federal Highway Administration.

Area Development Magazine ranks "highway accessibility" as the second factor considered most important by site selectors. A survey of Waukesha County businesses showed the same result and in fact, more than 80 percent of respondents said the number one service a government could provide was a good, safe network of roads that allow for the efficient transport of employees, customers and goods.

Not only is the East-West project significant to southeastern Wisconsin, it's vital to the entire state of Wisconsin, given the sheer volume of freight moved annually through this corridor, often traveling to and from other parts of Wisconsin. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns about our support for this project of local and statewide significance.

Sincerely,

PAUL FARROW
Waukesha County Executive

SUZANNE KELLEY
President and CEO
Waukesha County Business Alliance