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CITY OF БЕЛОIT SEEKS TO ‘RE-VITAL-IZE’ LOCAL HIGHWAYS

Civic leaders, elected officials, stakeholders highlight corridor conditions, community impacts

(BELOIT, WI) – Today, Beloit’s city manager, Jerry Gabrielatos, was joined by community leaders and stakeholders to spotlight the need to revitalize the city’s aging roadways. The event, part of the statewide “Re-VITAL-ize” initiative, underscored how improved infrastructure is critical to enhancing safety, quality of life, and economic vitality in communities like Beloit.

“If you’ve been around the city of Beloit over the past 10 to 15 years, you’ve noticed that it’s revitalized and re-energized,” reported Gabrielatos. “We need the roads to keep up with all the activity we have going on here in our community. Our roads are used for getting to and from work, and for emergency vehicle, residential and commercial needs. Safe roads are important to our entire community. And being located at the center of so many state highways, it’s really important that our infrastructure keeps pace with the business and residential needs of our city.”

Gabrielatos was joined by his colleagues at the city, including Bill Frisbee, director of public works, and Scot Prindiville, Beloit’s city engineer.

“We have significant needs for funding our roadways,” reported Prindiville. “We have to choose between spending on state highways or other local roads. Every dollar we spend maintaining connecting highways is a dollar *not* spent on other (local) roads.”

Blackhawk Technical College president, Dr. Tracy Pirner, also joined the group and explained the need for good roads as they impact the students at his college.

“Without good roads there isn’t access to higher education, which in turn results in family sustaining wages for many of our community members,” said Pirner. “Our current students need good, safe, reliable roads to engage in their apprentice work, commute to their clinical rotations via our healthcare programs, and take part in internships to help support our workforce.”

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“Our students are on these roads every day, and I promise you – the difference between a quality nurse filling a position in our health care system versus a student that is unable to complete a nursing program due to a flat tire resulting in a missed clinical rotation because of a bad road – will cost lives in the future,” added Pirner. “Good highways are necessary for a strong workforce.”

The “Re-VITAL-ize” campaign, led by the League of Wisconsin Municipalities and the Transportation Development Association, aims to raise awareness about the challenges communities face in maintaining roadways.

The recently enacted state transportation budget boosts funding for the State Highway Rehabilitation Program and includes inflationary adjustments for local transportation aids. However, local leaders warn that these steps are insufficient without a sustainable, long-term funding solution. The current funding model pits state and local road improvements against each other and often favors short-term patches over long-lasting solutions.

“While the current budget is a positive step, building upon recent budgets and keeping projects moving for the next two years, we fear that without a long-term fix to funding transportation, the state risks delayed projects and deteriorating infrastructure,” said Toni Herkert, government affairs director for the League of Wisconsin Municipalities.

The Re-VITAL-ize effort will continue throughout Wisconsin in the coming months with similar road tours in communities around the state. You can follow the efforts of “Re-VITAL-ize” on their Facebook page: [Re-VITAL-ize Wisconsin’s Community Highways](#).

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*The **League of Wisconsin Municipalities** advocates for Wisconsin’s cities and villages, large and small, urban and rural, speaking up for common-sense citizen-led government. Learn more at [lwm-info.org](#).*

*Founded in 1971, the **Transportation Development Association of Wisconsin** promotes the vitality and safety of the state’s transportation system, including public transit systems, public-use airports, railroads, commercial ports, and roads. TDA’s members comprise business, labor, units of government, regional planning organizations, as well as individuals. [tdawisconsin.org](#)*

***Re-VITAL-ize Wisconsin Community Highways** is a statewide effort calling attention to long-overdue road improvements on state highways that run directly through the heart of Wisconsin’s communities. We aim to build support for a long-term, sustainable plan to support the transportation infrastructure these communities rely on daily.*