

May 3, 2022

Senator Tom Bakk, Chair
 Senate Capital Investment Committee
 328 State Capitol Building
 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
 Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Bakk and Committee Members:

The Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA) represents fifteen of Minnesota’s larger and faster growing counties, including four suburban and 11 Greater MN counties.

MICA supports SF4066 authored by Senator Jasinski, to appropriate \$200 million for local road improvement fund grants (LRIP) and \$200 million for local bridge replacement and rehabilitation.

Minnesota counties have jurisdiction over 45,000 of our State’s 142,000 miles of roads and highways. Additionally, counties and other local governments oversee 16,017 bridges - 80% of all bridges in the state. LRIP was created in 2002 to assist local agencies with constructing and reconstructing local roads. However, LRIP funding has been lagging in recent years despite growing needs.

The Local Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program (LBRP) was created in 1976 and is designed to provide essential funding allocated to local projects based on objective, competitive criteria aimed at creating a safe, well-integrated statewide transportation network. The program has historically been funded by general obligation bonds, however, funding over the past decade has been inconsistent and inadequate relative to the growing need.

Local Bridge Replacement & Rehabilitation Funding Has Not Kept Pace with Needs
 Years of Zero Funding Especially Contribute to Growing Backlog*

	2008	2009	2010	2012	2014	2015	2017	2018	2019	2020
State Bond Amounts (in millions)	\$51.5	\$10	\$66	\$30	\$33	\$7.4	\$49.3	\$5.0*	0*	\$86.2
Number of Projects	133	6	232	129	49	23	80	22	0	??

**\$12.6 million was also made available in 2018-19 from a portion of the proceeds from motor vehicle lease sales tax (MVLST). To date, 37 local bridges have been funded.*

The condition of state and local bridges is falling behind. Over 1,124 of the state's bridges are structurally deficient, another 400 or more are functionally obsolete, and a 2020 MnDOT Bridge Annual Report found that 1,438 bridges have load restrictions limiting which vehicles can cross. The waiting list for funding is merely the "tip of the iceberg" as many counties wait to invest in the prerequisite engineering work until project funding is more available.

We support SF4066 because it appropriates a level of funding for local roads and local bridges that better aligns with the scale of the need.

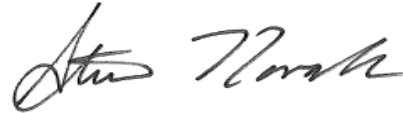
The county highways that would benefit from SF4066 are essential to connecting farms to markets, manufacturers to shippers, and employees and employers. The funding would improve road safety and create positive economic spin-off benefits for communities across the state.

We urge that SF4066 be included in the 2022 Capital Investment Bill.

Thank you, Senator Jasinski for authoring SF4066, and thank you, Chair Bakk for hearing SF4066.



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Cc: Senator John Jasinski