The twentieth meeting of the Committee on Transportation was called to order by Chairman Henry J. Kalis on Thursday, September 10, 1987, at 10:20 a.m. in the Mapleton High School Gymnasium, Mapleton, Minnesota.

Members present: Brown, Lasley
Carlson, D. Lieder
Dauner, McDonald
DeBlieck, Olson, E.
Dempsey, Olson, K.
Frictrichs, Richter
Haukoos, Seaberg
Johnson, A. Steensma
Johnson, B. Welle
Johnson, V.
Kalis, Chair
Lasley
Lieder
McDonald
Olson, E.
Olson, K.
Richter
Seaberg
Steensma
Welle

Members absent: Begich, excused
Jensen, excused
McEachern, excused
Segal, excused
Tunheim, excused
Valento

Members of the Semi-States Division/Appropriations Committee were invited to attend this hearing. Those present: Reps. V. Johnson, Lieder, Kalis, Knuth, Seaberg and Steensma.

Members of the Crime and Family Law Division/Judiciary Committee were also invited to attend. Those present: Reps. Dempsey, Rest, Seaberg, and Welle.

Arno Proehl, Mayor of Mapleton, welcomed the committee to Mapleton.

The Chair made opening comments and reviewed the agenda. He then introduced the committee members and dignitaries in the audience.

The Chair introduced Rep. A. Johnson, author of House Advisory 15, a study of deterring repeat DWI offenders and the practice of granting limited worked licenses.

Also testifying were:

Joe Meyerring, State Department of Education
Steve Simon, DWI Task Force
Nancy Johnson, Lonsdale, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)
Mapleton High School Students: Christ Swanson, Gerald Conrad, Rhonda Swift, Erik Leagjeld, and Bruce Sellers
Don Nichols, Defense Attorney, MN Bar Association

Senator Earl Renneke and Mayor Roger Beck, New Auburn, presented a petition "that the repair work currently being done on Hwy. 22 between Gaylord and Highway 212 is insufficient to correct the problems of this highway and hereby request that it receive a complete blacktop overlay." (Attached) They explained their problem and answered questions.

Jack Nawrocki, Southern Minnesota Highway Improvement Association, offered testimony (copy attached) on the need to provide the funding for highway maintenance and construction. The Association is interested in upgrading several substandard roads in southern Minnesota, including Hwys. 14, 169, 60 and 30.

Commissioner Paul Beyer, Faribault County, spoke in behalf of the Association of Minnesota Counties, urging the Legislature to fully fund transportation and promised an MAC funding proposal for the 1988 session.

Meeting adjourned 12:05 p.m.

[Signatures]
We, the undersigned, who are citizens of the New Auburn area, are of the opinion that the repair work currently being done on Highway 22 between Gaylord and Highway 212 is insufficient to correct the problems of this highway and hereby request that it receive a complete black-top overlay.

This petition is being circulated by Roger Becker, Mayor of the City of New Auburn, by posting in various locations within the City.

Dated: 7-31-87

Roger H. Becker
Mayor, City of New Auburn

SIGNATURIES

Donald D. Leake
414 Dist. Sibley County Commissioner

Terry Johnson
414 Dist. Sibley County Commissioner

Wendy Bechworth

Jim Birket

Randy Wall

Patsy Cook

Paula Leiek

Linda Stroh

Linda Fawcett

Mary Salzburger

Alma K. Atkinson

Richard Eggle

Robert Budinger

New Auburn
Easterbrook
Frank Baker
Eldridge Bunch
Tom Allen
Margaret Vorhees
Karl Thompson
Beth Fretl
Myrtle A. Knacke
Adeline Lindstrom
Milton Lindstrom
Emma Lindstrom
Horace Schwart
girls
Stark
Leanne Homan
Laura Homan
Burr & Brechow
Dana Brechow
Rettig Schutt
Barlow Schutt
Shelly Schutt
Mary Jo Bielke
Margaret Bielke
Myrtle Bielke

New Auburn

New Auburn

Humes, IA

New Auburn

New Auburn

John J. Atkin
Barb Schulte
Pam Schulte
Don Schulte
Dave Schulte

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Glencoe, Min.
Glencoe, Min.

M. A.
Linda K. Black
Judy Sch mucke
Willie Sch neeck
Alice Moore
Lind Smith
Bradley Huff
Glenne Hubbard
Reggie Hacker
Kathy Becker
Larry T. Wachob
Lang M. Keel
Del A. Ditten
Kevin Selk
Vigil Neubert
Guy Schuylle
Bob Benson
Jim Schmigoff
Curly Bowers
Jim Lindstrom
Frank Thompson
Chuck Gottle
Debbie Martin
Gary Becker
Rosemary Kuehl
Mr. and Mrs. James Dennis Kuehl
Stephanie Kuehl
Herbert H. Becker
Linda S. Becker
Scott Becker
Warren Becker

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Brow 1904
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Stuart
Glencoe
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Gaylord
Glencoe
Glencoe
Henry J. Becker

Glencoe

Glencoe

Gaylord

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Gaylord, Mrs.

Gaylord, Mr.

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Gaylord
Please sign so we can get our
helicopter to land from 212 to Elk

Hardy

Hewison

Jay Beck

Zaylan, MN

Debra Scott

Sheneca, MN

Jim Kline

New Auburn

Edwin Beck

Shelby

Edwin Beck

Shelby

Roger Mey

New Auburn

Duane Rees

Hayland, MN.

Cheryl Rees

Hayland, MN.

Myron Knud

New Auburn

Paul Levis

Mankato, MN

Dave Dukha

Mankato, MN (Horm

Lori Johnson

Hayland, MN

Mims Ray, Sinclair

Brovata, MN

Terry Frostman

Hayland, MN

Jeffy Settman

Hayland, MN
Please sign do we can try to get a train from A12 to England

Kenneth Schree R.R.1 Branson MI
Lynn Freimundt - Gaylord
David Freimundt R.R.1 Box 134 Gaylord
Marilyn C Jones R.F.3 Hutchinson
Mark Allender MG Manistee, MI

Travis Strautman - Clunce, MN
Will Roberts - Clunce, MN
Clarence Kuhn - Gaylord MN

Roland Schuyer - Alqona MN
Gerald Henke - Gaylord

Walter Zim - Branson
Gary Carlson - Gaylord
Barry Carlson - Bayfield

Avery Freimundt - Bayfield
Jeff Knaden - BF&B salesman
Robert Milke - Branson
Re: Notice regarding Road Construction

May 22

Angie S. Schurte
Herbert Kange
Robert Schurte
Fred Kundendert
Marlys Schramm-Freling
Elise Stuck
Don Elde Stuck

Guadalupe Complex

Phyllis Freundkemst
Cindy Warm
Connie Laut

August Bass
Robert Schramm-Freling

Raymond Axtell
Empress Oak

Ludwig Ahlert Jr.

Vladimir & Karen

Fred Jent

Fred Stuck

Mr. Peggy Stuck
Mrs. Estelle Felding  Glenmore Wm.
Mrs. Gertrude Welch  Glenmore
Mrs. E. A. Webel  Glenmore
Mrs. Natalie Buehler  Brownson
Mrs. Emily Miller  Hammond
Mrs. Anna Schuff  Brownson
Mrs. Anna L. Schump  Glenmore
Frieda Beren  Badacsony
Wally Zeyntler  Brownson
Irene Ford  Brownson
Helen M. Williams  Glenmore
Helen M. Williams  Glenmore
Helen M. Williams  Glenmore
Helen M. Williams  Brownson
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LOW PRIORITY STATE HIGHWAYS

a bleak future?

Construction of state highway 22 between Gaylord & US 212 was completed in 1930.

As the pavement began to show its age in the 60's drivers began to use alternate parallel county routes.

Traffic volume continued to drop on T.H. 22 through the present time as no reconstruction or reconditioning occurred. Even though over 2 million dollars was allocated for partial reconditioning of 2 1/2 miles in 1987, it is not nearly enough to bring the 14 mile, 57 year old, stretch up-to-date.

With the present road funding climate making it difficult to get money for high priority routes, it is unforeseeable when T.H. 22 will get any more work improvements.

This is one example, but the situation occurs throughout the state.

WE NEED INNOVATIVE, NEW, IDEAS THAT WILL ALTER OUR PRESENT DIRECTION OF SYSTEMATICALLY ABANDONING OUR LOW PRIORITY STATE ROADS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement Priority</th>
<th>Traffic Counts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>none</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>none</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>partial</td>
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*Average Daily Traffic
Source: Mn/DOT - Averages for entire 14 miles.

79: Transportation Committee - Minisession, Mapleton, Sept. 19, 1987
FROM: Roger Becker, Mayor, New Auburn & Carl Renneke, Senate Dist. 38
WHEREAS, The Minnesota Department of Transportation has
made a decision to realign and upgrade only that portion of Minnesota
Trunk Highway No. 22 from the Sibley County line north to Minnesota
Trunk Highway No. 212; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Trunk Highway No. 22 from the Sibley
County line south to the City of Gaylord is in dire need of repair
and resurfacing, causing haulers to seek alternate routes to trans­
port their commodities, which has put undue burden and stress on
Sibley County Roads 4 & 13.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Sibley County
Board does hereby support a local effort encouraging Minnesota
Department of Transportation to consider upgrading and resurfacing
all of that portion of Trunk Highway No. 22 from the City of Gaylord
north to it's junction with Trunk Highway No. 212.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of the resolution
be sent to the Commissioner of Transportation; the District Engineer,
MN DOT in Mankato; Senator Earl W. Renneke, Legislative District
No. 35; and Representative Gary Schafer, Legislative District No.
35A.

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Abstain</th>
<th>Absent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bach</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Beck</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Beck</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meyer</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schweke</td>
<td>X</td>
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STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of County Auditor
COUNTY OF SIBLEY

I, Gene O. Solmonson, Auditor of the County of Sibley, State of
Minnesota, do hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing with the
original proceedings filed in my office on the 11th day of August,
1987 and that the same is a true and correct copy of part thereof.

Witness my Hand and Seal of Office at Gaylord, Minnesota this

[Signature]
Gene O. Solmonson
County Auditor
RESOLUTION SUPPORTING RESURFACING
OF TRUNK HIGHWAY NO. 12

WHEREAS, it has come to the attention of the City of Gaylord that the Minnesota Department of Transportation has decided not to resurface all of Highway 22 from Gaylord to Highway 212, and

WHEREAS, this portion of Highway 22 is very much in need of upgrading and resurfacing.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Gaylord City Council does hereby support a local effort encouraging Minnesota Department of Transportation to consider upgrading and resurfacing all of that portion of Trunk Highway No. 22 from the City of Gaylord North to its junction with Trunk Highway No. 212.

Adopted by the Council this 19th day of August, 1987.

Attest:

[Signature]
City Clerk

[Signature]
Mayor
In 1980, Jim Feehan received a heart transplant. He also underwent a change of heart in another sense. Jim once told me that a second chance at life, the result of the heart transplant, gave him a totally new perspective. He had the second chance that most of us never get, and he was determined to make the most of it.

Jim was born again in the real sense of the word. And he celebrated the event. In 1981, he held the first of what he called his “annual second birthday parties.”

Jim also became an evangelist, telling others of the meaning of life. He spoke at our church one Sunday. His talk was so inspirational that my wife, Joyce, wrote him a letter thanking him.

Tuesday I attended a Rotarian meeting in New Ulm. When I introduced myself as being from Glencoe, Rotarians from Gaylord and New Ulm asked me about Jim. He had spoken to clubs in both of those communities, and he had inspired them too.

Jim Feehan was one of the first people I met when I arrived in Glencoe in 1981, when he greeted me at Lindy’s. I’ll always remember him for that and for the support he offered me in the years following.

It’s ironic that a man with a borrowed heart and fragile health should be the one supporting others. But that was the role he played, both here in Glencoe and in the wards at University of Minnesota Hospitals.

Jim Feehan’s life was extended six years by the heart transplant he received. But that transplant affected more lives than we will ever be able to count.

New Auburn residents are singing the Highway 22 blues. Either that or they are not driving anywhere these days.

You’d know what I mean if you’ve driven north or south on Highway 22 recently between Highway 212 and Gaylord.

The speed limit says 55, but if you drive that fast on Highway 22, you’ll jam your head into the roof of your car and your car will suffer a worse fate — it’ll bottom out.

In short, Highway 22 makes a roller coaster appear smooth by comparison.

Whoever plows snow on Highway 22 must have an interesting time of it. He probably uses Dramamine to avoid a sensation of seasickness.

Highway 22 between Glencoe and Hutchinson is somewhat easier to travel than the southern stretch, but not by much.

The highway needs to be rebuilt, and soon.

I don’t like to see dogs running loose in the country. They raise havoc with livestock and wildlife.

Now comes the report that a 6-year-old from Longview, Texas, died after an attack by wild dogs.

Responsible pet owners are often to blame. And, more often than not, those owners are town people who dump unwanted pets in the country.
TESTIMONY OF THE SOUTHERN MINNESOTA HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION ON THE NEED FOR STATE FUNDING FOR HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS

September 10, 1987

The Southern Minnesota Highway Improvement Association ("SMHIA") is an organization of businesses in the greater Mankato area. The Association is active in seeking increased state funds for highway maintenance and construction, and is particularly concerned with the highway needs that are affecting the businesses and economies of communities in southern Minnesota.

The SMHIA believes that a well maintained transportation system is vital to the economic future of the State. Its primary objective is to promote adequate state funding for highway maintenance and improvements and to promote improvements to the state and federal highway system in southern Minnesota that are essential to the diversified economy of the region.

The legislature made deep cuts in state funding for highway improvements during the 1987 session. The SMHIA believes that the legislature must act in 1988 to restore adequate funding for highway improvements. The highway system is vital to the economy of the State and adequate funding for its maintenance and improvement should be a high priority for the state.

The SMHIA focus is the highway improvement needs of southern Minnesota and, in particular, the highways serving Mankato and the surrounding communities. The attached materials summarize the current level of funding for highways and provide an overview of the highway improvement needs of the State and southern Minnesota. These materials demonstrate that the Mankato area is the only one of the State's six largest economic and manufacturing employment centers that does not have quality four lane access to the metropolitan area or to the interstate highway system. The SMHIA believes that improvements to the highways in southern Minnesota are important for the continued growth of the region's diversified economy. Timely improvements to those highways will require the state's financial commitment to adequate funding for highways.
The Department of Transportation's five year highway improvement program is based on an anticipated funding level well below what the Department believes is optimum and needed to adequately improve and maintain the State's highway system. During the 1987 Legislative Session the legislature made significant cuts from that anticipated level of funding for highways. The following information demonstrates why the legislature must act in 1988 to provide an adequate level of funding for highway maintenance and improvements.

Existing Highway Maintenance and Construction Program.

The following chart compares the existing program of highway maintenance and construction with the program the Department believes is needed. Based on an estimated 50 year life cycle for the State's trunk highways, over 700 miles of highway would need to receive some type of maintenance each year at a total cost of over $825 million. In comparison, at the current level of funding the Department estimates that the State's trunk highways will need to last for 135 years on average before being replaced or rebuilt.

### MINNESOTA HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE

#### Comparison of Existing Program and Needs of System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Existing Program</th>
<th>Needs of System</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Resurfacing</td>
<td>100 miles</td>
<td>400 miles</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Reconditioning</td>
<td>75 miles</td>
<td>145 miles</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Reconstruction</td>
<td>25 miles</td>
<td>90 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Major Construction</td>
<td>15 miles</td>
<td>100 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL NUMBER OF MILES</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Bridges Repaired and Replaced</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Number Locations for Safety Improvements</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL COST OF PROGRAM *</td>
<td>$343 million</td>
<td>$825 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Cycle of Highways</td>
<td>135 Years</td>
<td>50 Years</td>
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</table>

**SOURCE:** Minnesota Department of Transportation

**NOTE:** Total Cost includes additional funds for Interstate work and R/W Agreements.
The table on the previous page shows that reconstruction and major construction—the projects that improve rather than just maintain the highway system—are the projects most affected by reductions in funding. Highway improvements are most dramatically affected by funding cuts because they can normally be postponed without damage to the existing system. However, if maintenance and resurfacing of existing highways are postponed too long, deterioration will increase costs and seriously damage the integrity of the system.

**Impact of 1987 Funding Cuts.**

The Department of Transportation's current highway improvement plan for the years through 1991 was based on the revenues it projected would be available for highway improvements. Those projections included the phased-in transfer of the motor vehicle excise tax (MVET) revenues from the general fund. However, during the 1987 legislative session the transfer of MVET revenues was cancelled.

The table on the following page shows the impact of the 1987 legislative changes on the Department's highway improvement program. The 1987 legislature cancelled the phased-in transfer of the motor vehicle excise tax from the general fund and, instead, allowed only 5% of the revenues to be transferred. This decreased the amount of actual available highway revenues by more than $90 million below what the Department had projected would be available during the 1988-1989 biennium. In response to these cuts the Department announced the postponement of $96 million of projects that had been scheduled for 1988.

The table also shows that unless the legislature acts this year to restore adequate funding for highways, an additional $140 to $150 million of projects will need to be postponed or dropped from the 1990 and 1991 program. The cumulative impact of the cuts made in 1987 is a reduction of nearly $240 million in revenues compared to the revenues the Department projected would be available when they developed their five year highway improvement program. Restoring this $240 million in highway funding is necessary to prevent important projects from being dropped from the program. New money in addition to the $240 million would be needed in order to add new projects and increase the amount of highway maintenance and improvements over what is scheduled in the Department's current five year program.
## IMPACT OF 1987 LEGISLATURE ON MINNESOTA HIGHWAY FUNDING

(all dollars in millions - $000,000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Projected Total Highway Revenues prior to 1987 Session</td>
<td>$389</td>
<td>$389</td>
<td>$416</td>
<td>$416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue lost due to cancellation of MVET Transfer from General Fund</td>
<td>($51)</td>
<td>($51)</td>
<td>($78)</td>
<td>($78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected Current Law Revenues for Highways from Fuel Taxes, MV Registration, Federal Aid and Drivers Licenses *</td>
<td>$338</td>
<td>$338</td>
<td>$338</td>
<td>$338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual New Revenues for Highways After 1987 Legislative Session</td>
<td>$5</td>
<td>$5</td>
<td>$5</td>
<td>$5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual Total Highway Revenues</td>
<td>$343</td>
<td>$343</td>
<td>$343</td>
<td>$343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortfall in Actual Revenues From Projected Total</td>
<td>$46</td>
<td>$46</td>
<td>$73</td>
<td>$73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL SHORTFALL in Biennium</td>
<td>$92</td>
<td>$146</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUMULATIVE SHORTFALL BY 1991 (revenues necessary to restore current planned projects)</td>
<td>$238</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Minnesota Department of Transportation and Senate Staff.

* Based on current levels of taxes, constitutionally mandated distribution of money in the Highway User’s Fund and legislative appropriations from the Trunk Highway Fund.
The map on the following page shows the six major economic centers in Minnesota. It also shows the federal interstate highway system and the major four lane trunk highways in the State.

The map shows that five of the six major economic centers in the State have direct access to the interstate system and to the metropolitan area. Direct access to the interstate system and to the metropolitan area is often a major factor in the location of manufacturing businesses. It is particularly important for businesses that rely on trucks to transport materials and products.

The Mankato area is the only one of the six major centers of economic activity in the State that does not have direct four lane access to the interstate system. Because of the bottleneck near Shakopee, the Mankato area is also the only major economic activity center in the State that does not have direct four lane access to the metropolitan area. Improved highway access in this region is important to its diversified economy. State investment in improving the highways in southern Minnesota would be an important investment in the economic future of the region and the State.

The table below shows the level of economic activity in each of the six major centers shown on the map as measured by wholesale and retail sales and the number of manufacturing jobs. The table shows that the Mankato area is clearly one of the six largest centers of economic activity in Minnesota. It is the third largest area in terms of the number of manufacturing jobs. The next largest centers of economic activity in the State are significantly smaller than Mankato and include cities such as Winona and Albert Lea.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>City/Area</th>
<th>Total Retail and Wholesale Sales ($000)</th>
<th>Number of Manufacturing Jobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Minneapolis / St. Paul</td>
<td>$42,068,985</td>
<td>178,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Moorhead / Fargo, ND</td>
<td>$3,341,124</td>
<td>4,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Duluth</td>
<td>$1,256,038</td>
<td>3,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>St. Cloud</td>
<td>$1,019,394</td>
<td>3,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Rochester</td>
<td>$738,382</td>
<td>9,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mankato / W.Mankato</td>
<td>$666,392</td>
<td>5,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Department of Transportation Trunk Highway Market Artery Study (July, 1987) and City of Moorhead. Note: Data for Moorhead manufacturing jobs is from 1982 and retail and wholesale sales is from 1985.
Major Minnesota Economic Centers and Transportation Routes

Legend

- Interstate Hwy.
- 4-Lane Hwy.
- Major Trade Center
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY CENTERS AND TRANSPORTATION ROUTES IN THE MANKATO REGION

The Mankato area is the only one of the six major economic activity centers in the State that is not located directly on an interstate highway. The table below shows the amount of economic activity in Mankato and North Mankato and the four nearby cities in the greater Mankato region.

### ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IN GREATER MANKATO REGION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City/Area</th>
<th>Total Retail and Wholesale Sales ($'000)</th>
<th>Number of Manufacturing Jobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mankato/North Mankato</td>
<td>$666,392</td>
<td>5,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Ulm</td>
<td>$130,090</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Peter</td>
<td>$54,611</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waseca</td>
<td>$48,891</td>
<td>3,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Sueur</td>
<td>$40,096</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$940,080</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Department of Transportation Trunk Highway Market Artery Study (July, 1987)

The map on the following page shows these cities and the transportation routes in the area. The primary connection between the cities of New Ulm, Mankato, and Waseca and Interstate Highway 35 is Trunk Highway 14. Sections of Highway 14 between Mankato and I-35 are deteriorated, narrow and unsafe, particularly for large trucks. Upgrading this highway to four lane status is one of the highest priorities of the Southern Minnesota Highway Improvement Association. Some improvements have been made along Highway 14 and others are included within the Department of Transportation's five year program. However, completion of these projects may be in jeopardy if the cuts in state highway funding are not restored.

The map also shows that the major connection for these cities with the metropolitan area is Highway 169. Although much of Highway 169 is a four lane road, there is a serious bottleneck and interruption of four lane access to the metropolitan area near Shakopee. A more detailed map on page 9 shows this bottleneck and the break in four lane access to the metropolitan area for traffic using Highway 169. Traffic must pass through downtown Shakopee and travel east along Highway 13 to reach I-35W. The proposed Shakopee bypass and improvements to the Bloomington Ferry Bridge across the Minnesota River would provide alternative routes and improved access to the metropolitan area and its freeway system. Eliminating this bottleneck in the Shakopee area is a second major priority for the Southern Minnesota Highway Improvement Association.
HIGHWAY FINANCING IN 1988

THE PROBLEM

Minnesota citizens and businesses expect and require good roads.
Local governments need money from the state for the construction, reconstruction and maintenance of state-aid highways.

The funding mechanism agreed upon by the State Legislature in 1981 -- transfer of a portion of the motor vehicle excise tax (MVET) -- has consistently been delayed because the state has used the money to help balance the budget. No alternative funding has been provided to replace the lost MVET dollars.

The anger and frustration of local government officials faced with ever-increasing road and bridge needs has intensified with each year of delay.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) has proposed a metropolitan sales tax to be used for funding roads statewide. Such a solution would be unacceptable to the members of AMC.

Because state leaders seem unable to devise an alternative funding program or to transfer the promised MVET dollars, the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) will propose a funding program in 1988.

1988 TRANSPORTATION FUNDING PROPOSAL

The AMC’s Subcommittee on Transportation has met with other interested parties to discuss the possibility of forming a coalition to work on 1988 legislation. Also discussed was the need to propose legislation early as an alternative to administration proposals.

The legislation package proposed includes the following items:

1. TRANSFER OF 50 PERCENT OF THE MVET FUNDING PROMISED IN 1981 ($110 MILLION) AND REINSTATE A PHASED TRANSFER FOR THE REMAINING 50 PERCENT.

2. Some type of funding for mass transit in urban areas.

3. Wheelage tax for the seven-county metropolitan area with the option of a wheel-age tax available to the other counties.

4. General capital bonding authority for all counties in Minnesota.

5. State bonding for bridge repair ($20 million).

6. Repeal MVET on local governments and sales tax paid by Mn/DOT.
TIME FOR TRANSPORTATION

The 1988 legislative session is six months away. The Governor’s budget amendments and legislative priorities will be in final phases within three months.

If counties want to make an impact on transportation funding now is the time. Counties must take a leadership role. In 1987 we failed to lead and were derailed by unfulfilled promises, lack of commitment, political posturing, budget constraints and an uncaring citizenry.

1988 is going to be equally difficult. Already an MVET transfer is taking a back seat in the improved state fiscal health. There is little or no recognition that MVET fueled the biennial budget. The Governor and legislators are spending the “surplus” on the Greater Minnesota Corporation, election year tax relief, education and a half a dozen other “priorities”. Transportation is not one of those top priorities. Why not?

Now is the time to build a strong coalition around local government, Minnesota Good Roads, transit, the handicapped, the construction industry, labor, tourism, agriculture and other benefactors of transportation funding.

The coalition needs to reach beyond its own collective interests to the public. The public is not knowledgeable about transportation money or how money raised through the excise tax is being used. Maybe the public will agree with the state policy of spending excise tax dollars on other state needs. Maybe they can help make the hard choices between gas tax, license and fee increases versus the utilization of the excise tax for other than transportation purposes if they are informed. They need to be informed. The coalition needs to fulfill that role -- because no one else will.

Transportation funding must not be denied in the 1988 legislative session! By February 9 it must be an absolute priority. Roads, bridges and transit are as important to this state and its social and economic well being as are education, environment and other human needs. It is time to balance our priorities. It is transportation’s time!

-- Norrie Anderson