



## 2012 CGMC Policy Positions: Transportation

CGMC believes that state funding sources—including new state revenues—should be distributed equitably to meet the transportation needs of both greater Minnesota and the metro area. Accordingly, CGMC supports the following transportation positions in the 2012 legislative session:

**1. Allocation of trunk highway bonding dollars for greater Minnesota interchange program**

CGMC supports at least a \$35 million appropriation of trunk highway bonds to a competitive grant program for the construction or reconstruction of interchanges in greater Minnesota where the interchange will promote economic development and promote public safety.

CGMC supports additional revenue to service debt payments related to the additional trunk highway bonding authority.

**2. Allocation of bonding dollars for roads and bridges in greater Minnesota**

CGMC supports an adequate appropriation of bonding dollars for programs designed to improve, expand and/or replace local roads and bridges in greater Minnesota. These programs help improve safety, prevent deterioration and provide connections to interregional corridors and other highways.

Specifically, CGMC supports at least a \$15 million bonding appropriation request for the Local Road Account for Routes of Regional Significance, and at least a \$25 million appropriation request for the Local Bridge Replacement Program.

**3. Allocation of bonding dollars for greater Minnesota transit facilities**

To address the increasing need and demand in greater Minnesota for transit and transportation alternatives, CGMC supports at least \$30 million in funding through the capital investment bonding bill or other sources for greater Minnesota transit facilities throughout the state.

**4. Allocation of state transportation dollars**

CGMC supports measures to generate additional revenue for transportation projects in greater Minnesota, including an increase in the gas tax. CGMC also supports indexing the gas tax in 2011 until an alternative fee or funding mechanism is in place. Additional sources of revenue the state should consider include an increase in the Motor Vehicle Sales Tax, repeal of MVST tax exemptions, value capture taxes, tolling, congestion pricing, mileage taxes and weight taxes.

CGMC supports the MVST statutory allocation, namely 60% of funding dedicated to highways and 4% dedicated to greater Minnesota transit. Revenue generated from the MVST should be for transportation purposes only.

## **5. Protect greater Minnesota transit**

The demand for transit services continues to grow throughout greater Minnesota. These services help rural Minnesotans get to work, school and social activities—often at great distances and when no other transportation options are available. Accordingly, the state must adequately fund transit services in greater Minnesota.

CGMC also acknowledges the increased demand for transit service in the metro area. However, CGMC believes expanded service for metro area transit must not come at the expense of greater Minnesota transit services.

## **6. Safety**

CGMC believes efforts to improve road safety in greater Minnesota roads are best accomplished by improving interchanges and expanding dangerous two-lane roads into four-lane roads. The completion of such safety improvements also directly enhances greater Minnesota's economic vitality and growth. As a result, the CGMC supports efforts by MnDOT to prioritize safety as the key measure when allocating highway transportation dollars, and opposes efforts by MnDOT to reprioritize its spending decisions to favor metro congestion relief over statewide safety.

## **7. Public-private partnerships**

CGMC supports efforts by the Minnesota Department of Transportation to encourage private sector contributions to state and local transportation projects. However, projects with strong private sector support must not be completed at the expense of highway, road and bridge projects either already programmed for construction or designated as safety risks.

## **8. Federal transportation reauthorization**

Congress should pass at least a six-year surface transportation reauthorization act in order to provide long-term funding stability for transportation programs in greater Minnesota and beyond. At a minimum, this reauthorization should fund transportation at existing funding levels. CGMC also opposes an excessive number of continuing resolutions of the current highway authorization act, SAFETEA-LU.

Within this reauthorization, CGMC supports efforts to:

- Increase the federal fuel tax by 5 to 8 cents per gallon; the federal fuel tax has remained at 18.4-cents per gallon since 1993;
- Emphasize investments that increase safety and efficiency, and prevent deterioration of our roads, bridges and transit systems;
- Enhance access to greater Minnesota's interregional corridors and highways; and
- Invest in high-speed passenger rail from Chicago to the Twin Cities, as well as other rail routes to and from greater Minnesota cities.

## **9. Statewide transportation plan**

CGMC believes the legislature must assert a strong role in developing and overseeing a comprehensive, interconnected, multimodal approach to statewide transportation planning. Accordingly, CGMC supports legislative efforts to adopt in statute a strategic, statewide transportation policy plan guiding MnDOT in their short- and long-term capital planning decisions.

## **10. Street Maintenance Fees**

Under current law, cities do not have the authority to issue a street maintenance or improvement fee. CGMC supports efforts by the legislature to provide cities with the flexibility they need to keep city streets in a state of good repair, whether by administration of a street maintenance or improvement fee or other mechanism.

## **11. Transportation Permitting Procedures**

Cities must go through an often rigorous permit approval process in order to improve, develop or expand city streets and roads. The CGMC supports efforts by the legislature and governor to improve the regulatory and administrative process for cities when developing or redeveloping transportation projects within their communities.