



## PRESS RELEASE

Contact:  
Mayor, Robert B. Mielke 715-261-6800

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### **The City of Wausau requests Marathon County support for wheel tax resources**

The City of Wausau formally requests that the Board of Marathon County Supervisors remit \$650,000 of the proposed over \$3 million countywide wheel tax to road improvements within the City of Wausau. I request these funds in my role as Mayor and to defend the interests specifically of the Wausau taxpayer.

#### Why a Wheel Tax?

Both the City and County, like many local governments in Wisconsin, are at a breaking point for resources, especially for maintenance items like roadways and infrastructure. The State of Wisconsin continues to balance state priorities on the backs of local governments. At a time of recovery, when income tax revenue has increased over the past 5 years the City of Wausau has LOST \$1,305,113 in shared revenue resources from the State:

- State transportation aid has DECREASED \$183,760
- State shared revenue payments DECREASED \$809,847
- State grants to Police and Public Safety DECREASED \$311,506

The only reason the City of Wausau must raise taxes is because of these State cuts. Furthermore, the County's proposed tax does not propose to allocate our citizens a fair amount. Our police needs and road improvements have only increased, but our share of the resources has not. We, as Wisconsin and Marathon County taxpayers, pay into these pots but the funds are not coming back to the City for local needs. Marathon County has experienced many of the same declines in State revenue, though the sales tax revenue the County has received continues to increase since the recession.

#### Why a Partnership?

The City and County both need revenue from a wheel tax to support transportation infrastructure now more than ever, but our citizens should not be double taxed. We will use our resources to maintain City and County transportation infrastructure within the City which benefits the entire region and these funds are by statute required to ONLY be used for transportation improvements.

The City of Wausau constitutes a significant amount of total vehicle miles traveled within the County and 29% of the population of Marathon County. Our entire region needs the City's roadways to live, work and receive important services within the City. The City maintains over 8 miles of County highways within our boundaries with no funds from the County- and given all our challenges- this must change.



Instead of two separate wheel taxes, we request that the County Board of Supervisors remit to the City our fair share of the collected wheel tax revenues- \$650,000- and then the City would repeal our own wheel tax. The State's cuts and the County's proposed double tax has put us in the situation. I want everyone to know that we will hold them accountable to Wausau taxpayers and we must insist on our fair share.

As I now ask all of you on the County Board to evaluate this fair request, I will ask the Wausau City Council to consider tabling our own wheel tax proposal, until the County makes their decision, with hopeful results that this funding will be shared together.