

Hi Jessica,

Let me address the parking pass first. I stand by what I said about this when the topic was raised during the budget process. The introduction of Alder Doran's amendments was political theater. I know that because of the content of his conversations with staff and other actions that support that conclusion. What's more, no process was considered to carry out the amendment. You cannot just say that alders will be reimbursed without considering how they will be reimbursed or what qualifies for reimbursement. I still cannot understand how that amendment failed 12-2 after staff pushed back on time necessary for management, and instead of exploring ways to adjust the process, the next attempt (which the Council could have blocked because it was against Council Rules) was more severe. Instead of finding a reasonable compromise, the subsequent action was to do away with reimbursement altogether. That does not make sense if you are truly looking to succeed legislatively.

Now, personally, it is not about the cost of parking that I am concerned about. (Though, I believe that we should be mindful of how the cost of being an alder compares to the salary of an alder. I do not know many successful people who spend beyond what they earn! We also do not want to disqualify people from representative government based on income.) I spend a lot of time at City Hall (and previously at the library) during the day for meetings. Having a pass has allowed me to park in the ramp without worry about plugging a meter during essential discussions or the risk of parking tickets.

Furthermore, saying that the alders who want to keep their passes "just need to walk" is inappropriate and inflammatory. Since the demolition of the Blue Ramp, many colleagues who have relinquished their parking passes park across the street in the Chase bank parking lot. Even though this is a private lot, Chase has not seemed to be bothered by the use of their lot after business hours; however, it will not be available much longer with the planned development. Those who park in the Yellow Ramp (the only ramp that accepts the alder parking pass) typically walk further than those who claim these passes are unnecessary. I noted in the Finance meeting that I shared the pass situation with my constituents when gathering signatures and that no constituent found alders having a parking pass to be unreasonable. One constituent said they wanted me at City Hall as much as possible and wanted nothing to interfere with my attendance or concentration during the meetings. He wanted me to work on district issues for as many hours or days as possible.

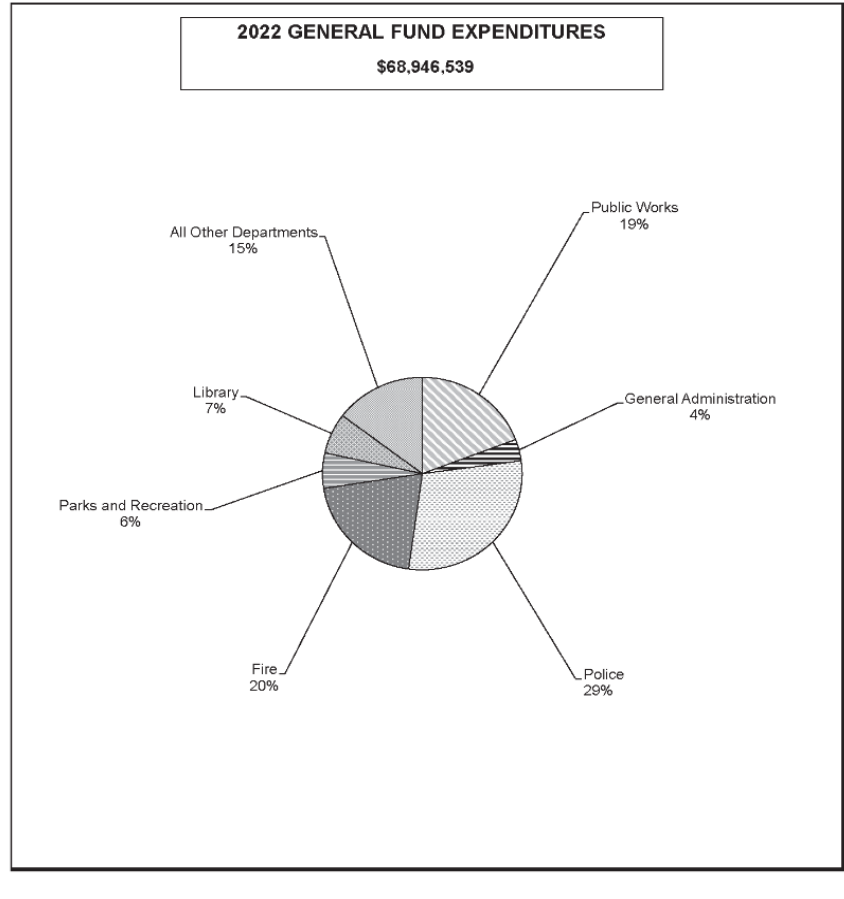
I was Chair of the Safety & Licensing Committee last year. I worked closely with Chief Thomas and Chief Hansen to ensure AFD and APD had necessary funding. Our officers should not be relying on donations for vital equipment, and I do not believe they are – though, I have reached out to Chief Olson via email to confirm. If there is a need not being addressed, I will do what I have always done: advocate for budget reallocation and/or advocating for community partnerships or grants to resolve the problem.

This brings me to your next concern. You said you "have gotten the impression that the Common Council is unwilling to reallocate city funds to increase the budget for the maintenance of our transportation and underground utility system." The investments in transportation and utility infrastructure are priorities (as you can see by how they are funded) and the choices being made are driven by data.

1. Our budget prioritizes public safety and public works as priorities. The 2023 Budget allotted general funding as follows:
 - a. Police: 29%
 - b. Fire: 20%
 - c. Public Works: 19%
 - d. Library: 7%
 - e. Parks & Rec: 6%
 - f. General Administration: 4%
 - g. All Other Departments: 15%

CITY OF APPLETON 2023 BUDGET
GENERAL FUND

The General Fund is the general operating fund of the City. This fund accounts for the financial resources of the City which are not accounted for in any other fund. Principal sources of revenue are property taxes, State transportation aids, and State shared revenues. Primary expenditures are for police protection, fire protection, public works, and general administration.

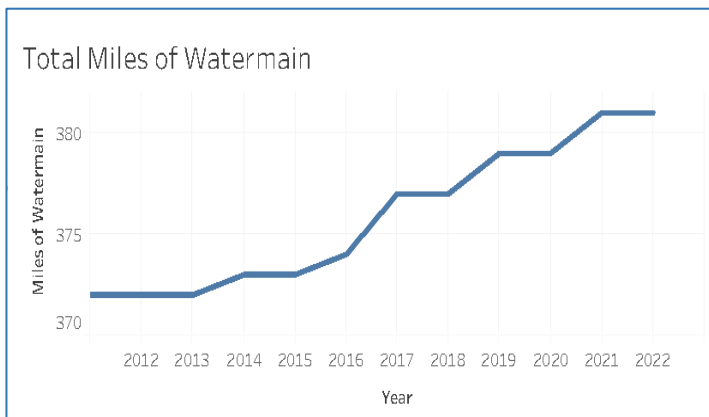


The funding designated for Public Works is almost the exact amount specified for the Fire Department, closely behind the Police Department.

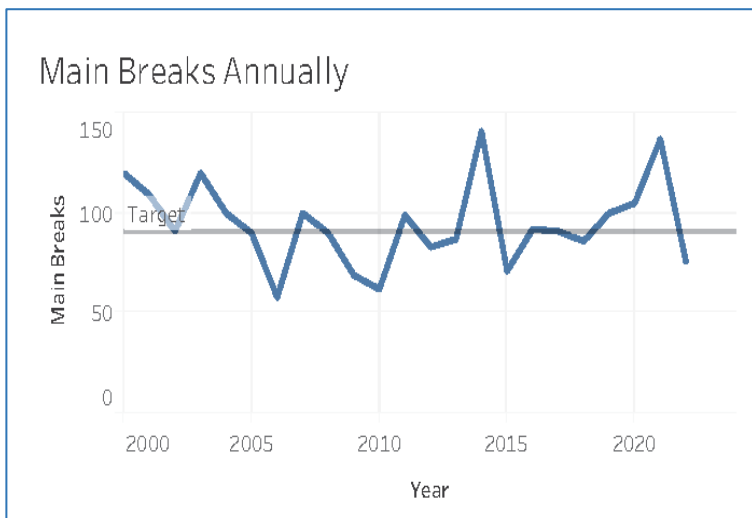
Source #1: City of Appleton 2023 Adopted Budget - Page 37 (.pdf: Page 49)

<https://www.appleton.org/home/showpublisheddocument/25182/638060246200470000>

2. The total miles of watermain has steadily increased:



3. Main breaks are down significantly.



4. The city is above target for hydrant placement.

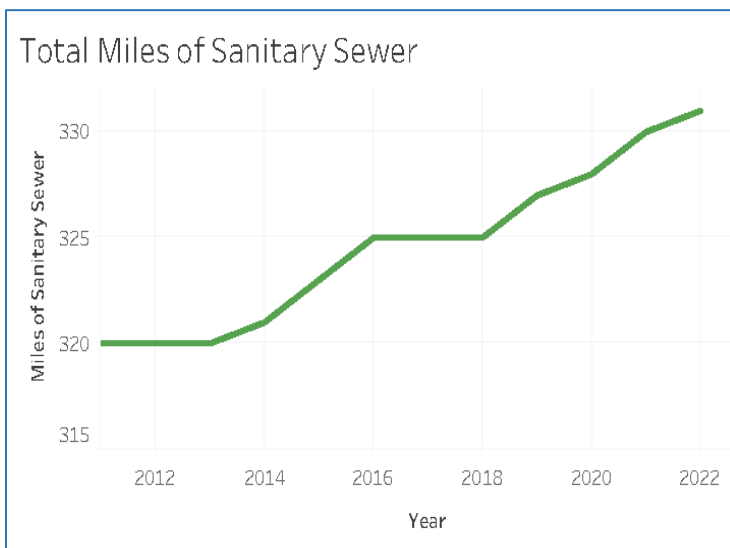


The city has 9.25 hydrants per lane mile of street, better than the target of 8.8, which places a hydrant every 600 feet.

Source #2-#4: City of Appleton 2023 Adopted Budget - Page 568 (.pdf: Page 580)

<https://www.appleton.org/home/showpublisheddocument/25182/638060246200470000>

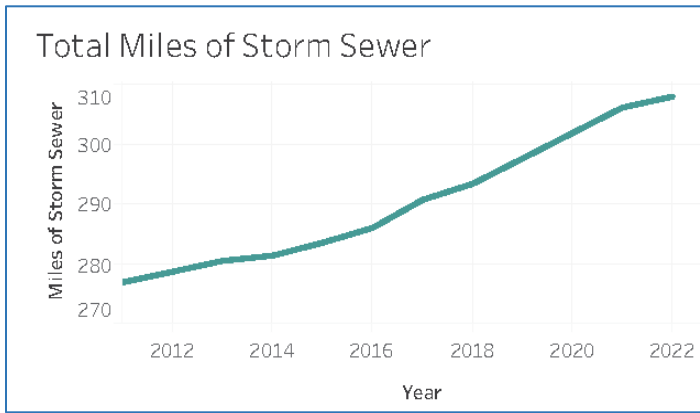
5. The total miles of sanitary sewer are steadily increasing.



Source #5: City of Appleton 2023 Adopted Budget - Page 569 (.pdf: Page 581)

<https://www.appleton.org/home/showpublisheddocument/25182/638060246200470000>

6. The total miles of storm sewer are also steadily increasing.



Source #6: City of Appleton 2023 Adopted Budget - Page 570 (.pdf: Page 582)

<https://www.appleton.org/home/showpublisheddocument/25182/638060246200470000>

7. When we found ourselves with a surplus after finding a less expensive route for the new raw water line, the entire \$2.9 million dollars was transferred directly into the 2022 Watermain replacement program to address the concerns raised about watermains, for example, undersized watermains.

Request to approve the following Budget amendment:

Water Utility

2022 Watermain Program	+\$2,900,000
Second Raw Water Line Improvements	-\$2,900,000

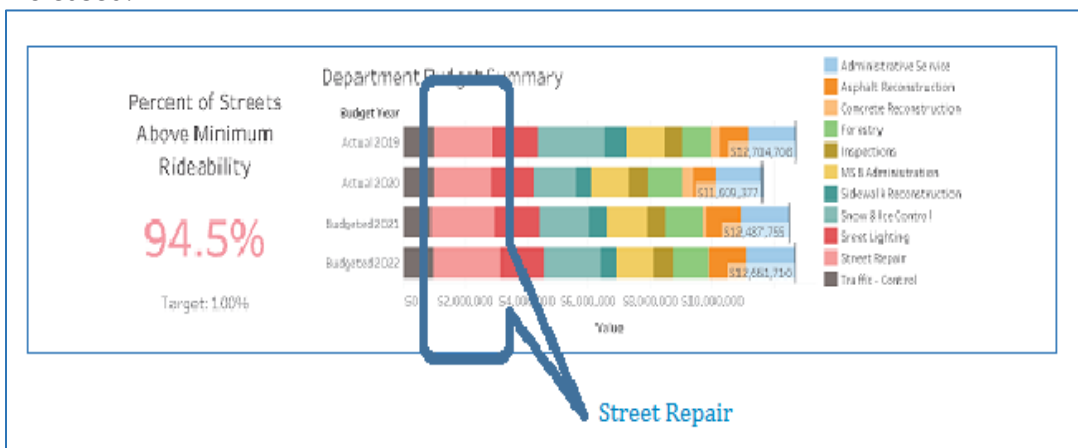
to reallocate funds from the Second Raw Water Line Improvements project to the 2022 Watermain replacement program (2/3 vote of Council required)

Attachments: [Second Raw Water Line Budget Transfer.pdf](#)

Source #7:

<https://cityofappleton.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5714267&GUID=E972E780-6405-407E-A4D9-3DA6FB741981>

8. While we admit that we need to do more (more on that next), the budget for street repair has increased.



Source #6: City of Appleton 2023 Adopted Budget - Page 560 (.pdf: Page 572)

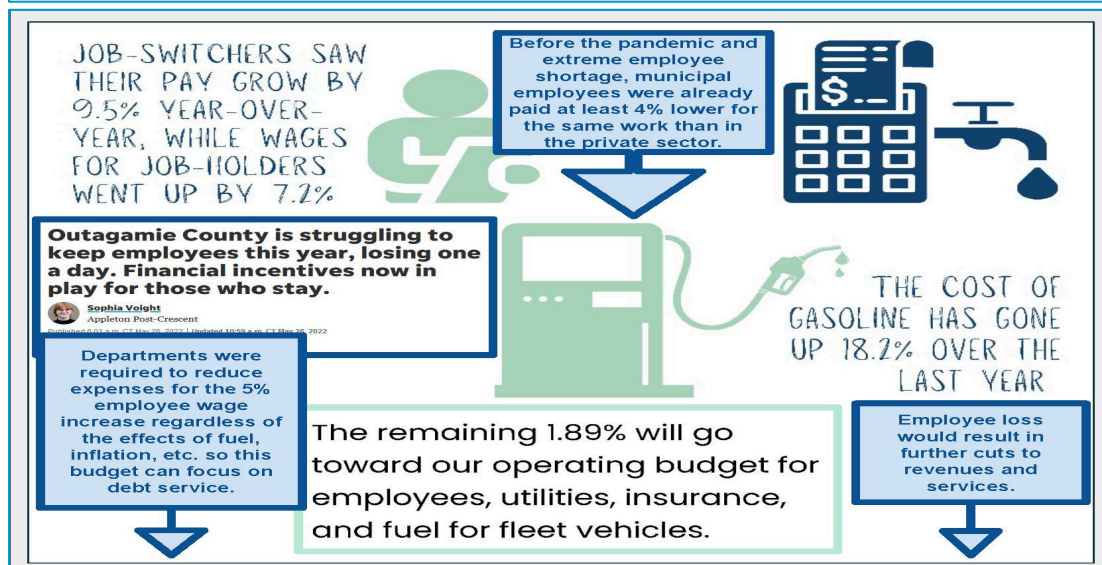
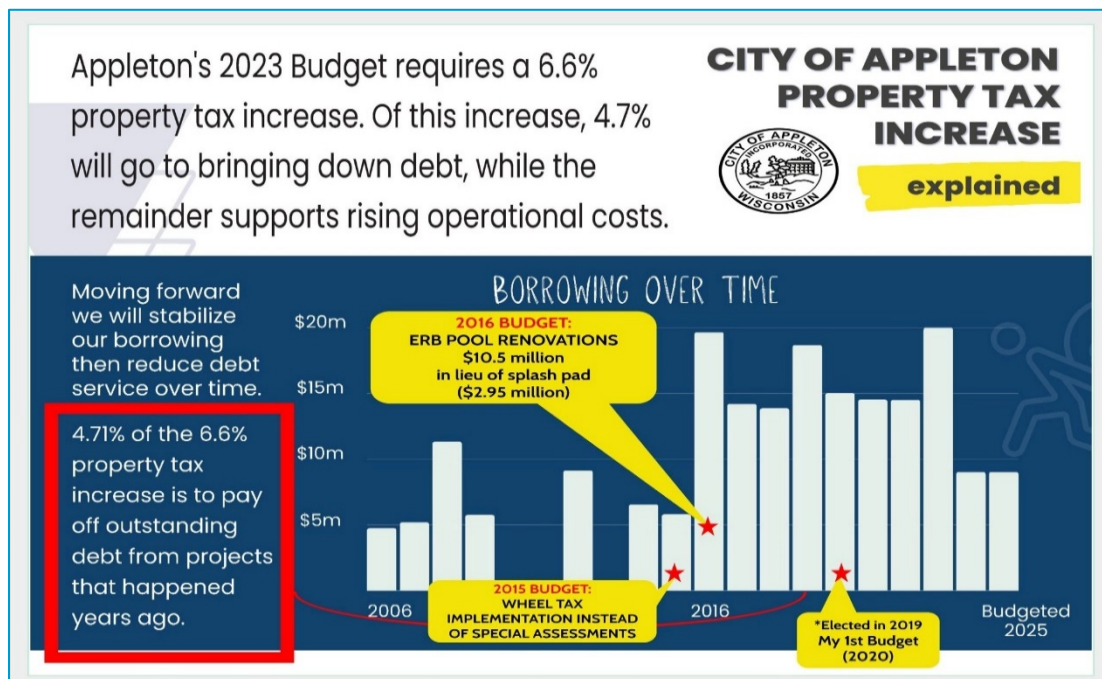
<https://www.appleton.org/home/showpublisheddocument/25182/638060246200470000>

Lastly, I absolutely agree with your concern about borrowing for street projects and the system being unsustainable. This is why having a long-term plan to reduce debt is essential. We also need to find a way to fund road construction in a way that is fair for taxpayers (offering relief to residential homeowners that currently shoulder most of the burden) that also meets the regulations that the state legislature has in place that controls how municipalities are allowed to handle their budgets. The Council has not just sat on its hands and complained. We are actively looking for solutions.

These solutions would be more straightforward if we had not inherited, in my opinion, overspending on Erb Park and Pool and the adoption of the Wheel Tax, which has never met the needs of DPW, and is likely to continue to decrease as people work from home and more households become single-vehicle households. (FYI: The Wheel Tax currently brings in approximately \$1,200,000 per year. To meet the objective of a 100-year replacement cycle the Wheel Tax would need to bring in \$10,885,000 per year. That would require the current Wheel Tax to be raised from \$20 to \$180 per year with no end to increases in sight.) If municipalities had control of their finances (even only as the Home Rule allows) we could address this without absorbing the full impact of the loss of shared revenue. The state controls both, which is why we find ourselves in this predicament.

I posted about this in detail during Budget Season, but the slides are shown below:

<https://www.facebook.com/AlderpersonVanZeeland/posts/pfbid0xt7WKrf5ngdGR1zTk7hP8DUUoyYgZc7yvVht5QJJGpDpy5uPe7yaG5x8KtdgVF71l>





INFRASTRUCTURE



EQUIPMENT



QUALITY OF LIFE

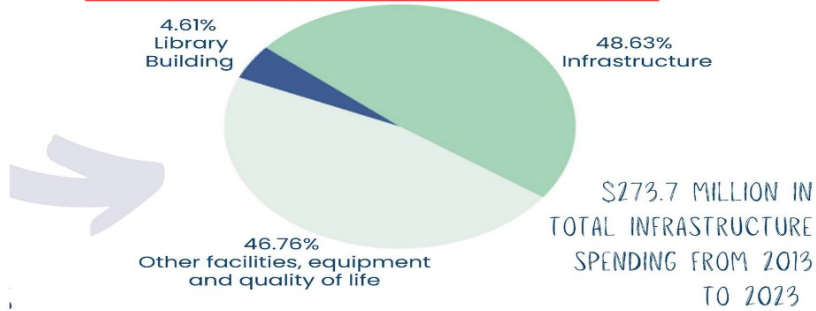


FACILITIES

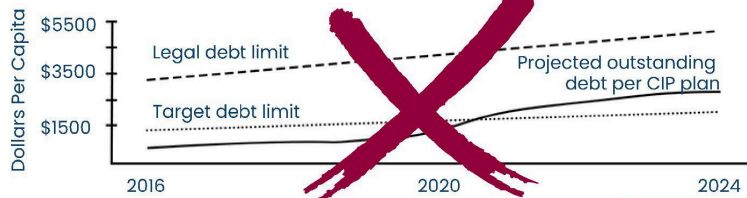
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Appleton's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) includes things like street & sidewalk maintenance, police & fire equipment, Lundgaard Park and the library building.

CIP BUDGET 2013 TO 2023



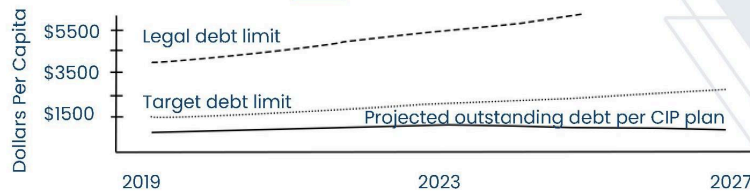
DEBT UNDER OLD CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN



State-imposed limits on tax amounts and flat or declining shared revenue have driven the City to more borrowing.

DEBT UNDER NEW CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

PER THE OLD CAPITAL PLAN, IF WE CONTINUED TO BORROW AT THE SAME RATE, WE WOULD HAVE EXCEEDED OUR TARGET LIMIT BY 2021



STREET RECONSTRUCTION FUNDING CHALLENGES

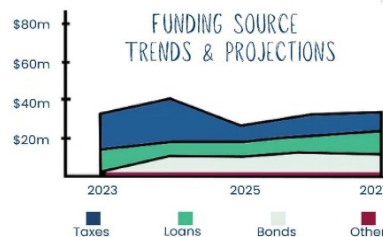
WI state law dictates how municipalities can manage their own budgets.

PROBLEM:
THE WHEEL TAX IS DECLINING

POSSIBLE SOLUTION:
COUNCIL HAS EXPLORED CREATION OF A TRANSPORTATION UTILITY

A transportation utility would create an enterprise fund for street repair similar to the city's Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater Utilities. The utility would be based on usage and would shift the burden away from homeowners.

Although a municipality may, with some restrictions, rely on its broad statutory and/or constitutional home rule powers under Wisconsin Stat. § 62.11(5), the general authority statute for city councils to create a transportation utility, some have been dragged into costly litigation while state legislators again attempt to take control of municipal finances.



Business group sues Pewaukee over transportation utility fee

WMC claims fee amounts to tax not permitted under state law

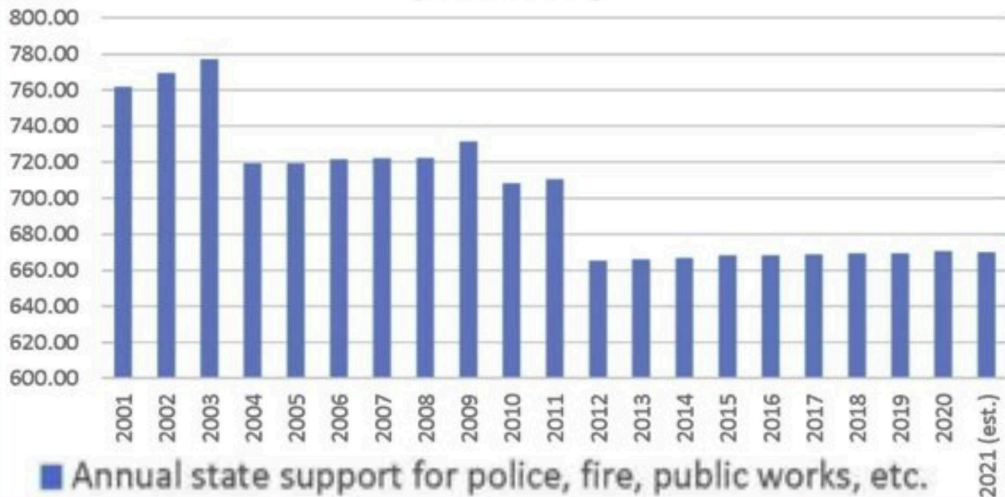
By Brian Huber - Freeman Staff Apr 8, 2022 Updated Apr 8, 2022

Republican bills aim to punish local governments that enact transportation utility fees

Lawmakers claim the user fees circumvent state limits on property tax increases, fee supporters say it's one of few options to keep up with road repair needs

By Rich Kremer
Published: Tuesday, February 8, 2022, 5:35am

Declining Shared Revenues (In Millions)



WHAT IS SHARED REVENUE?

Shared revenue is a portion of the income and sales taxes collected by the WI State Government that is then shared back to municipalities like ours.

STATE SHARED REVENUE MAKES UP FOR MORE THAN 15% OF OUR \$63.3 MILLION BUDGET

SHARED REVENUE NOT RISING WITH TAXES

