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Responses to the Wisconsin Bike Fed Governor Candidate Questionnaire - Spring 2026

Do you support proposed legislation like AB694/SB690 (restoring eminent domain)? Please share a brief rationale for your position.

Communities deserve the tools to keep people safe and to build the transportation networks that reflect their values and priorities. Restoring the ability to use eminent domain for bike and pedestrian projects is not about taking people's property. It's about giving local governments a fair, transparent negotiation tool that helps projects move forward responsibly and at a reasonable cost. In most cases, this authority is never exercised, but it helps communities negotiate in good faith and avoids situations where out-of-state landholders or speculative developers hold out for inflated prices that projects in the public's best interest out of reach.

Right now, Wisconsin is one of the only states in the country that prohibits the use of eminent domain for these purposes, even when a project has broad community support and clear public safety benefits. The restriction doesn't just complicate the process, it weakens local governments' ability to negotiate responsibly and can drive up costs, especially for trail corridors and crucial community connections.

Restoring this authority would simply put bike and pedestrian projects on the same footing as road, utility, and other public-purpose projects, where eminent domain is already used sparingly, with due process, and with fair compensation. As governor, I would support restoring this tool because communities should have every option available to advance their own safety, health, and economic goals. Local governments know their streets, trails, and corridors best, and they should be empowered when it comes to building the infrastructure that keeps people safe and strengthens local economies. My administration will trust communities to use this authority responsibly and transparently, just as they already do for other public infrastructure. And, where needed, we will be available to support communities who need assistance navigating the process.

Do you support proposed legislation like AB334/SB343 (complete streets)? Please share a brief rationale for your position.

Safe, connected streets shouldn't depend on your ZIP code. Communities across Wisconsin have shown that when they have the tools, flexibility, and support to design streets for everyone, they do it. That's why I support modernizing Wisconsin's Complete Streets policy, but I believe the next version needs to reflect what we've learned over the past decade: a one-size-fits-all mandate isn't the most effective way to build safer, more vibrant communities.

Since the repeal of Trans 75, dozens of communities, from La Crosse and Stevens Point to Franklin, West Allis, and New Richmond, have adopted their own Complete Streets policies

because they see the economic, safety, and quality-of-life benefits. The state should be a partner in that work, not a barrier. A modern Complete Streets policy should set clear statewide expectations for safety and multimodal access, while giving communities the flexibility to design solutions that fit their context.

Rather than recreating the rigid mandate of the past, I believe Wisconsin should take a more effective approach: align state funding, technical assistance, and project development support with communities that embrace Complete Streets principles. When the state rewards good planning, provides consistent guidance, and models best practices on its own facilities, communities respond. And WisDOT has work to do. From updating design standards to improving internal coordination it must ensure its own projects reflect modern multimodal expectations.

As governor, I will champion a statewide Complete Streets framework that is practical, flexible, and rooted in safety. That means setting clear goals, supporting local innovation, and ensuring WisDOT becomes a reliable partner and clearinghouse for communities that want to build safer, more connected streets. Wisconsin doesn't need to force communities into a mold; we need to empower them with the tools, resources, and leadership to build the streets their residents deserve.

Do you support proposed legislation like AB 371/SB375 (Milwaukee traffic safety camera)? Please share a brief rationale for your position.

The fight for traffic safety needs to be balanced with the outrageous civil and personal rights violations law enforcement officers have committed using license plate readers in Wisconsin. Atop the marquee offenses of ICE working with local PDs to run Flock searches and known issues in discriminatory camera placement, we've seen outrageous personal abuses: multiple Wisconsin LEOs have in just the past two months been caught using license plate reader data to stalk ex-girlfriends; in Texas an officer was found using a Flock dragnet to identify an abortion patient. The popular movement against Flock cameras has merit: extremely dangerous drivers don't use license plates and a wholly unaccountable third party owning our data (& reselling it) is the worst of both worlds and grounds for major civil rights abuse. While I'm amenable to hearing an equitable, community-led solution that addresses these concerns, I'm more immediately interested in other approaches to road management: traffic-calming street design, investments in public transit, and increased impoundment of repeat offender vehicles.

Emotos (and other OCEVs) are an increasing concern in communities, and many are adapting local ordinances that create a patchwork of varying laws. Should Wisconsin define e-motos in legislation, should there be regulations on the sale and use of these vehicles?

E-motos, electric bikes, scooters, and other small electric vehicles are changing how people get around, and Wisconsin's laws haven't kept up. Right now, communities are trying to manage powerful e-motos and similar devices with rules that were written for cars, dirt bikes, or bicycles, and that's not fair to riders, law enforcement, or the public. We need clear, modern statewide definitions and a basic framework so that local governments can make thoughtful decisions about where these vehicles belong and how they should be operated.

Broadly, we've already seen with e-bikes and e-scooters that when the state sets clear classes, safety expectations, and broad rules of the road, communities are better able to integrate new mobility options in a way that supports safety and access. I would take a similar approach with e-motos and other off-road capable electric vehicles: define them in statute, set baseline equipment and safety standards, and then give local governments the authority to decide how and where they can be used on local streets, trails, and public spaces.

As governor, my goal would not be to ban emerging mobility options, but to make them safer, more predictable, and easier to manage. That means avoiding a one-size-fits-all mandate and instead giving communities the tools, guidance, and flexibility to permit, regulate, or restrict these vehicles based on their own context. Handled appropriately, e-motos can be meaningful contributors to environmentally responsible transit policy. A modern framework for e-motos should protect people walking and biking, give riders clear rules, and support innovation without leaving local governments to figure it out on their own.

What is your position on the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund?

The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund is one of Wisconsin's greatest bipartisan achievements. For more than three decades, it has protected the places that make our state special, our forests, lakes, rivers, trails, and parks, while strengthening local economies and expanding outdoor access for families across Wisconsin. I fully support reauthorizing and strengthening the Stewardship Fund so it can continue doing what it does best: preserving the natural resources that define our state and investing in the outdoor recreation infrastructure that communities rely on.

The benefits of Knowles-Nelson are clear. It helps protect working forests and farmland, supports hunting and fishing access, expands trail networks, and boosts tourism in rural communities. These are long-term investments that pay dividends for generations. And at a time when more communities are embracing trails, outdoor recreation, and conservation as economic drivers, the state should be a reliable partner, not a source of uncertainty.

As governor, I will champion a stable, long-term reauthorization of the Stewardship Fund, ensure the program remains transparent and community-driven, and support local governments, land trusts, and conservation partners who use these dollars to protect the places that make Wisconsin home. Stewardship is not a partisan issue (it's a Wisconsin value) and my administration will treat it as such.

In recent years, visits to our State Parks and Trails have increased while funding for the DNR has decreased. This has resulted in the inability to maintain facilities, and in some cases lead to closures. What do you think is an appropriate funding mechanism for Wisconsin's State Parks and Trails?

Wisconsin's state parks and trails are some of our greatest public assets; they support local economies, protect our natural resources, and give families across the state places to connect with the outdoors. But for too long, the Department of Natural Resources has been asked to do more with less. Chronic underfunding has left our parks understaffed, our trails in need of maintenance, and our infrastructure stretched thin at a time when demand for outdoor recreation has never been higher.

I fully support increasing and stabilizing funding for Wisconsin's state parks and trails. Investing in trails is both good environmental policy and smart economic policy. This funding is a core component of environmental justice: underinvestment in parks has widened the opportunity gaps for underserved communities to access beautiful state parks. These places are economic engines for rural communities, drawing visitors who support local businesses, restaurants, and lodging. They are also a major quality-of-life asset that helps Wisconsin attract and retain residents, especially young families and workers who want access to outdoor recreation.

As governor, I will work to ensure the DNR has the resources it needs to maintain safe, accessible, and well-managed parks and trails. That means addressing staffing shortages, modernizing facilities, and supporting the expansion and upkeep of the statewide trail network. Wisconsin's natural beauty is one of our greatest strengths, and my administration will treat our parks and trails as the essential public goods they are, worthy of long-term, reliable investment.

Are you familiar with Minnesota's Legacy and Trust Funds, and would you support legislation of that nature for Wisconsin?

Minnesota's Legacy Amendment is a powerful example of what's possible when a state makes a long-term commitment to conservation, outdoor recreation, clean water, and cultural heritage. Wisconsin deserves that same level of ambition. For too long, we've relied on short budget cycles and unpredictable funding to support the parks, trails, natural lands, and cultural assets that define who we are as a state.

I believe Wisconsin should explore dedicated, stable funding mechanisms that reflect our own values and needs, and that could include learning from Minnesota's model. But, any approach we take has to be grounded in Wisconsin's political and constitutional realities, and it has to be shaped by broad public input. What matters most is the principle: our state should be investing consistently and transparently in the natural and cultural resources that support our economy, strengthen our communities, and improve quality of life.

As governor, I would support a serious, statewide conversation about long-term funding for conservation, parks, trails, and cultural heritage, including models like Minnesota's. My administration would work with communities, tribal nations, conservation partners, and the public to identify the best path forward for Wisconsin. We don't need to copy another state's policy word-for-word, but we should absolutely match their commitment to protecting the places and resources that make Wisconsin home.

The Governor's Bicycle Coordinating Council was established in 1977 by then Governor Patrick Lucey. What do you see as the mission and purpose of the Council?

The Governor's Bicycle Coordinating Council has played an important role in bringing together state agencies, advocates, and community partners to support bicycling in Wisconsin. But our transportation landscape has changed dramatically since the Council was created almost 50 years ago. Today, communities across the state are thinking about mobility in broader, more inclusive ways, from safe routes to school and all-ages-and-abilities networks to trail-based tourism, recreation access, and the needs of residents who rely on biking as everyday transportation.

I support rethinking and strengthening the Council, but I believe its mission should be modernized to reflect the realities and opportunities of today. That means expanding its focus beyond traditional bicycling interests and ensuring it serves as a statewide forum for community mobility, multimodal safety, and equitable access to recreation. The Council should help WisDOT and DNR work together more effectively, support communities that want to build safe and connected networks, and elevate the voices of people who have historically been left out of transportation decisionmaking.

As governor, I would charge a renewed Council with helping Wisconsin build a transportation system that works for everyone, whether you bike for transportation, recreation, health, or because it's the most affordable way to get around. This is about more than bicycles; it's about giving every community the tools and support they need to create safe, connected, and accessible places to live, work, and play.