



Saint Louis County

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NEWS RELEASE

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County Board rejects wheelage fee option

Commissioners have voted down the option of imposing a \$10 wheelage fee on vehicles in St. Louis County. The measure would have raised an estimated \$1.5 million annually for road and bridge projects in the county through a surcharge added to license plate and tab renewals.

Commissioner Steve Raukar initially offered to withdraw the resolution, stating it had become apparent the measure was going to fail. However, the board voted to consider the matter in order to allow citizens the opportunity to speak. Commissioners stated that numerous residents had contacted them in opposition to the tax. Commissioner Keith Nelson ultimately offered a replacement resolution stating the Board opposed the wheelage fee for now, which commissioners approved unanimously.

The debate has centered on the need for extra funds for St. Louis County's massive road network versus the impact the added fee would have on residents. The Public Works Department is responsible for the maintenance and repair of 3,000 miles of roads and 600 bridges in the County.

Counties in the Twin Cities metropolitan area have long had the option to impose a wheelage fee to fund transportation projects. The 2013 legislature expanded the option to all counties, with a deadline of August 1 to approve in order to enact in 2014. The Board has the option to reconsider the matter next year to be enacted in 2015.

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