

Every year townships in Minnesota hold their Annual Meeting, and it is at this meeting that the electors, or everyday people, are able to communicate and bring resolution to issues that their community faces. There is a limited number of policies, outlined in Minnesota Statutes § 365.10 and § 366, that the electors are able to influence; however, despite the limited powers, electors are able to make a big impact on their community. An issue that my community faces in Greater Minnesota is the deterioration of roads and bridges. The primary mode of transportation outside the Metro-Area is via car along county and township roads. The upkeep of these roads are vital to the function of daily life; however, very little funding is provided by the state for the maintenance of county and township roads.

Roads are a backbone function in the everyday way of life for all people, but how much does it cost to fix roads? Depending on the condition of the road, the cost of repairing the road can be anywhere between \$167,000 and \$3.7 million per lane per mile. This price is extremely worrying because, in 2018, a report card from the American Association of Civil Engineers graded Minnesota's 19,776 bridges at a C and its 140,000 miles of public roads at a D+. There are 15,187 bridges owned by local governments (ie counties and townships) and nearly 116,000 miles (or 88%) of roads are in Greater Minnesota. With these statistics, I as an elector, would bring up the discussion of rural road conditions and make a motion to contribute more tax dollars to the upkeep and maintenance of township roads and bridges.

By using Statute §365.10 Subdivision 4, electors are able to keep themselves safe from unsafe driving conditions caused by deteriorated roads and bridges. In Greater Minnesota, township roads provide a safe mode of travel for citizens to go to their jobs, schools, homes, churches, community centers, and other destinations. Township roads also help our economy by providing a connection between cities and the Metro-Area to rural Minnesota that relies on tourism for income.

Greater Minnesota is home to the incredible natural beauty that deserves to be shared with all Minnesotans. By providing more money to the maintenance of the 55,052 miles of township roads, townships are able to share the wonders and artistry of their homes and people. The Annual Meeting is a wonderful right that gives everyday people, like my family, the ability to have an influence on our local government. So, while Minnesotan electors are given limited powers at the Annual Meeting, we're able to make an incredible difference in our lives and the future of our communities.