

**Citizens League** non-partisan public affairs research and education in the St. Paul-Minneapolis metropolitan area. **84 S. 6th St., Minneapolis, Mn. 55402 (612) 338-0791**

June 23, 1981

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TO: Members, Metropolitan Council

FROM: James R. Pratt, President

SUBJECT: Recommendations on I-394

We are aware that you will be voting soon on the plan that the Metropolitan Council will recommend to the Commissioner of Transportation for I-394. We strongly urge you to maintain the emphasis on ridesharing facilities reflected in the staff recommendation to you.

The Citizens League has conducted several studies of transportation problems and opportunities in the metropolitan area (see list below). We have found repeatedly that facilities and policies which facilitate ridesharing represent the most practical and least expensive strategy for long-term progress.

We concur with the staff that the corridor east of Highway 100 is likely to reflect more congestion than a standard freeway can handle, and that the diamond lanes approach for that three-mile distance is virtually worthless. The exclusive HOV lanes are essential there.

Much of the opposition to HOV lanes appears to come from those who are evaluating the new highway on the basis of its use for short trips. Freeways, when they are operating effectively for their principal purpose, are rarely useful for short trips. These neighborhood groups deserve a better solution than twisting the natural purpose of a freeway can provide.

The Council's own statements on the strategic importance of ridesharing in the Transportation Plan are among the best available policy evaluations on the subject. The discussion of "basic underlying philosophy" and the specific references to ridesharing in Policies 3 and 4 make the strongest possible case for a prominent ridesharing role in I-394. This decision, now before you, may be the first opportunity to make a major capital recommendation consistent with these policies, to prove that the policies mean what they say.

Ride-sharing-related statements

Ride-sharing and Capital Facilities for Transit, Feb. 27, 1980

Statement on Downtown People Mover in St. Paul, March 21, 1979

Needed: A Policy for Parking, Jan. 18, 1978

Transit: Redirect Priorities Toward a Smaller-Vehicle System and Shorter Trips, Jan. 21, 1974

Building Incentives for Drivers to Ride, March 21, 1973

Transit: The Key Thing to Build is Usage, Feb. 17, 1971