Where have all the vehicle registration dollars gone? 

In 2009, the Iowa County Highway Department undertook a project to improve the safety and functional design of a portion of County Highway J. The project involved the realignment of the highway from an at-grade intersection to a grade-separated bridge over County Road QH, with a road narrowing and a roundabout to be constructed at the new intersection with County Road QH. The project was estimated to cost $474,000 for just under three miles.

In 2010, the department completed work on the portion of County Road QH from 35th Street to Milton Freewater Drive, and from Milton Freewater Drive to County Road QH in Mission Township. The project cost was $350,000. The costs for the County Highway QH bridge replacement project were approximately $585,000. In total, since adoption of the Iowa County Long Range Transportation Plan, the venue for County Highway Y in Mineral County, funding was to be leveraged by the county for an improvement project on County Highway E between State Highway 39 in Mineral County and County Road V in Arena Township and phase one of County Highway G between State Highway 39 and County Road V was anticipated. The costs for these projects are estimated to be $430,000 on an annual basis.

In 2011, the project was authorized for $425,000 in dollars on County Highway QH between State Highway 39 and County Road V. The project cost was $425,000.

In 2012, the project was authorized for $350,000 in dollars on County Highway J between State Highway 39 and County Road QH. The project cost was $350,000.

The costs for the County Highway QH bridge replacement project were approximately $585,000. In total, since adoption of the Iowa County Long Range Transportation Plan, the venue for County Highway Y in Mineral County, funding was to be leveraged by the county for an improvement project on County Highway E between State Highway 39 in Mineral County and County Road V in Arena Township and phase one of County Highway G between State Highway 39 and County Road V was anticipated. The costs for these projects are estimated to be $430,000 on an annual basis.

For every dollar of vehicle registration funds that has leveraged these dollars from other cost share sources of the funding. The $350,000 dollars was redistributed to the region to be redistributed through various cost share mechanisms of the state highway fund; however, the county could also leverage these dollars to use for projects.

Cost share matching funds were available to assist with funding these projects, but the county needed a way to access these dollars. Adoptions of vehicle registration fees in the state have increased by an average of $500 million on an annual basis. This funding was available to support the Iowa County Highway department against other state highway fund programs to projects for five bridges project based upon a backing of national improving requirement for personal service.

Local registration fees and gas taxes contribute to the cost of $474,000 for just under three miles.

In 2015, the first project was undertaken for $425,000 in dollars on County Highway QH between State Highway 39 and County Road V. The project cost was $425,000.

In 2016, the department completed work on the portion of County Road QH from 35th Street to Milton Freewater Drive, and from Milton Freewater Drive to County Road QH in Mission Township. The project cost was $350,000. The costs for the County Highway QH bridge replacement project were approximately $585,000. In total, since adoption of the Iowa County Long Range Transportation Plan, the venue for County Highway Y in Mineral County, funding was to be leveraged by the county for an improvement project on County Highway E between State Highway 39 in Mineral County and County Road V in Arena Township and phase one of County Highway G between State Highway 39 and County Road V was anticipated. The costs for these projects are estimated to be $430,000 on an annual basis.

As a result, I authored Senate Bill 329, the Local Road Improvement and Road Authority Act of 2016. The bill enables local public agencies, districts, and counties to use a portion of the state highway fund to make improvements to the state highways within their territorial limits. The bill was introduced on February 16, 2016, and the Iowa Senate passed it on May 11, 2016. The bill was signed by Governor Kim Reynolds on May 25, 2016.

The bill was enacted on July 1, 2017, and its provisions were in effect from the time of its enactment. The provisions of the bill are designed to give local public agencies, districts, and counties greater flexibility and control over the use of the state highway fund to make improvements to the state highways within their territorial limits.

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