**Fiscal Facts: Local governments shift spending away from road maintenance**

One of the consequences of the tighter levy limits and relatively flat state aids to local governments in recent years appears to be less spending on local streets and roads. A survey of officials from nearly 500 cities and villages in the League of Wisconsin Municipalities report *The State of Wisconsin Cities and Villages 2017,* found many said they had shifted their spending priorities away from street maintenance to police and fire services since the start of the 2007-09 recession.

The report noted that road conditions declined statewide from 2011 to 2016, although they improved slightly from 2015 to 2016. Using state Department of Transportation ratings, the share of streets statewide ranked either “excellent” or “very good” dropped from 38.1% in 2011 to 32.3% in 2016, the last year for which the ratings are available. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the share ranked “fair” or “poor” rose from 28.1% to 31.2%.

Similarly, a 2015 survey using slightly different criteria found that 29.2% of Milwaukee County’s highways were rated “excellent” or “very good, ” compared to 42.2% that rated “good” and 28.6% “fair” or worse.

*This information is a service of the Wisconsin Policy Forum, the state’s leading resource for nonpartisan state and local government research and civic education.*