What does voting “Yes” mean?
A winning “yes” vote simply requires the legislature to leave your gas tax and registration fee dollars in the transportation fund to be used to pay for Wisconsin’s roads, public transit systems, ports, airports, rail and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Why is Wisconsin's transportation fund segregated in the first place?
Wisconsin, like most states, has a history of funding its transportation system by charging the users of the system. User fees have a couple of benefits. First, users of the system pay for the maintenance of the system, and heavy users pay more. In addition, dedicated revenue allows the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to better plan and execute complex, multi-year projects.

Almost 90 percent of Wisconsin’s state funding for transportation comes from two main user fees: the gas tax and vehicle registration fees.

User fee…tax…what’s the difference?
A user fee is payment for a specific service, while a tax funds general services as determined by the legislature through the state's budget process. The "user fee compact" holds that those who pay should benefit from those revenues. Just as hunters and anglers believe that the license fees they pay should be used to promote those activities, transportation advocates believe the fees paid by system users should be dedicated to maintaining and improving that system.

So money was transferred, what’s the big deal?
“The change in revenue mix [shift to borrowing for transportation] coincided with the use of transportation fund revenues to help balance the general fund budget… In every year from 2002 to 2011, lawmakers transferred money from the transportation fund to the general fund – a 10 year total of more than $1.4 billion.” Wisconsin Tax Payers Alliance

www.VoteYesforTransportation.com
Paid for by Vote Yes for Transportation, Craig Thompson, Treasurer.
Is this truly a bipartisan issue?
In order for a proposed constitutional amendment to be put before voters on a ballot, the state legislature must pass a joint resolution with the proposed constitutional language in two consecutive legislative sessions. In the case of this proposed amendment, the item passed both times by an overwhelming margin and with bipartisan support.

The Votes
First and Second Consideration of the Proposed Constitutional Amendment

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<td>Assembly</td>
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<td>2nd Consideration - 2013</td>
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Should budget or monetary items be included in the constitution?
The Wisconsin Constitution is a combination of high ideals as presented in Article I, the Declaration of Rights, and the basic structure of our government. It also includes many financial and administrative provisions ranging from the rule of taxation, to the use of debt, to the authorization of gambling, to the bidding procedure for state stationary.

The majority of states have constitutional language limiting the uses of transportation revenue to transportation purposes.
Why does it take a constitutional amendment?
Wisconsin has statutory language restricting the use of gas tax and registration fees to transportation purposes. This did not stop the practice of using transportation fund revenues for other purposes. Unfortunately, anything passed by the legislature and signed by the governor can be undone with legislation now or in the future. This is why most states, including our neighbors Minnesota, Iowa, Michigan and Ohio, have some constitutional language directing the use of transportation user fees for transportation purposes.

Why does the constitutional amendment not protect all segregated funds?
No single constitutional amendment can address all the segregated funds because constitutional language must be very precise to be enforceable. For this reason, only constitutional language that spells out directly where the money comes from and what it can be used for will be successful.

The transportation fund is the state’s largest segregated account, and therefore, it has been a target for transfers. Amending the state constitution to safeguard it can serve as the example for protecting all segregated funds.

Will protecting the transportation fund only benefit roads?
No. Wisconsin’s segregated transportation fund is the primary source of state funding for the entire transportation system - roads, air, rail, transit, harbors, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. When money is diverted from the transportation fund, it hurts all of these modes of transportation.

What did the Transportation Commission have to say about this constitutional amendment?
In early 2013, the Wisconsin Commission on Transportation Finance and Policy gave unanimous approval to its final report on the needs of Wisconsin’s transportation system over the next decade. Included in the recommendations was support for the proposed state constitutional amendment to protect the integrity of the Wisconsin Transportation Fund.

The Wisconsin Commission on Transportation Finance and Policy was created in the 2011-2013 biennial state budget to examine issues related to the future of transportation finance in Wisconsin.

What about the use of general fund revenues for transportation?
The general fund is comprised of general purpose revenues (GPR). The governor and the legislature have the prerogative to determine how GPR is spent every two years when the state budget is enacted.

The benefits of transportation go well beyond just the users of the system, benefitting the health and welfare of all residents. Accordingly, most states supplement user fee revenues in some way with general fund revenues.