RESOLUTION 2026-109

A RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING OCTOBER 1-8, 2026 AS WEEK WITHOUT DRIVING WITHIN THE VILLAGE OF DEFOREST

WHEREAS, *Week Without Driving* is a national challenge to increase awareness and understanding of non-drivers and the barriers they face in our communities, which certain Dane County communities, organizations, local champions, and policymaking bodies have recognized annually since 2024; and

WHEREAS, access to mobility is fundamental to thriving health, safety, economic opportunity, and community connection, enabling residents of the Village of DeForest to reach essential needs including education, employment, medical care, food, recreation, faith communities, and social networks; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 30 percent of Wisconsinites and 30-40 percent of Dane County residents of all ages are non-drivers, including aging adults, youth, students, low-income individuals, people with physical, mental or intellectual/developmental disabilities, and those who choose not to drive; and

WHEREAS, transportation is the second-largest household expense for most families and the American Automobile Association estimates that the average cost of owning and operating a vehicle exceeds $12,000 per year, placing a particular financial strain on low- and moderate-income households; and

WHEREAS, transportation costs are directly tied to housing and land use decisions, and communities that lack affordable housing near jobs, schools, healthcare, and essential services often require residents to travel farther and rely more heavily on costly car ownership; and

WHEREAS, nearly one-third of people in the United States do not have a driver's license due to age, disability, income, immigration status, health conditions, or other barriers, and many others face temporary or permanent circumstances that prevent them from driving; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 20,653 households in Dane County do not have access to a vehicle; and

WHEREAS, not all neighborhoods in the Village of DeForest have safe sidewalks, accessible curb ramps, protected bike infrastructure, reliable public transit, or land use patterns that allow daily needs to be met within a reasonable non-driving distance; and

WHEREAS, transportation is a leading source of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States, and is responsible for an estimated 29% of greenhouse gas emissions in the U.S. and Dane County; and

WHEREAS, communities designed with multiple transportation options support local businesses and economic development, reduce traffic injuries and fatalities, benefit public health, promote a cleaner environment, and create vibrant, connected neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the Village of DeForest has plans and policies contained in its Comprehensive Plan that support a multimodal transportation system that works for all, yet we have more work to do to achieve this vision; and

WHEREAS, experiencing a week without driving offers residents and leaders an opportunity to better understand the barriers faced by nondrivers in our community, and to identify practical ways we can improve our transportation system to better meet the needs of all residents and visitors;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Village of DeForest recognizes October 1–8, 2026 as Week Without Driving, and encourages residents, community organizations, businesses, and public officials to participate, reflect, and work toward a future where everyone—regardless of age, ability, or income—has safe, affordable, and sustainable transportation options.

Adopted this 15th day of September, 2026.

Colleen Little

Colleen M. Little, Village President

Attest: Callista Lundgren

Callista Lundgren, Village Clerk

Village Board Summary and Recommendation Sheet

Meeting Date: September 15, 2026
Item: A resolution proclaiming October 1-8 as Week Without Driving within the Village of DeForest.
Author: Alex Allon, Community Development Director

Summary of Issue
Week Without Driving is a nationwide challenge that invites everyone – and especially people who make transportation decisions – to go a week, a day, or a single trip without driving. The goal is to better understand the transportation system from the perspective of people who don't drive, including older adults, youth, people with disabilities, people who can't afford the costs of owning and driving a vehicle, and people who choose not to drive.

The Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has led local Week Without Driving efforts since 2024, bringing together communities, elected officials, transportation partners, and other local champions to participate and better understand what it's like to get around without driving. According to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, 30-40% of Dane County residents are non-drivers, underscoring the importance of planning a transportation system that works for everyone. Week Without Driving also aligns closely with the goals of the MPO's RoundTrip Greater Madison program, which supports car-free and shared transportation options.

Trustees are also invited to take the Week Without Driving Challenge, share their experience, and help spread the word during the week, and participate in local Week Without Driving events. More information is available on the MPO's 2026 Week Without Driving webpage: www.greatermadisonmpo.org/WeekWithoutDriving.

Requested Village Board Focus: Action.

Recommendation
Staff recommends that the Village Board approve the Resolution.