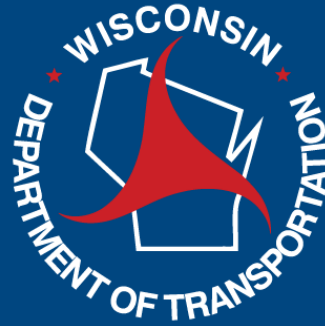




Local Small Structure Improvement Program (LSSIP) & Agricultural Roads Improvement Program (ARIP) Updates

Josh Dietsche – Bureau of Structures (BOS) Director
Merrill Mechler-Hickson, LP&F Section Chief

-
April 2026 WTA Spring Road School



Local Small Structures Program

Josh Dietsche

Director – WisDOT Bureau of Structures

April 28, 2026

What is a bridge?



What is a bridge? – A Definition

- The definition of a bridge is found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)
 - CFR 650.305

A structure including supports erected over a depression or an obstruction, such as water, highway, or railway, and having a track or passageway for carrying traffic or other moving loads, and having an opening

measured along the center of the roadway of more than 20 feet

between under copings of abutments or spring lines of arches, or extreme ends of openings for multiple boxes; it includes multiple pipes, where the clear distance between openings is less than half of the smaller contiguous opening.



A Bridge is Not Defined by Looks

- Bridges and “not bridges” can look and act very similar



NOT A BRIDGE



BRIDGE



Why Does this matter?



Bridges (structures > 20 ft)

- Required to document inventory information
- Required to inspect on a regular cycle
- Required to load rate and post (as necessary)
- Eligible for the Local Bridge Program (funding)

Structures < 20 ft

- No inventory requirements
- No inspection requirements
- No load rating or posting requirements
- NOT Eligible for the Local Bridge Program



Small Structures Big Consequences

- Small structures can still present issues...



- ...and require funding to repair or replace.



Wisconsin 2023 – 25 State Budget

- Budget Language
 - *Provides \$12,500,000 SEG to JCF's supplemental appropriation in FY24 for assessment of local bridges and culverts and create a biennial DOT SEG appropriation that could receive the funds. Directs the Department to develop a program for counties to assess local bridges and culverts that are less than 20 feet, but greater than six feet in length.*
- State Statute 85.64
 - *The department shall administer a program for counties to inventory and assess the condition of local bridges and culverts that are 20 feet or less in length but greater than 6 feet in length.*



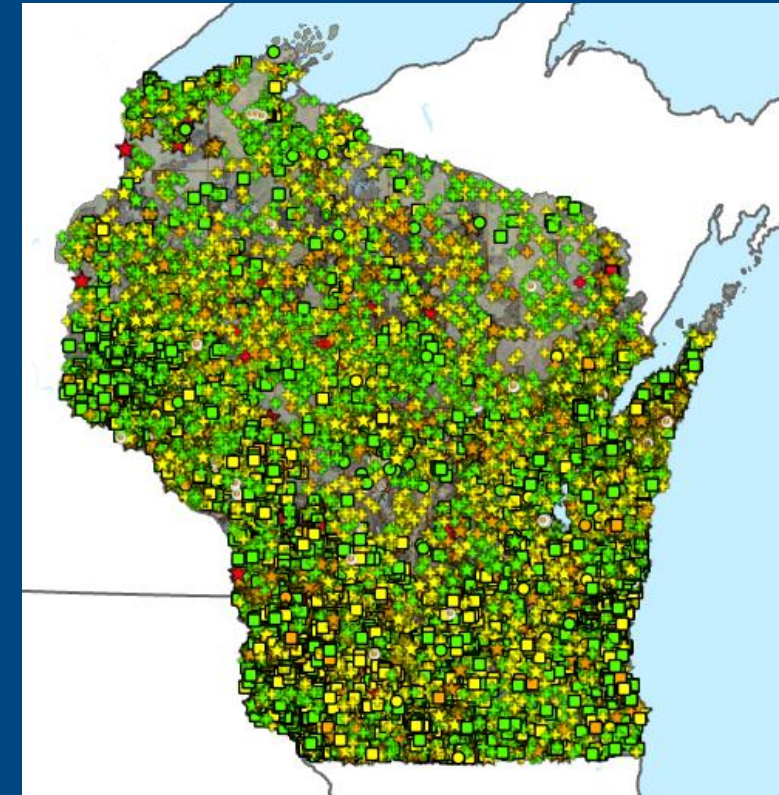
Wisconsin Stakeholder Partnerships

- Collaborative effort to develop a program
 - Wisconsin DOT
 - Wisconsin Towns Association
 - League of Wisconsin Municipalities
 - Wisconsin Counties Association
 - Wisconsin County Highway Association



Current Status

- 16,781 structures in HSIS
- For reference:
 - About 14,000 total bridges in the state
 - About 9,000 local bridges in the state



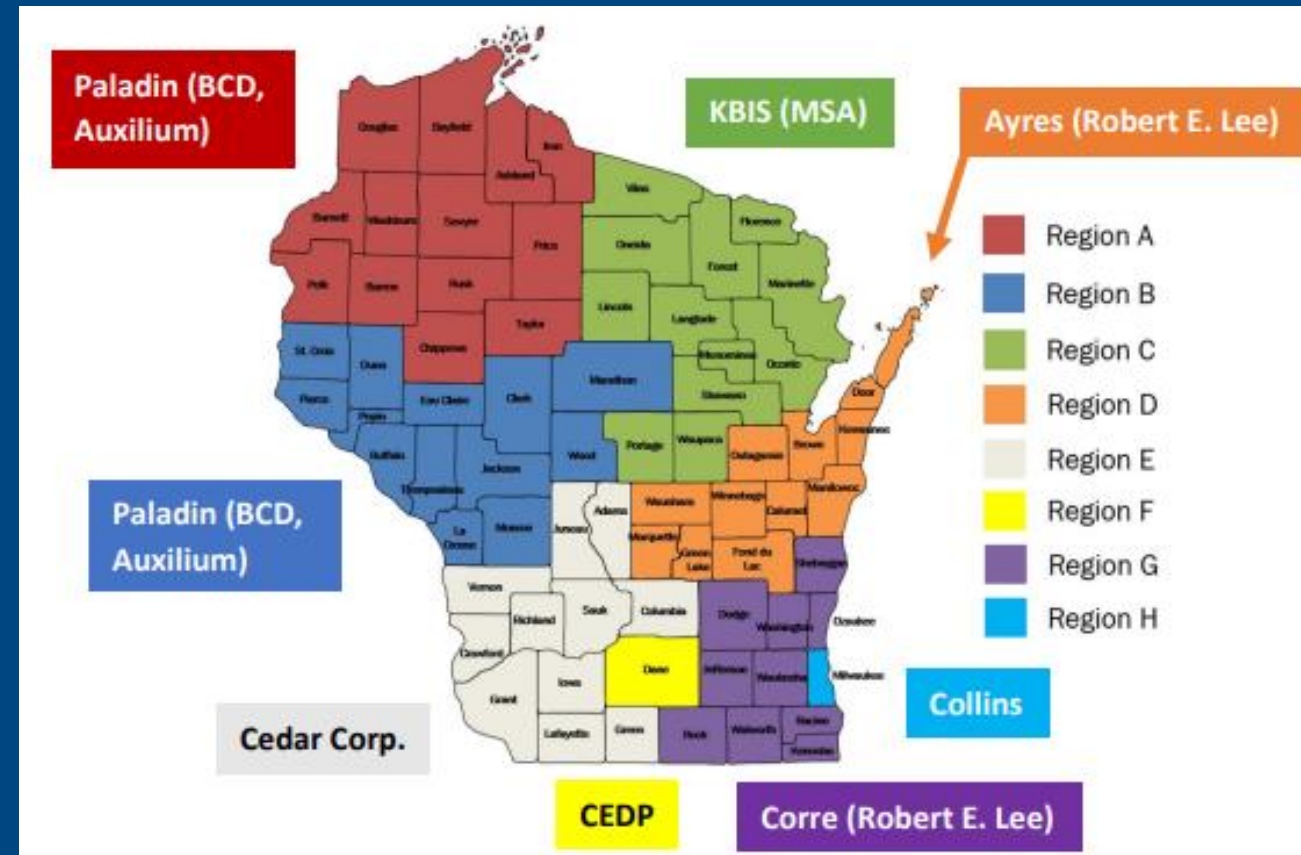
Current Status Part 2

- Inspections performed by Wisconsin certified bridge inspectors
- Based on National Bridge Inspection (NBI) rating scale (0 – 9)
 - 0 – 2: Severe condition
 - 3 – 4: Poor condition
 - 5 – 6: Fair condition
 - 7 – 9: Good condition



Current Status Part 3

- Counties were responsible for inspecting county system
 - Either with county staff or hiring a consultant of their choice
- Consultant contracts for city, town, and village inspections



Current Status - Inspections

- Structure Condition

- 49.9% good condition
- 40.3% fair condition
- 9.2% poor condition (~1500 structures)
 - Likely need some kind of action in the next 5-10 years (structure dependent)
- 0.6% severe condition (~100 structures)
 - Need attention now

} ~90% Good or Fair

- Severe condition...





Mar 03, 2025 02:54 PM



Very possible that local owner assumes this is a bridge and getting inspected...

03, 2025 03:05 PM









Apr 14, 2025 10:49 AM



Apr 14, 2025 10:56 AM



Apr 14, 2025 10:57 AM

What we need from you

- WisDOT is facilitating this effort, but these are local structures
 - Safety first – please take action as needed
 - Inspector of record can be a resource to answer questions



Questions

- I'm missing a structure – what happened?
 - Inspection determined structure was ineligible – too short.
 - Must be greater than 6ft.



Questions Part 2

- I'm missing a structure – what happened?
 - Inspection determined structure was ineligible – too long.
 - Must be 20ft or less.
 - “Found” about 150 new bridges.
 - Assigned a bridge number, treated as a bridge



Questions Part 3

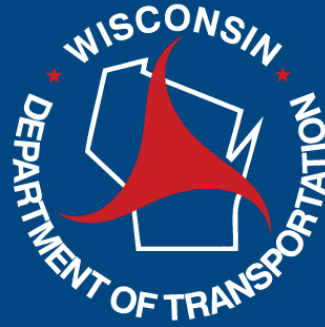
- I'm missing a structure – what happened?
 - Inspection determined structure was ineligible – not on a local road.
 - Private road, driveway
 - Part of a storm sewer system
 - Incorrect information entered
 - Incorrect owner
 - Incorrect road, location

Questions Part 4

- Can structures still be entered in the inventory?
 - Yes.
 - Past the point where funding is available for the effort, but can accept new information at any point.

Thank you!

- HUGE effort
 - 16,000+ structures
 - Find and inspect
 - Relatively short timeframe
- Wouldn't have accomplished without willing local partners.



Local Small Structure Improvement Program (LSSIP) 2026-2027 Program Cycle

Merrill Mechler-Hickson
LP&F Section Chief

Local Small Structure Improvement Program (LSSIP) – General Overview

LSSIP is a one-time appropriation authorized as a set-aside of up to \$30 million from the Agricultural Roads Improvement Program in the 2025-2027 Wisconsin Biennial Budget (Act 15).

- This program (identified in WI State Statute 85.64) aims to inspect, repair or replace deteriorated culverts/small structures.



Projects will be funded at up to a 90% state cost share



Local Small Structure Improvement Program (LSSIP) – Definition

Small Structures are structures underneath the roadway that are 20 feet or less in span but greater than 6 feet in span.



LSSIP Application Intake

- Method for application submission: **AccessGov**
 - Same method previously used for the rollout of the 2024-2025 Agricultural Roads Improvement Program (ARIP)
 - Application submissions opened on February 3, 2026
 - **Due date: 5pm, May 1, 2026**



The screenshot shows the top of a web page with a blue header. On the left, there is a menu icon and the text 'WISCONSIN .gov / ACCESSGOV'. On the right, there is a search icon. Below the header, the main content area is white. It features a bold heading: 'Local Small Structure Improvement Program (LSSIP)'. Below the heading, there is a paragraph: 'Welcome to the Local Small Structure Improvement Program (LSSIP) Application page. Please read the information below carefully before proceeding with the application.' Another paragraph follows: 'LSSIP is a one-time appropriation authorized as part of the 2025-2027 Wisconsin Biennial Budget (Act 15). This program aims to repair or replace deteriorated culvert crossings. Projects will be funded at up to a 90% state cost share.'



LSSIP Application Intake Part 2

Structure Rating	Designation	Applications per Municipality
0-2	Severe	Unlimited applications for structures designated as "Severe"
3-4	Poor	2 applications per municipality for structures designated as "Poor"
5-6	Fair	INELIGIBLE
7-9	Good	INELIGIBLE

- Applicants are able submit multiple structures in a single application if these structures serve the same drainage function and are less than 20 feet apart. If an application includes structures of different ratings, the rating referenced for scoring will be determined by the lowest rated involved structure.



LSSIP Project Eligibility

Eligible structures underneath the roadway must:

- Be 20 feet or less in span but greater than 6 feet in span.
- Have a structural condition rating of 4 (poor) or lower, as determined by a certified bridge inspector.
- Be owned by a local unit of government (e.g. Towns, Cities, Villages, Counties)
- Be designed with a minimum projected design life of 10 years.

Structures are considered ineligible if they are part of a storm sewer system.

Further details on project eligibility are available on the WisDOT LSSIP webpage and guidelines.



LSSIP Timeline

Culvert inspection
inventory completed
in CY2025

LSSIP application
materials released
February 3, 2026

LSSIP application
materials are due
5:00 PM
May 1, 2026

WisDOT anticipates
finalizing project
selections in June
2026

WisDOT Secretary
and Governor
anticipated LSSIP
Project Award
Announcements



December 2025

February 3, 2026

May 1, 2026

June 2026

July 2026

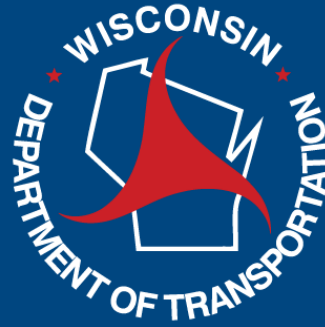


Post-Application Period

LSSIP Application Deadline: 5:00 PM on May 1, 2026

- Application review and selection:
 - May-June 2026
- Anticipated LSSIP award announcements:
 - July 2026
- The department will reach out to sponsors selected for award for additional information about the proposed work on the structure and the cost estimate prior to issuing a State Municipal Agreement (SMA)





Agricultural Roads Improvement Program (ARIP) Updates



ARIP General Overview

The Agricultural Roads Improvement Program (ARIP) was established as a one-time \$150 million SEG-funded grant appropriation in the 2023-2025 biennium.

- Purpose: provide state funding to assist local governments in improving deteriorating Class B and load posted roads that restrict the ability of producers to transport full loads of agricultural goods and forest products.
- ARIP was continued in the 2025-2027 biennial budget (\$120 million in new ARIP programmatic funding, with \$30 million reserved for the new LSSIP program).
- ARIP projects may be funded at up to a 90% state cost share.



ARIP Round 1 Results

- In the Round 1 project solicitation, 122 eligible applications were received requesting \$224 million in ARIP funding, representing nearly \$250 million in total project costs.
- 29 projects were awarded across 28 counties for nearly \$50 million in ARIP funding



Agricultural Roads Improvement Program (ARIP) - 2026 Awards

WisDOT Region

- NC
- NE
- NW
- SE
- SW

Town Application

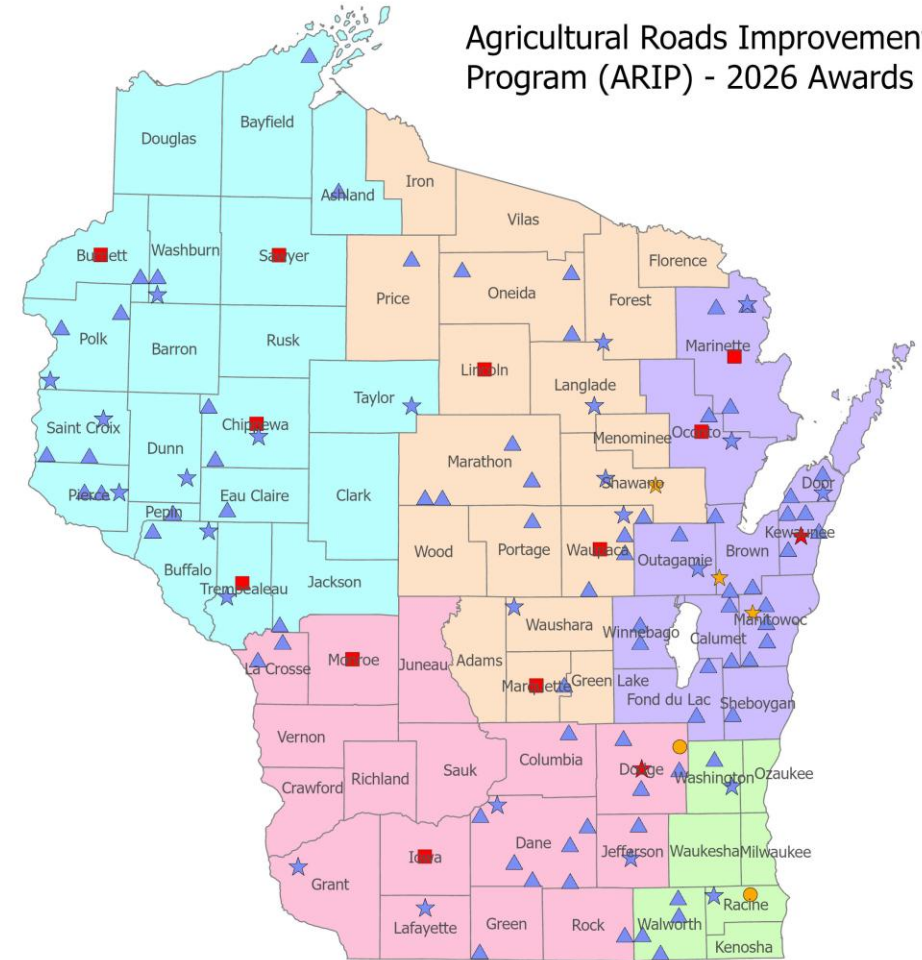
- ▲ Application
- ★ Awarded

City or Village Application

- Application
- ★ Awarded

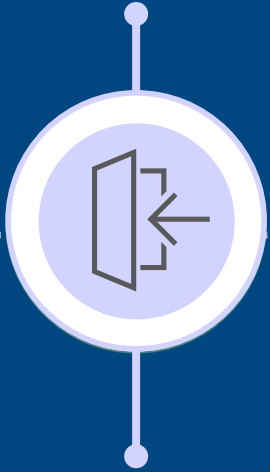
County Application

- Application
- ★ Awarded



Round 2 Timeline – \$70 Million

**Project Solicitation
Opens**



**Tentatively
April 29, 2026**

**Application
Deadline**



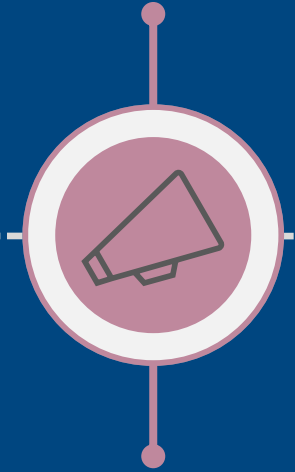
June 29, 2026

**Committee
Reviews**



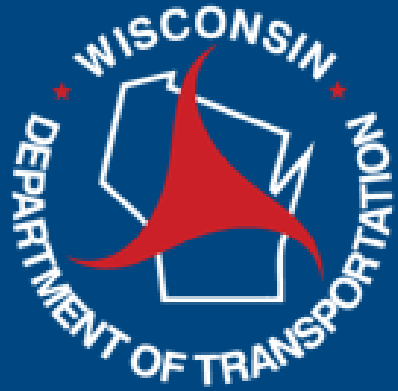
July-September

**Anticipated Award
Announcements**



October-November





Questions?

