

Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP)

Statutory Authority: [§ 86.31](#)

Admin. Rule: [Trans 206](#)

Objective: The Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP) was established in 1991 to assist local units of government in improving seriously deteriorating county highways, municipal streets in cities and villages, and town roads. Throughout Wisconsin, there are over 102,000 miles of local roads. LRIP serves as a significant source of funding for local governments to make needed, long-lasting improvements to their local roads.

The program provides funds to local governments for road improvements that may not be eligible for any other road improvement funding or cannot successfully compete for other state or federal funds. As a reimbursement program, LRIP leverages matching state and local dollars to fund high priority county highway, municipal street, and town road projects. The continuing demand for program funds demonstrates the ongoing, significant needs on the local road system. It also demonstrates the ability of local communities to leverage program funding to complete larger improvements. The popularity of the program among local governments and the positive feedback it consistently receives are major indicators of its continuing success.

Eligibility: All local governments are eligible to participate in LRIP. Participation in the various components of the program is based on local government type.

Entitlement fund distribution is managed by Wisconsin County Highway Commissioners, determined by committees made up of representatives from cities and villages for municipal street projects and by representatives of towns for town road projects via the components of LRIP. County entitlement awards are determined by a committee comprised of County Highway Commissioners located within their WisDOT region.

The program has three entitlement components that provide funding for road improvements. Counties are eligible for funding through the County Highway Improvement (CHI) program, towns through the Town Road Improvement (TRI) program, and cities and villages through the Municipal Street Improvement (MSI) program. MSI consists of two components: cities and villages with populations less than 20,000 (MSILT) and cities and villages with populations equal to or greater than 20,000 (MSIGT).

In addition to entitlements, there are three discretionary components for counties (CHID), cities and villages (MSID), and towns (TRID) to request funding for high-cost projects. Discretionary projects have additional eligibility requirements, are competitively reviewed and prioritized by committee, and are approved by the WisDOT Secretary based on defined criteria and with a goal of fair geographic distribution in mind.

- All proposed improvements must comply with applicable federal, state and local laws, and program policy. The project roadway width must meet the minimum design standards and include both the traveled way and shoulder.

- LRIP funding is only available for improvements on existing county highways, city and village streets, and town roads under the authority of the local unit of government.
- A project is not eligible for LRIP funds if any other federal or state aid funds will be used on the project. However, the local match can be provided by a federally recognized American Indian tribe or band using tribal funds.
- The approved LRIP reimbursement amount cannot exceed 50% of the total eligible project costs.
- The proposed project must be included as part of the county or municipality road Improvement Plan (minimum of two years for towns and a minimum of five years for counties, cities and villages).
- An engineering certification is required when the total eligible costs are greater than \$65,000.
- All LRIP projects must have a ten-year design life. As a result, the same project location cannot be submitted more than once within a ten-year period.
- Paved roads with PASER pavement ratings of 1-6, or gravel roads with ratings 1-3, are considered “seriously deteriorating” and are eligible for LRIP funding. Paved roads with ratings 7-10, or gravel roads with ratings of 4-5 are considered “good” and are not eligible. Improvements to gravel roads with ratings of 4-5 that will be paved with asphalt or concrete are eligible for LRIP funding. WisDOT will not approve removing an existing asphalt road and replacing it with gravel.
- Improvements must be built to appropriate standards, unless an Exception to Standards has been requested and approved by WisDOT prior to construction.
- If new bicycle and pedestrian facilities are included as part of a reconstruction project, the project recipient is required to have a resolution authorizing the construction of these facilities. A resolution is not required if removing or replacing existing facilities.
- WisDOT signs and emails an executed State Municipal Project Agreement (SMA) for each approved LRIP project to the project recipient, the clerk and the CHC. The project recipient must receive an SMA prior to advertising for the project.
- LRIP projects must be advertised for bids for two consecutive weeks in a newspaper.
- LRIP projects must be let to contract to the lowest, responsible bidder. Towns, cities and villages may not use their own workforces or equipment on an LRIP project.

Description: LRIP is a reimbursement program which may pay up to a maximum of 50% of total eligible project costs, with the balance of the remaining costs funded by the local unit of government. All projects are advertised, awarded, managed and contractors paid in full by the project recipient prior to submittal of the reimbursement request to WisDOT.

The program consists of three general components: one for towns (TRI), one for cities and villages (MSI), and one for counties (CHI). The entitlement component for MSI is further divided by size, one for communities with a population of 20,000 or more and another for communities with a population less than 20,000. Within the three general components, there are entitlement funds and discretionary funds.

Decisions affecting the program occur at the local and state levels. Project selection, competitive bidding (which is required) and project administration are handled at the local level. At the state level, WisDOT approves project applications, initiates and signs state/municipal agreements and approves reimbursement requests. The WisDOT Secretary recommends discretionary projects for the Governor’s approval based on recommendations by the discretionary committees.