

Local Bridge Improvement Assistance Program Funding Policy

Horizontal Alignment

- Project design remains on existing alignment.
- If horizontal realignment of bridge is intended, the realignment cost difference is a local cost share¹
- During preliminary design, if a scope change is needed, submit Change Management request.

Vertical Alignment

- Start project scope with 50-foot approach lengths in each direction¹
- If an increase in vertical profile is needed, match to existing bridge design speed as closely as possible. Approach lengths in excess of 50-feet on each side of the structure (100-feet total) must be identified in the project application and the cost estimate must reflect the longer approach lengths. Bridge approach lengths up to 300-feet can be approved at the application stage. Bridge approach lengths beyond 300-feet should be identified as non-participating costs in the project application.
- During preliminary design, if the vertical profile requires changes that vary from the original scope, submit Change Management. Sound engineering justification will be necessary to obtain additional funding due to approach lengths longer than what is indicated in the project application.
- If the combined approach lengths are more than 300-feet, submit a Bridge Approach Length Justification Report to Bureau of Project Development (BPD) for approval and Change Management request if additional funding is requested.²

Cross Section

- Cross section width should match existing facility width, applicable TRANS code, or FDM lower minimum design criteria, whichever is larger¹
- If the existing structure is wider than the lower minimum design criteria required, the structure may be replaced at the current width or to a width between minimum and existing.
- Designing to below lower minimum design criteria requires an approved Design Justification (DJ).
- During preliminary design, if the cross section needs to be changed, submit Change Management request.

If the sponsor chooses to build a project outside of Local Bridge Funding Policy design criteria, they do so with an increased local cost share and the designer would need to process the Modernization Design Study Report found in [FDM 11-4 Attachment 10.1](#).

NOTES:

¹ Please note that Local Bridge Funding Policy is a starting point for project scoping and estimating. At the program cycle application stage, if an exception to the project funding policy is required for engineering reasons, a request to approve the exception should be requested so that the funding is included in the original estimate. If the project design changes based on engineering principles (i.e., hydraulics, crash data, etc.) a Change Management Request for additional funding can be submitted to the Bureau of Transit, Local Roads, Railroads and Harbors (BTLRRH).

² Approval of the Bridge Length Justification Report (BLJR) approves the engineering changes to the approaches but does not approve additional project funding. Change Management is required to secure additional funding to the project. The Local Bridge Improvement Assistance Program (s84.18(2)(e)) limits eligible funding to the structure and minimum approaches, which are here defined as the shortest lengths necessary to make the bridge serviceable. As a result, an approved BLJR could increase the local cost share.

Process for Determining Bridge Approach Length Eligible for Federal Funding Work

It is the WisDOT's objective to minimize approach lengths on structures being replaced or rehabilitated in the Local Bridge Program. The approach lengths should be the minimum to render the bridge serviceable, i.e. the minimum to reach attainable touchdown points using current bridge design standards. The following describes the process for determining bridge approach lengths.

If long approaches are anticipated (beyond 100-feet or 50-feet on each side), this must be identified at project application and prior to the approval of the project in the Local Bridge Program. We must ensure the use of good design practice to determine the appropriate attainable touchdown point. Long approaches to correct major safety deficient geometrics must be reviewed and approved by **WisDOT** for the project to be able to expend federal funds.

A new process will be used to obtain approval for bridge approach lengths. This process separates bridge projects into four categories: desirable, short, and long approaches. The fourth category of bridges are for approach lengths greater than 600 feet – these will now be funded by the Local Sponsor unless some other Federal/State funding source is available to fund the additional approach lengths, or WisDOT approves additional funding through a Change Management (CM) request for the additional funds necessary for the cost over 600 feet.

Approach lengths up to 300-feet, or 150-feet on each side of the structure, can be approved at the project application stage. Sufficient justification must accompany the request and the cost estimate must include the entire proposed approach length. Bridge approach lengths beyond 300-feet should be identified as non-participating costs in the project application. Applications with approach lengths greater than 300-feet will require an Approach Length Justification Report to be approved prior to Design Study Report. Sound engineering judgement must be employed to justify long (300 feet or greater) approaches.

Bridge Replacement Desirable and Short Approaches - Total Approach Lengths are Less than 300 feet

The following will apply if it is determined at project scoping that approach lengths of less than 300 feet are expected:

- An approach length justification is not required for total approach lengths up to 100-feet.
- Justification must be provided at application for total approach lengths greater than 100-feet.
- Documentation shall be included in the Design Study Report (DSR).

Bridge Replacement Long Approaches - Total Approach Lengths are Between 300 and 600 feet

The following will apply if it is determined at project scoping that total approach lengths between 300 and 600 feet are expected:

- Bridge approach lengths beyond 300-feet should be identified as non-participating costs in the project application.
- An Approach Length Justification Report is required. The approach cost justification shall be submitted to the LPPM and approved by the WisDOT Regional Chief. If the justification shows that the approach length is warranted and the WisDOT BPD Design Chief approves, the Local Program Project Manager (LPPM) will approve the extended approach length.
- The justification and approvals shall be documented in the DSR.

Bridge Replacement Long Approaches - Total Approach Lengths Greater than 600 feet

The following will apply if it is determined at project scoping that approach lengths greater than 600 feet are expected:

- Concurrence from the WisDOT BPD Design Chief is necessary before the project can be approved in the Local Bridge Program.
- An approach cost justification must be created, recommended for approval by the LPPM, and then approved by the WisDOT Regional Chief.
- The justification and approvals shall be documented in the DSR.

The table below summarizes when concurrence or justification is needed depending upon the approach lengths.

Cumulative Approach Length	Needs Preliminary Concurrence from WisDOT Regional Chief	Needs WisDOT approval of approach cost justification by WisDOT BPD Design Chief	* Local Sponsor will have to pay 100% of the Costs for Approaches beyond this length.
100 feet or less (Desirable)	No	No	No
Over 100-feet but less than 300-feet (Short)	No	No	Justification required at application
Between 300-feet and 600-feet (Long)	Yes	Yes	Will be determined through the Approach Justification Report
* Greater than 600 feet (100% funded by the Local Sponsor)	Yes	Yes	Yes

** Unless other type of Federal/State funding is available or approved for the approach costs over this length, or WisDOT approves additional funding through a Change Management (CM) request for the additional funds necessary for the cost over what was approved at application.*