

2016 WLIP Report

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OVERVIEW

The Wisconsin Land Information Program (WLIP), administered by the Division of Intergovernmental Relations within the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA), provides public funding to Wisconsin counties for the modernization of local land records. This funding takes the form of register of deeds real estate document recording fees retained at the county level and grants awarded by DOA.

This annual report discusses the year in review for WLIP program activities and how WLIP funding was invested in county geospatial technology and infrastructure in 2015.

WLIP YEAR IN REVIEW

WLIP PROGRAM PLAN: 2016-2021

In August, the final *WLIP Program Plan: 2016-2021* was released, after a six-month process that included three public drafts, over 80 pages of written comments from stakeholder organizations, and five meetings of the Wisconsin Land Information Council. The plan is designed to provide a framework for future program planning and implementation activities. It lays out two main **strategic goals for the program**: 1) Administering county grants/instituting standards; and 2) Continuing progress on the Statewide Parcel Map Initiative.

Highlights include:

- Strategic Initiative grant funding will continue to be allocated equally among all 72 counties for 2018-2021.
- In 2018, counties will be eligible for Strategic Initiative grant funding to complete Benchmark Set I – Parcels.
- Beginning in 2018, each county will be eligible for Strategic Initiative grant funding to work on the new Benchmark Set II – Open Data.
- Beginning in 2018, after achieving Benchmark Set I and Set II, counties can choose from a menu of Benchmark Set III options that include PLSS, aerial imagery, lidar, and additional layers to be determined with community input.
- DOA will continue to carry out the duties of the department under s. 16.967(3), including administering county grants, instituting standards, and statewide projects, primarily the Statewide Parcel Map Initiative.
- DOA will work with counties to facilitate open data, enabling greater access to county GIS data, partially through a “WLIP Portal,” which could be an intermediary step in advance of a more comprehensive solution to the land information community’s data access needs.
- The community will have the opportunity to help develop benchmarks for future grant cycles.

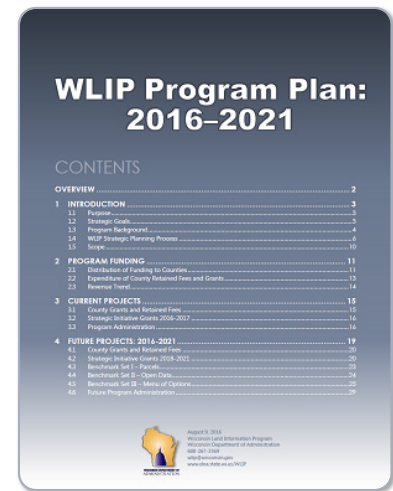
Planning does not stop with this document. DOA will look to continue to collaborate with the WLIC and land information stakeholders on further planning and implementation tasks.

2017 GRANT APPLICATION RELEASE

The 2017 WLIP Grant Application was made available on August 31, offering Base Budget, Training & Education, and Strategic Initiative grants totaling \$6.4 million. As with the 2016 application, each county is eligible to receive a \$50k Strategic Initiative grant. Strategic Initiative grants are prioritized to meet standards known as **“benchmarks” for parcel dataset improvement**. Every county is also eligible for a \$1k Training & Education grant, and the 52 counties that retained less than \$100k in recording fees during the previous state fiscal year are eligible for Base Budget grants.

UPDATE OF COUNTY LAND INFORMATION PLANS

By early 2016, all counties had updated their land information plans, which can be found posted on the WLIP webpage. By statute, counties must spend their WLIP grants and retained fees consistent with their county land information plan, which is typically prepared by the county land information officer (LIO). Requirements included approval by the county land information council and adherence to the instructions created by DOA in collaboration with LIOs called the *2015 Uniform Instructions for Land Information Plans*. Note that plans can be amended by counties as needed, and are required by s. 16.967(3)(e) to be updated every three years.



V2 STATEWIDE PARCEL MAP DATABASE PROJECT – STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

The V2 Statewide Parcel Map Database Project (V2) is part of the larger Statewide Digital Parcel Map Initiative, a multi-year, DOA initiative that resulted from Act 20, the state’s 2013-15 biennial budget. The Parcel Initiative is important for improving the quality of Wisconsin’s real estate information, economic development, emergency planning and response, and other citizen services. Like V1, the V2 Project was a collaboration between DOA and the State Cartographer’s Office (SCO).

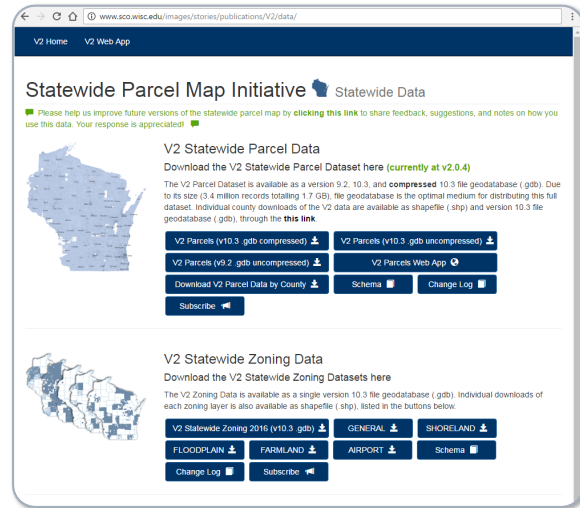
In the V2 request for county parcel data, DOA asked for the first time that counties submit data according **the Searchable Format**, a set of standards for parcel data that followed from the directives in Act 20. In the Searchable Format, county data submittal is ready for immediate aggregation into the statewide parcel layer. The Searchable Format was developed during 2015, piloted with a test group, and finalized in the *V2 Submission Documentation* on January 26, 2016. To assist in data formatting and standardization, SCO created a number of geoprocessing tools, and the V1 and V2 Projects have made it a point to provide feedback designed to aid counties in achieving the Searchable Format, which they must do no later than March 31, 2018.

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V2 OBSERVATION REPORTS

With an eye toward **accountability** and in an effort to check county progress on benchmark achievement, each annual iteration of the statewide parcel map has included assessment metrics and reports. In response to the data submitted for the V2 Project, each county received an individual observation report on its parcel dataset called the *V2 Observation Report*. The reports document progress in meeting the Searchable Format and describe steps still necessary to meet the standard. This is intended to help counties design WLIP grant projects to ensure that they meet the Searchable Format standard. On a statewide level, overall, the reports indicated that progress has been made, but there is work yet to do in order to achieve the Searchable Format statewide by 2018.

V2 STATEWIDE PARCEL LAYER RELEASE



On August 31, 2016, the V2 database was released—the third version of the state’s publically available statewide digital parcel map. It is available for download in several formats from the **V2 data download** webpage and can also be viewed with the **V2 web application**, which provides the community with a web-based mapping interface for browsing the statewide parcel layer.

The V2 Project was another phase in the incremental approach towards the Parcel Initiative—improving the statewide parcel map with each annual iteration. The final V2 layer represents parcel coverage of 98.5% of the possible square mileage of the state. Only eight counties have yet to complete digital parcel mapping. The V2 Project is documented in detail in the *V2 Final Report*. Noteworthy is the fact that for the V1 Project, DOA and SCO were awarded an ESRI Special Achievement in GIS Award at Esri’s annual conference in 2016.

FEDERAL FUNDING FOR LIDAR

The Geographic Information Officer, Jim Giglierano, helped coordinate successful 2016 grant applications for lidar through the federal USGS 3DEP Program. Counties participating in the 2016 application included Bayfield, Buffalo, Forest, Portage, Taylor, Washburn, and Winnebago. This totals \$703,988 of federal funding netted for lidar through 2016 applications coordinated by the GIO. Hoping to repeat the success of 2016, 3DEP applications were also coordinated on behalf of counties for 2017 grants as well.

WISCONSIN LAND INFORMATION COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

The Wisconsin Land Information Council (WLIC) serves in an advisory role to DOA on matters relating to the WLIP. In 2016, the WLIC was active in advising DOA on the development of the *WLIP Program Plan 2016-2021*. They met six times at sites like Wisconsin Land Information Association (WLIA) conferences and DOA, providing an effective channel for stakeholder organizations to voice their opinions on matters relating to land information records modernization.

FUNDING

Counties collected retained fees and received grants that combined total \$10.3 million for 2015. This number is expected to increase to about \$13.6 million for 2016, because for the first time, DOA awarded \$3.6 million in 2016 Strategic Initiative grants to carry out the directives from Act 20 of 2013.

Since the Program's earliest days, from 1990 through July 1, 2016, Wisconsin counties have retained a total of \$175 million for land information activities and received a total of \$43 million in land information grants.

In order to retain fees for land information and be eligible for WLIP grants, county land information offices must meet several requirements for accountability and transparency.

Requirements for Counties to Retain Fees and Receive WLIP Grants

- Update the county's land information plan at least every three years
- Meet with the county land information council to review expenditures, policies, and priorities of the land information office at least once per year
- Report on expenditure activities each year
- Submit detailed applications for WLIP grants
- Complete the annual WLIP survey
- Subscribe to DOA's land information listserv
- Meet a June 30, 2017 deadline to post certain types of parcel information online – *This will be facilitated by annual submittal of parcel data for statewide parcel layer*

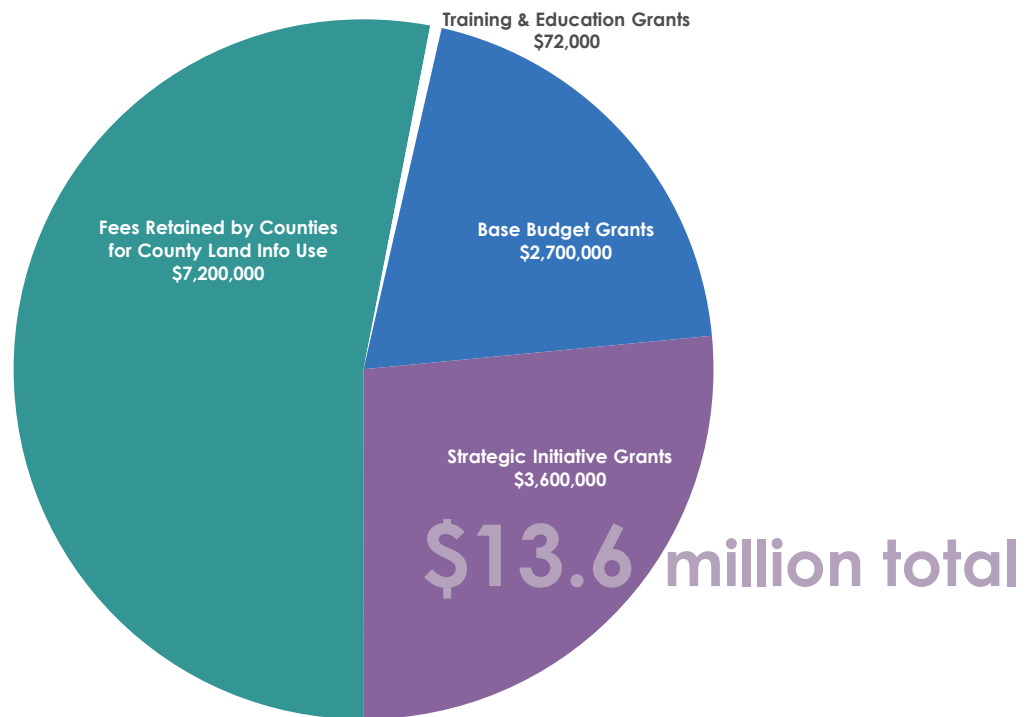


Figure 1. Projected 2016 County Land Information Funding – Fees Retained and WLIP Grants

EXPENDITURE OF RETAINED FEES AND GRANTS IN 2015

Counties submit annual expenditure reports on how WLIP retained fees and grants were utilized in the previous year and categorize their expenditures in a *Retained Fee/Grant Report*, in keeping with s. 59.72(2)(b). In 2015, WLIP retained fees and grants—totaling \$10.3 million—were devoted to the areas depicted in Figure 2.

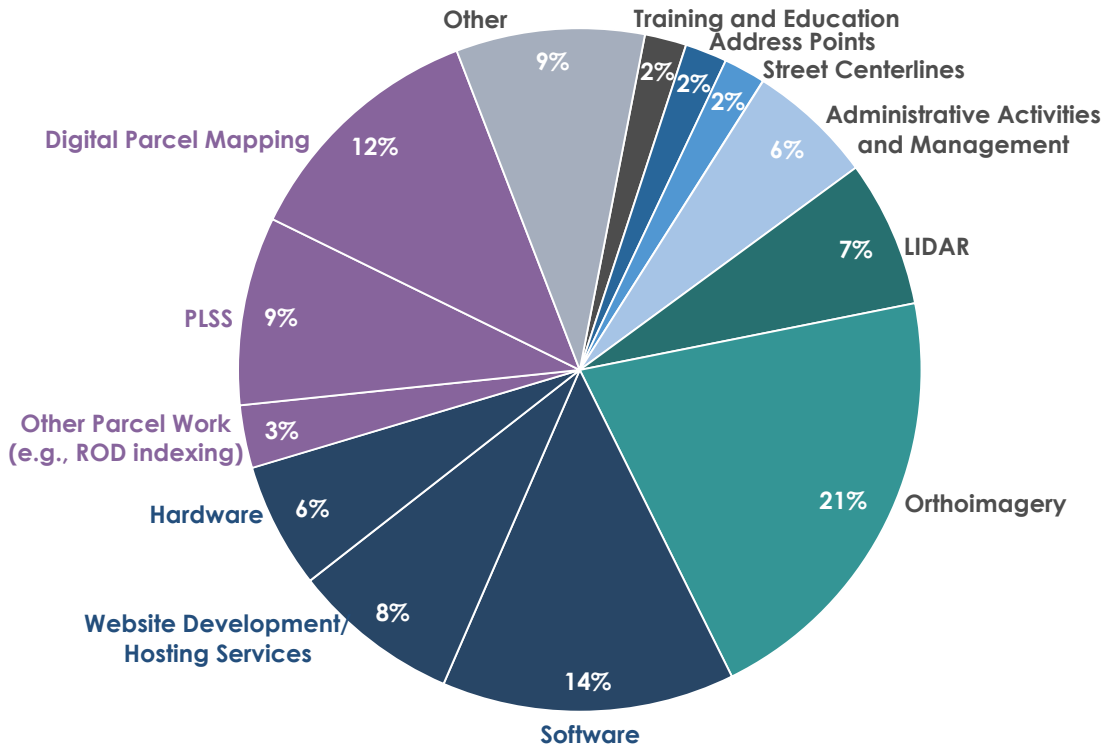


Figure 2. County 2015 Expenditures Reported

Orthoimagery spending was higher than average in 2015, constituting an estimated 21% of WLIP expenditures, due to the acquisition of imagery by a number of counties associated with WROC, the Wisconsin Regional Orthophotography Consortium.

Otherwise consistent with previous years, Figure 2 illustrates that about one quarter of WLIP funding was used for the development and maintenance of county parcel datasets, including Public Land Survey System remonumentation and other parcel work.

About another quarter of funding was used for computer hardware, software, and website development and hosting. These expenditures help to provide convenient access to land records through searchable databases, online interactive maps, and various types of mapping applications. The remaining quarter of funding supported a diverse range of activities, including the acquisition of lidar, as well as the development of address points and street centerlines. A small portion of funding goes to administrative activities and management, a category that is primarily associated with counties that have large land information office budgets and thus employ multiple staff persons.

WLIP Revenue and Grants

As of January 1, 2015, counties are required to submit \$7 per document recorded to the state Land Information Fund (an increase from \$2 prior to 2015). The \$7 contribution to the state Land Information Fund increased state program revenue to \$6.5 million per year in State Fiscal Year 2016.

ROD Document Recording Fee After Jan 1, 2015

\$15	County Undesignated
\$8	County Retained for Land Information
\$7	State Land Information Fund
\$30	

Base Budget Grants

Because counties with modest real estate market activity do not generate substantial land information office revenue, WLIP Base Budget grants are provided in order to enable eligible counties to develop, maintain, and operate a basic land information system. Counties that retain less than \$100k in retained fees for land information are eligible for a Base Budget grant according to the formula at right. Base Budget grants totaled \$2.7 million statewide and were awarded to 52 counties in 2016.

WLIP Base Budget Grant Eligibility Formula

\$100k – ROD document recording fees @ \$8 per document recorded

Example: County records 5,000 documents
 $\$100k - (5,000 \times \$8)$
 $\$100k - (\$40k)$
 $\$60k = \text{Base Budget grant eligibility}$

FUTURE GRANT PROJECTIONS

Figure 3 shows grants already awarded and the projected Land Information Program budget for the next few years. If implemented as shown in Figure 3, in 2017, all counties would receive at least \$151,000 in WLIP funding, made up of retained fees, Base Budget grants where applicable, a \$1k Training & Education grant, and a \$50k Strategic Initiative grant. Such a scenario would mean that **90% of Land Information Fund revenue will be invested in grants to counties** for local land records modernization.

Projected WLIP Funding in 2016

≥ \$100k Base Budget grant + Retained fees
 \$ 1k Training & Education grant
 \$ 50k Strategic Initiative grant
 ≥ \$151k per county

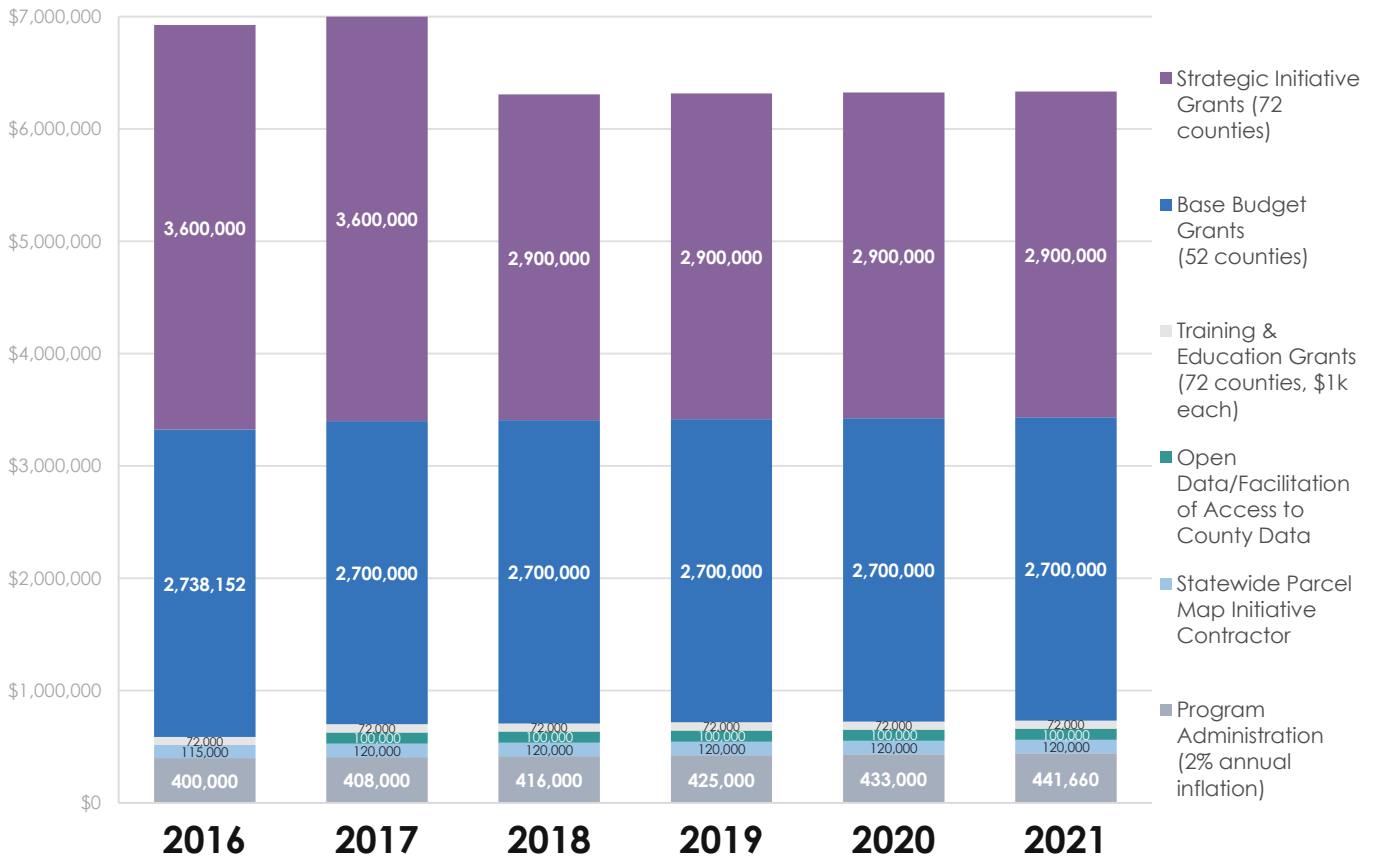


Figure 3. Projected Land Information Program Budget

DOA is mindful that utilization of Land Information Fund revenue must be consistent with statutory spending authority, as described by state statute 16.967, and should be for well-defined activities with statewide benefits.