

2020 WLIP Report

CONTENTS

OVERVIEW..... **2**

WLIP YEAR IN REVIEW **2**

 ROUTES TO RECOVERY COVID-19 RELIEF 2

 2021 GRANT APPLICATION RELEASE 2

 V6 STATEWIDE PARCEL MAP DATABASE PROJECT 2

 COUNTY DATA ACCESS & OPEN DATA 3

 FEDERAL FUNDING FOR LIDAR 3

 HAZARD RESPONSE/MITIGATION & LIDAR DERIVATIVES 3

 WISCONSIN LAND INFORMATION COUNCIL ACTIVITIES 3

FUNDING **4**

 WLIP REVENUE AND GRANTS 4

 EXPENDITURE OF RETAINED FEES AND GRANTS IN 2019 5

 FUTURE GRANT PROJECTIONS 6



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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 the previous reporting year (2019).

WLIP YEAR IN REVIEW



ROUTES TO RECOVERY COVID-19 RELIEF

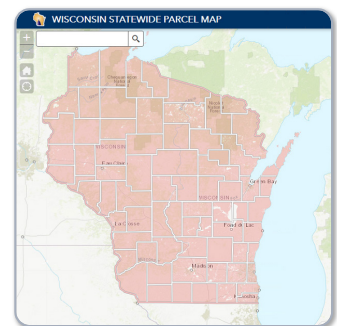
With all aspects of life, including government services, affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, WLIP staff pitched in to help administer aid through DOA's **Routes to Recovery local government aid program**. The effort, funded by \$200 million in federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act dollars, is aimed at helping local governments address some of Wisconsin's recovery needs by making certain expenses related to the public health emergency eligible for reimbursement.

2021 GRANT APPLICATION RELEASE

The 2021 WLIP Grant Application was made available in September offering three types of WLIP grants totaling \$6.1 million. Each county is eligible to receive a \$50k Strategic Initiative grant for 2021. Strategic Initiative grants are prioritized to meet standards known as "benchmarks" for parcel dataset development, which includes the annual parcel/tax roll data submission. Every county is also eligible for a \$1k Training & Education grant, and the 48 counties that retained less than \$100k in recording fees during the previous fiscal year are eligible for Base Budget grants.

V6 STATEWIDE PARCEL MAP DATABASE PROJECT

The Version 6 Statewide Parcel Map Database Project (V6) is part of the larger Statewide Digital Parcel Map Initiative, a multi-year DOA initiative that resulted from Act 20 of 2013. 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-V5, the V6 Project was a collaboration between DOA and the State Cartographer's Office (SCO). Counties submit data according to the Searchable Format, a set of standards detailed in the Submission Documentation that followed from the statutory directives in Act 20. On July 1, **the V6 statewide parcel database was released**—the sixth version of the state's publicly available digital parcel map, featuring 3.5 million parcel records. Visit the statewide parcel map webpage for data downloads, a web app, and more.



V6 Observation Reports

The V1-V6 Projects have made it a point to provide feedback designed to aid counties in achieving the Searchable Format, which they must do each year no later than March 31st. With an eye toward accountability and in an effort to assess county progress, each county received an individual observation report on its V6 data submission. These V6 Observation Reports document progress in meeting the Searchable Format. This is intended to help counties design WLIP grant projects to ensure 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 and maintain the Searchable Format statewide. Detailed analysis related to V6 can be found in the V6 Final Report.

Statewide PLSS Layer Sub-Project

Proportionally, the largest segment of WLIP funds counties devote to land records modernization is dedicated to PLSS completion and integration. In 2020, DOA and SCO continued work to create an updated a statewide PLSS database, constructed from local PLSS corner data collected as part of the V6 Project. Learn more about PLSS data in Wisconsin at www.sco.wisc.edu/surveying.

COUNTY DATA ACCESS & OPEN DATA



GeoData@Wisconsin

For Version 6 of the Statewide Parcel Map Database Project, the data request was coordinated with the UW-Madison Robinson Map Library (RML). RML collects and archives annual snapshots of several framework vector layers which are available for

download via GeoData@Wisconsin, a geospatial data portal developed in partnership with SCO. In 2020, enhancements were made to the state agency data collection, and **461 new county GIS datasets were added to GeoData@Wisconsin** for public download. For the most current county data, users can always consult county webpages, listed at doa.wi.gov/DIR/County_Contacts.pdf.

FEDERAL FUNDING FOR LIDAR

With the Fiscal Year 2020 cycle, lidar elevation data coverage for the state was 100%. All 72 Wisconsin counties now have pending or existing lidar coverage, including 54 federally-funded counties meeting the Quality Level 2 (QL2) lidar standard or better. The Geographic Information Officer (GIO), Jim Giglierano, helped coordinate 2020 grant applications for QL2 lidar data through the federal USGS 3D Elevation Program, or 3DEP. County land information programs that directly participate in the lidar acquisitions mostly do so through the Wisconsin Regional Orthophoto Consortium (WROC).

- All 8 of the Wisconsin FY20 3DEP lidar projects submitted through DOA were funded, and flown in Spring of 2020 despite limitations due to the pandemic—Chippewa, Columbia, Eau Claire, Grant, Menominee, Rock, Sauk and Vernon Counties—for a total of \$672,521 in federal funding. Counties contribute an equal amount towards the data acquisition and processing.
- 3DEP applications were also coordinated on behalf of two counties for 2020 grants as well—Brown and Rusk Counties, with Brown County buying-up to QL1 standard (8 lidar points per square meter versus 2 psm).
- In FY20, new QL1 lidar was collected for Ashland and parts of Iron and Florence Counties by USGS, US Forest Service and Ashland County. DOA help facilitate communication between all the partners and will help with distribution of the data. Other areas of Iron and Florence Counties were acquired with QL2 lidar.
- 3DEP data as well as WLIP-funded lidar data have been made available via the WisconsinView FTP site at <ftp://ftp.ssec.wisc.edu/pub/wisconsinview/lidar>.
- The status of the statewide elevation effort can be viewed at www.sco.wisc.edu/data/elevationlidar.

This totals **\$3,247,917 of federal funding netted for lidar** in 2015-2020 3DEP applications coordinated by the GIO and distributed by DOA to county partners. Regarding a state elevation layer, planning efforts continue to revolve around the 18 Wisconsin counties who have older, non-QL2 standard lidar and work toward the national goal of finishing QL2 coverage by 2023. Areas without QL2 lidar are a high priority for 3DEP funding.

HAZARD RESPONSE/MITIGATION & LIDAR DERIVATIVES

The GIO and the Coastal Management Program continued work on the **Wisconsin Coastal Management Data Infrastructure** (WICDI) project in 2020. WICDI is a collaboration with the State Cartographer's Office, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and over 100 participants in a hazards mapping community of practice. NOAA funded the first WICDI Project of Special Merit in FY18, and has awarded the state a second grant to continue work in FY21-FY22. The project seeks to facilitate collaboration by developing tools and methods to collect and manage culvert information in order to assess vulnerability to extreme weather events and ultimately improve culvert maintenance workflows that enhance hazard resiliency.

Given Wisconsin's current lack of critical GIS layers that support hydrologic applications—especially for modeling floods, predicting structural damages, and hazard mitigation planning activities, the GIO has also engaged in other efforts related to the development of standards and workflows for lidar derived hydrologic products.

WISCONSIN LAND INFORMATION COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

The Wisconsin Land Information Council (WLIC) serves in an advisory role to DOA on matters relating to the WLIP. The WLIC met two times during 2020, providing a channel for stakeholder organizations to voice their opinions on matters relating to land information records modernization.

FUNDING

Since the Program’s earliest days, from 1990 through June 30, 2020, Wisconsin counties have retained a total of \$205 million for land information activities and received a total of \$67 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**:

- 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
- Submit parcel data in the Searchable Format to DOA
- Submit other WLIP-funded GIS layers to DOA as requested

WLIP REVENUE AND GRANTS

As of January 1, 2015, counties are required to submit \$7 per document recorded to the state Land Information Fund. The \$7 contribution to the state Land Information Fund amounted to program revenue of \$7.5 million in FY2020, which is the source of funding for WLIP grants and administration of the program.

ROD Document Recording Fee	
\$15	County Undesignated
\$ 8	County Retained for Land Information
<u>\$ 7</u>	State Land Information Fund
\$30	

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.

WLIP Base Budget Grant Eligibility Formula

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

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

Base Budget grants totaled \$2.8 million statewide and were awarded to 53 counties in 2020. Counties are projected to retain fees and receive grants that combined total \$13.7 million for 2020.

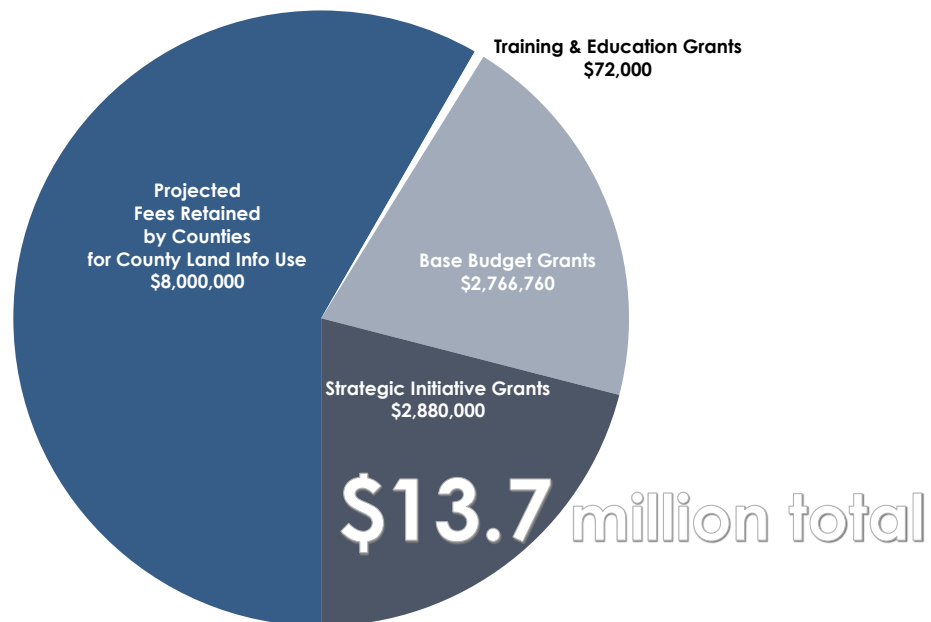


Figure 1. Projected 2020 County Land Information Funding – Fees Retained and WLIP Grants

EXPENDITURE OF RETAINED FEES AND GRANTS IN 2019

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 2019, counties retained fees and received grants for land information totaling \$13.9 million. The dollars spent on land information in 2019 were devoted to the areas depicted in Figure 2.

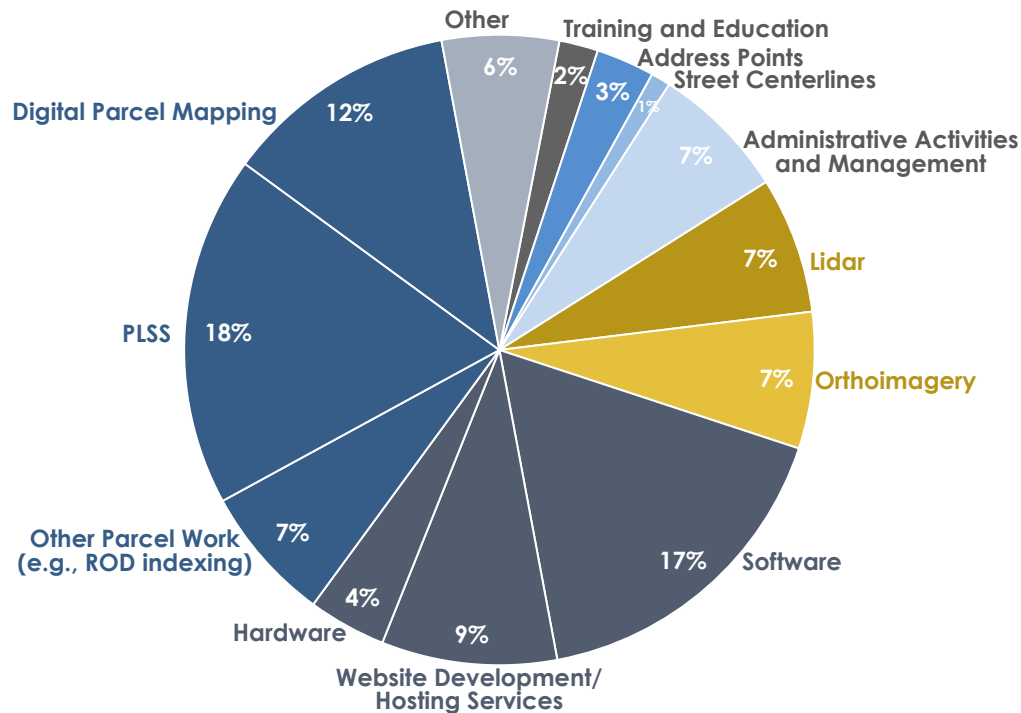


Figure 2. County 2019 Expenditures Reported

Roughly consistent with previous years, Figure 2 illustrates that a little over a third 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 a third of the 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 third of funding supported a diverse range of activities, including the acquisition of lidar and orthoimagery, as well as the development of address points and street centerlines. A 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.

FUTURE GRANT PROJECTIONS

Figure 3 shows grants already awarded and the projected Land Information Program budget for the next few years.

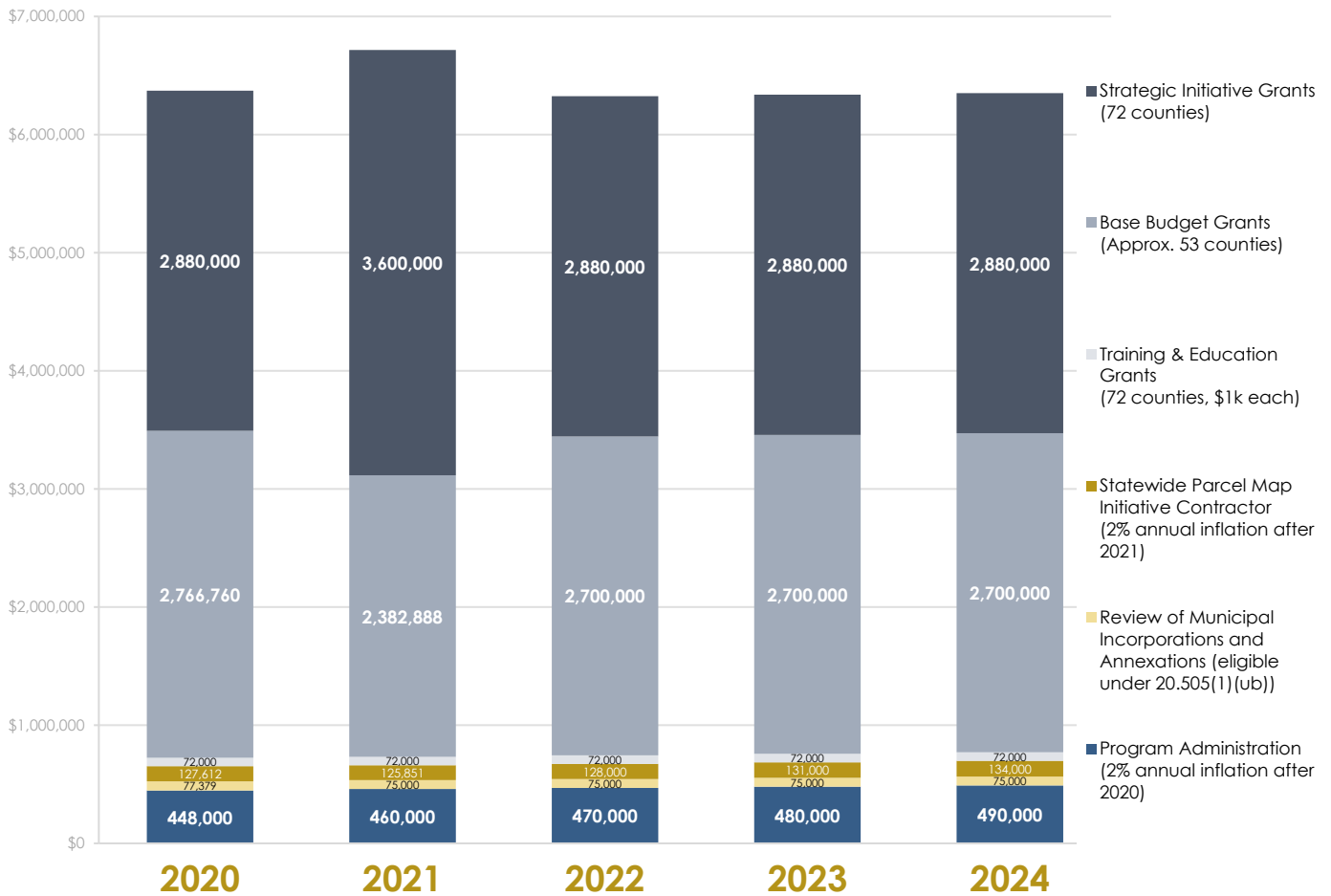


Figure 3. Projected Land Information Program Budget

If implemented as depicted in Figure 3, in 2021 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.

Projected WLIP Funding to Counties

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

Such a scenario would mean that **about 90% of Land Information Fund spending will be invested in grants to counties** for local land records modernization.

DOA is mindful that utilization of Land Information Fund revenue must be consistent with statutory spending authority as described by state statutes 16.967, 20.505(1)(ub-ud), and schedule under s.20.005(3), and should be for well-defined activities with statewide benefits.