



# DOA Local Government Report

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Wisconsin Department of  
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Please direct general questions  
or comments to Dawn Vick,  
DOA Division of  
Intergovernmental Relations,  
(608) 266-7043 or  
[dawn.vick@wisconsin.gov](mailto:dawn.vick@wisconsin.gov).

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## Governor Doyle Establishes Wisconsin Office of Recovery and Reinvestment

### New Office Serves as Clearinghouse for Wisconsin Governments

In January, while the recovery package was still being debated in Congress, Governor Doyle created the Wisconsin Office of Recovery and Reinvestment to start to lay the groundwork for implementing the new law. The Office was already geared up and working to understand the implications of the new law for Wisconsin when President Obama signed it in February.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is the most sweeping economic recovery package in our history. It is designed to build America's future through tax relief for middle class families, worthwhile new infrastructure projects to create jobs, and investments in research and alternative energy projects for a cleaner, healthier environment. It will also help Wisconsin maintain state budget priorities like education, health care and economic development.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will provide about \$3.8 billion to Wisconsin, not counting direct aid to individuals, tax breaks and competitive grants. The recovery package will create or save 70,000 jobs in Wisconsin and more than 2.2 million hardworking Wisconsin families will receive tax credits.

There are over one hundred different programs funded in the federal recovery package. Each program has its own set of criteria, requirements and timelines. The majority of the money flows through existing formulas to local and tribal governments and individuals. The Wisconsin Office of Recovery and Reinvestment is working to help local and tribal governments, businesses, educational institutions and non-profit organizations understand how best to access federal recovery funds for their projects.

The Office's website contains information on all of these different recovery programs along with key state and federal contact information for each program to help connect projects to recovery funding opportunities.

In addition, the Wisconsin Office of Recovery and Reinvestment will also coordinate the extensive reporting and accountability requirements in the new law. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will assure that taxpayers know their money is being spent wisely to create jobs while investing in worthwhile initiatives by requiring the following to be reported quarterly:

- Use of the recovery funds in Wisconsin
- Insure the funds were used correctly
- Jobs that were created or maintained by the funds
- Non-federal funds that were also used on projects

For more information or to see who to contact regarding a project proposal, go to the Office of Recovery and Reinvestment website at [www.recovery.wisconsin.gov](http://www.recovery.wisconsin.gov).

## **Census 2010: Get Started Now!**

### **Local Complete Count Committees**

Information from the US Census directly affects how more than \$300 billion in federal and state funds are spent each year for things like neighborhood improvements, public health, education, transportation and much more. As required by the U.S. Constitution, the census is also used to apportion seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and to redistrict state legislatures. The census, taken every ten years, is like a snapshot that helps define who we are as a nation. Information about changes in your community is crucial to many planning decisions, such as where to provide services for the elderly, where to build new roads and school, or where to locate job training centers.

One of the best ways to help Wisconsin have a complete and accurate census is for local and Tribal governments to form local "Complete Count Committees." Complete Count Committees are volunteer teams consisting of community leaders, faith-based groups, schools, businesses, media outlets and others who are appointed by elected officials and work together to make sure that everyone is counted in the census. The committees develop targeted outreach plans specific to their communities to supplement what the Census Bureau is already doing through paid advertising and partnership efforts. One of the goals is to help inform local residents, including those historically hard to reach, of the importance of responding to the census.

Local governments can now begin to form Complete Count Committees. The Census bureau has materials and support available on their webpage at: [www.census.gov/2010census](http://www.census.gov/2010census) (click on "Promotional Materials") for local and Tribal governments interested in forming their own committee. In the 2000 census, nearly 400 Wisconsin communities formed Complete Count Committees. Some of the activities of Complete Count Committees include donating space for testing and training temporary census workers, publicizing recruiting efforts and obtaining endorsements from local leaders. They can conduct census rallies or parades, media luncheons, interfaith breakfasts and weekend events as we get closer to Census Day.

In the coming months, staff from the US Census Bureau will be contacting and working with Wisconsin's local and Tribal governments to promote the census and encourage the formation of Complete Count Committees. If you wish to find out more about Complete Count Committees, contact the Chicago Regional Office of the Census Bureau at 1-630-288-9200 or 1-800-865-6384, or [chicago.regional.office@census.gov](mailto:chicago.regional.office@census.gov). For further information please contact Outreach Specialist, Marlene Weisrock at 312-933-0807.

## **Drinking Water and Wastewater Funding Sources**

The Wisconsin Drinking Water and Wastewater Funding Sources Committee provide up to date financial information on the various sources of funding for local and Tribal governments and some eligible individuals. The goal is to provide one-stop assistance in locating the available sources of grant or loan funds for drinking water and wastewater projects.

All available programs are summarized in the Drinking Water and Wastewater Funding Sources booklet. This publication contains eligibility and contact information for the available financial and technical assistance. The booklet also contains the Preliminary Inquiry for Project Financing form so a committee representative can contact you to discuss planning for your specific project.

The booklet is available on the internet at <http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/cfa/EL/Forms/sources.html>. If you would like a hard copy of the booklet, contact Pat Sullivan at 608-266-5742 or [patricia.sullivan@wisconsin.gov](mailto:patricia.sullivan@wisconsin.gov)

## Housing Programs with Spring Applications

The Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Division of Housing & Community Development annually awards \$50 million in grant funds to local governments and non-profit organizations. Local governments are encouraged to check their website for updates on available programs at <http://commerce.wi.gov/cd/>.

Two programs with upcoming grant application deadlines include:

- HOME Rental Housing Development Program: Over \$4 million allocated annually for supporting development of affordable rental housing units. Grant application due dates include 6/1, 9/1, 12/1. Applicants can apply directly for these funds or partner with one of 28 state certified community housing development organizations.
- CDBG Small Cities-housing rehabilitation/acquisition: About \$6 million is available annually which is granted to communities seeking funds for residential rehabilitation and home buy programs. We anticipate having a spring 2009 grant application.

For more information in Wisconsin Housing programs including HOME, Community Development Block Grants, Emergency Assistance Program, and the Neighborhood Stabilization Program, please contact Marty Evanson at (608)267-2713 or [marty.evanson@wisconsin.gov](mailto:marty.evanson@wisconsin.gov).

## Assistance to Fire Fighters and EMS Grant Program

The 2009 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program application will open soon. Eligible applicants for AFG are all fire departments in the United States and all non-affiliated Emergency Medical Service crews.

The Department of Homeland Security has made several important changes to the 2009 program. It is recommended all potential applicants read and follow the Program Guidance, at the following web page: [www.firegrantsupport.com](http://www.firegrantsupport.com).

Changes to the 2009 program include:

- Applicants will be required to obtain bids from at least two manufacturers for awarded grants.
- Modifications to facilities built after 2003 are no longer eligible for the grant.

For more information or grant assistance, contact Dawn Vick at the Wisconsin Department of Administration at (608) 266-7043 or [dawn.vick@wisconsin.gov](mailto:dawn.vick@wisconsin.gov).

## The State Trust Fund Loan Program

The Board of Commissioners of Public Lands (BCPL) works with local governments to maintain and improve Wisconsin's public infrastructure with the State Trust Fund Loan Program. This is one of the largest public lending programs in the state.

These loans are used for three types of public purposes:

- School repairs & improvements, including the installation of more energy-efficient heating & lighting systems
- General public works projects, including roads, town halls, airports, sewer systems and wastewater facilities, trucks, and emergency vehicles
- Economic development through TIF (tax incremental financing) districts and downtown revitalization projects

The application process is easy, there are no loan origination fees, and loans can be prepaid without penalty between March 15 and July 31 each year. Interest rates are competitive and can be fixed for terms of up to 20 years. Loan interest rates are subject to change from time to time based on economic conditions and availability of funds.

For more information on State Trust Fund Loans and the BCPL go to their web page at <http://bcpl.state.wi.us> or contact Trust Fund Loan Specialist Scott Eastwood (608) 266-0034 or [scott.eastwood@wisconsin.gov](mailto:scott.eastwood@wisconsin.gov).

# **Wisconsin Office of Recovery and Reinvestment**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### ***How do I submit a recovery project idea?***

There are over one hundred different programs funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The Wisconsin Office of Recovery and Reinvestment website has information on its website to help connect people with project ideas to the correct program and funding opportunity.

On the website, there is a brief description of the program and information on who to contact at the state and federal level regarding the program. The contacts will provide assistance to help determine if projects are eligible under the federal recovery criteria and to assist in the application process.

### ***What happened to the list of local projects submitted last December?***

Any project proposals submitted before the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was signed into law must be re-submitted through the correct program and agency. The Wisconsin Office of Recovery and Reinvestment has information on the program webpage that will help connect you to the correct program and agency.

For example, in December, local governments were asked to submit their wish lists of potential stimulus projects to show national leaders that states had a multitude of worthwhile projects that could help get people to work again. With passage of the new law, those projects will have to be re-examined to determine if they qualify for federal stimulus funds under the federal criteria and requirements.

### ***What happened to the project proposal I submitted through the website?***

Anyone who submitted project proposals to the Wisconsin Office of Recovery and Reinvestment website before the new federal law was enacted, should re-examine the projects to determine if they fit the new criteria and which state agency to contact regarding the project proposal. The website can help in determining where a project might fit.

Additionally, the Office of Recovery and Reinvestment plans to contact individuals who submitted ideas directly to the website to help them determine if their project qualifies and which agency to contact regarding their project. In some cases the project ideas may not be funded by programs in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

**[www.recovery.wisconsin.gov](http://www.recovery.wisconsin.gov)**