2017 WLIP Report

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WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

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 2016.

WLIP YEAR IN REVIEW

2016 WLIP SURVEY

The 2016 WLIP Survey was an important way the WLIP sought to gather information about stakeholder opinions on future WLIP Strategic Initiative grant funding. The survey focused on 2018 grant benchmarks—an area of emphasis which emerged from the *WLIP Program Plan 2016-2021*. The plan itself, released in August of 2016, had been completed via an extensive collaborative process.

The survey helped collect comments on draft versions of 2018 Strategic Initiative benchmarks. Somewhat breaking with the format of previous years, everyone from the community was invited to take part, with participation from Wisconsin's 72 land information officers required. With over 100 detailed responses, February's *2016_WLIP_Survey_Report* containing the survey data revealed the diversity of opinions on Strategic Initiative funding priorities and provided guidance on keeping benchmarks for the 2018 grant application the same as in years past.

2018 GRANT APPLICATION RELEASE

The 2018 WLIP Grant Application was made available on August 31, offering Base Budget, Training & Education, and Strategic Initiative grants totaling $6.2 million. As in 2017, 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 development**. Every county is also eligible for a $1k Training & Education grant, and the 50 counties that retained less than $100k in recording fees during the previous state fiscal year are eligible for Base Budget grants.

V3 STATEWIDE PARCEL MAP DATABASE PROJECT

The V3 Statewide Parcel Map Database Project (V3) 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 and V2, the V3 Project was a collaboration between DOA and the State Cartographer's Office (SCO).

In the V3 request for county data, DOA asked for the second 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, the 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, implemented in the V2 Project, and is detailed in the *V3 Submission Documentation*.

To assist in data formatting and standardization for V3, SCO created a number of geoprocessing tools. New for V3 was a tool that counties were required to use prior to submitting data. The **Validation and Submission Tool** checked for deviations from the schema, and created a mandatory file known as the Submission Form. For details or to download the tool, see the *Validation and Submission Tool Guide*.

V3 Statewide Parcel Layer - 2017

NEW! VALIDATION AND SUBMISSION TOOL
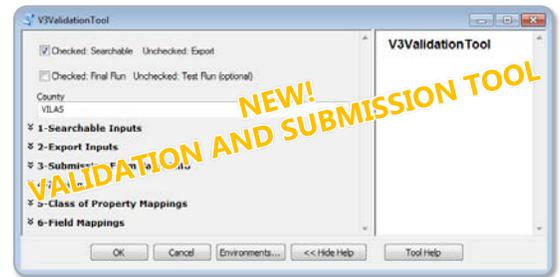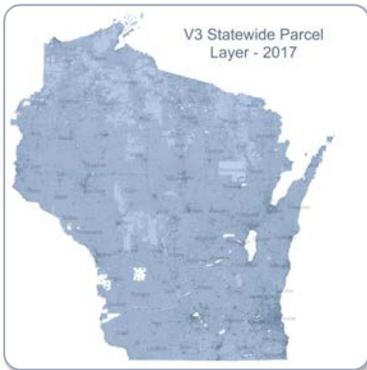
On July 31, **the V3 statewide parcel database was released**—the fourth version of the state's publicly available statewide digital parcel map. Visit the V3 statewide parcel map webpage for statewide downloads, individual county downloads, schema documentation, zoning data downloads, and more. As an exercise in accountability, pursuant to s. 16.967(6)(b), in December DOA submitted a report to the legislature on the positive progress in developing the statewide digital parcel map.

V3 OBSERVATION REPORTS

The V1, V2, and V3 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. With an eye toward accountability and in an effort to assess county progress, each county received an individual observation report on its V3 parcel dataset. These *V3 Observation 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 and maintain the Searchable Format statewide by 2018.

FEDERAL FUNDING FOR LIDAR

The Geographic Information Officer (GIO), Jim Giglierano, helped coordinate 2017 grant applications for lidar through the federal USGS 3DEP Program. FY17 projects include 12 counties representing over 50% of the state's population.

- All four of the Wisconsin FY17 3DEP lidar projects submitted through DOA were funded (Dane, Langlade, La Crosse, and Sawyer for $499,250 in federal funding). Other 3DEP projects include Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Waukesha, Washington, Walworth, Dodge, and Racine/Kenosha.
- With assistance from DNR's Lake Protection Grant, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and U.S. Forest Service, Forest County's FY16 project was completely flown ($205,000 in federal funding).
- The FY15 3DEP data for Bayfield and Manitowoc was made available in July, and FY16 3DEP data for Portage, Winnebago, Washburn, Taylor, and Buffalo Counties was made available via WisconsinView.

This totals **$1,656,023 of federal funding netted for lidar** in 2015-2017 applications coordinated by the GIO. Hoping to repeat the success of the past, 3DEP applications were also coordinated on behalf of ten counties for 2018 grants as well. If successful, this application cycle should complete coverage of lidar for the state for the first time, and continue refreshing data older than ten years.

LIDAR WORKSHOPS WITH SCO

The GIO worked with the State Cartographer's Office, who hosted the **Basics of Lidar Workshop** series. The workshops included both lectures and hands-on exercises focusing on: raster data, map algebra and raster data processing, DEM characteristics, accuracy and error, lidar application domains, terrain analysis, TINs, breaklines and contours, point clouds and LAS files, visualization, and more. Three separate workshops were held on March 20-21, June 12-13, and August 14-15. Day 1 of the workshop was taught by Joel Nelson of the Department of Soil, Water, and Climate at the University of Minnesota, and Day 2 was taught by Jim Giglierano and SCO staff.

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 2017, they participated in the process of interpreting the results of the 2016 WLIP Survey, and other strategic planning matters. The WLIC met several times at sites like Wisconsin Land Information Association (WLIA) conferences and DOA, 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 July 1, 2017, Wisconsin counties have retained a total of $182 million for land information activities and received a total of $49 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
- Meet a June 30, 2017 deadline to post certain types of parcel information online – (Facilitated by annual submittal of parcel data for the statewide parcel layer)

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 $6.9 million in state fiscal year 2017.

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.

ROD Document Recording Fee After Jan 1, 2015

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

WLIP Base Budget Grant Eligibility Formula

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

Example: County records 5,000 documents
$100k – (5,000 x $8)
$100k – ($40k)
$ 60k = Base Budget grant eligibility

Base Budget grants totaled $2.64 million statewide and were awarded to 51 counties in 2017. Counties are projected to retain fees and receive grants that combined total $14.2 million for 2017.
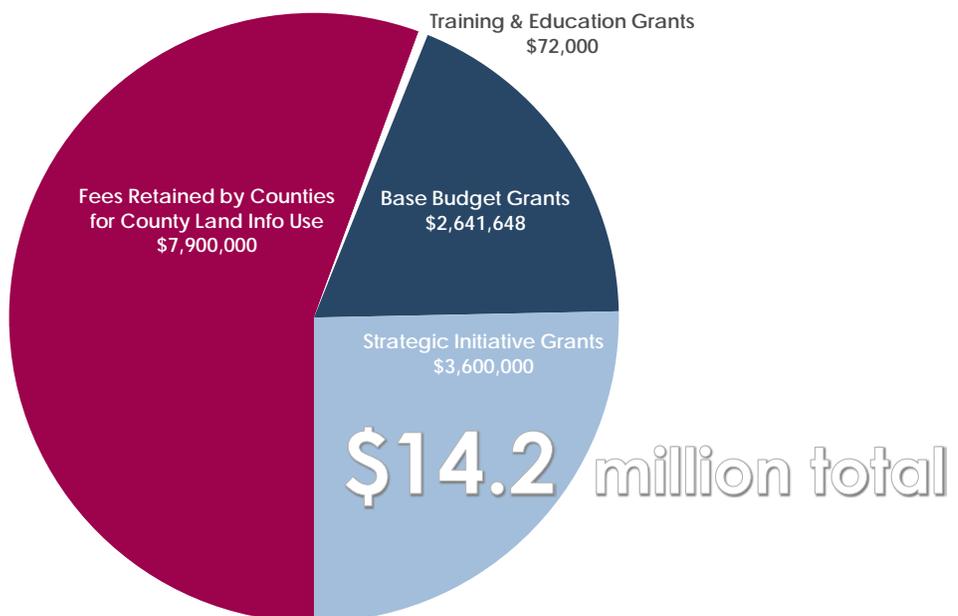

Figure 1. Projected 2017 County Land Information Funding – Fees Retained and WLIP Grants

EXPENDITURE OF RETAINED FEES AND GRANTS IN 2016

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).

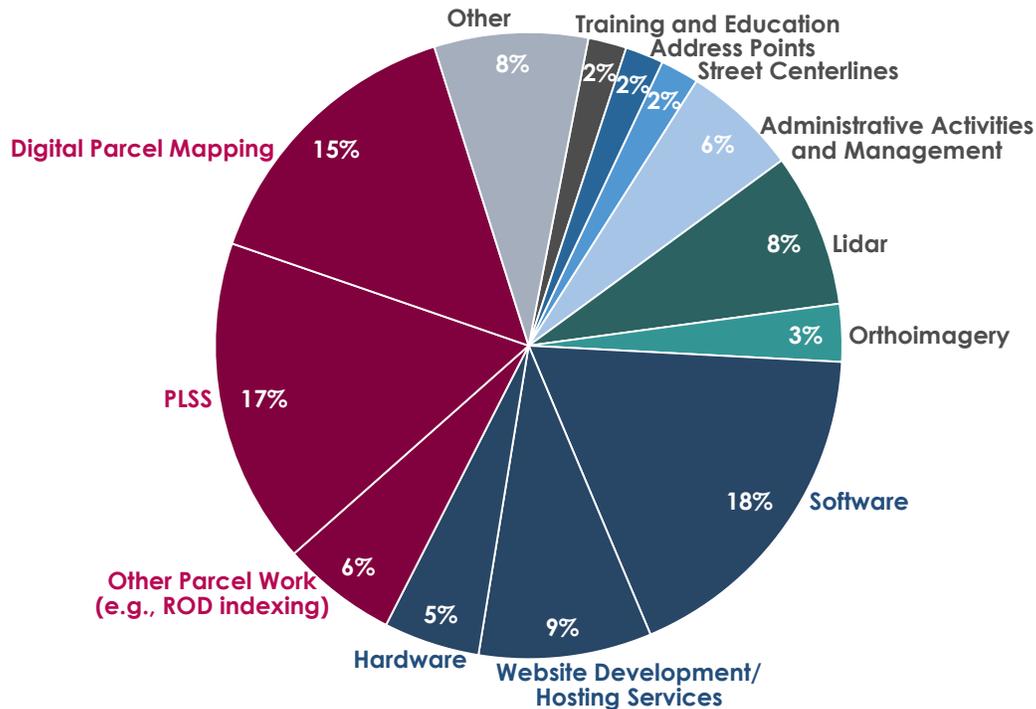In 2016, WLIP retained fees and grants—totaling $12.5 million—were devoted to the areas depicted in Figure 2.

Figure 2. County 2016 Expenditures Reported

Otherwise consistent with previous years, Figure 2 illustrates that about one 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 another 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, 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.
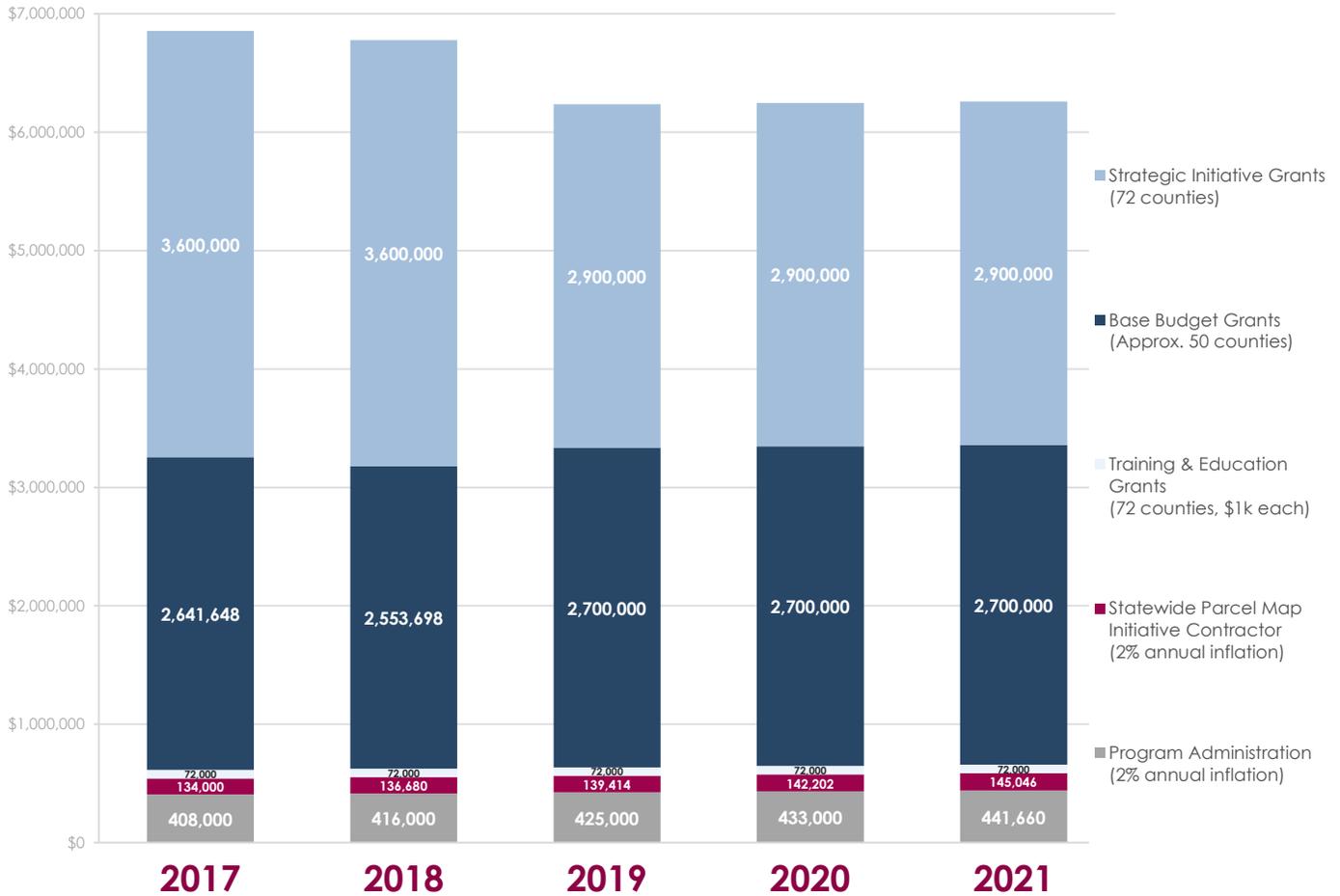
Figure 3. Projected Land Information Program Budget

If implemented as depicted in Figure 3, in 2017 and 2018 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 in 2017	
≥ $100k	Base Budget grant + Retained fees
$ 1k	Training & Education grant
$ 50k	Strategic Initiative grant
≥ $151k	**per county**

Such a scenario would mean that over **90% of Land Information Fund revenue 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 statute 16.967, and should be for well-defined activities with statewide benefits.