

# 2023 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 the previous reporting year (2022).

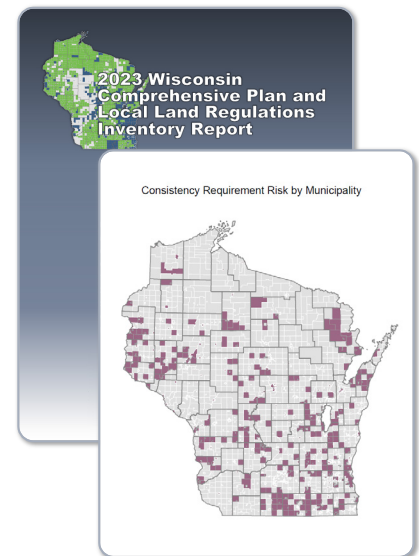
## WLIP YEAR IN REVIEW

### 2023 COMP PLAN AND LOCAL LAND REGULATIONS INVENTORY REPORT

Land information includes regulations governing land use and division. Comprehensive plans should guide the implementation of these regulations and any changes to zoning and subdivision (land division) ordinances must be consistent with a comprehensive plan. Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law (s. 66.1001) defines the contents of a comprehensive plan, which include a twenty-year vision and map of future land use. The 2023 Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan and Local Land Regulations Inventory Report was released in 2023, with the following key findings:

- Over half of local government comp plans are out of date.
- 479 local governments (25%) exercise general zoning or subdivision regulations AND do not have a current comprehensive plan, which may put them at more risk for violation of the Comprehensive Planning Law's consistency requirement.
- 39% of local governments have no ordinances posted online or are lacking a significant portion of ordinances posted online.

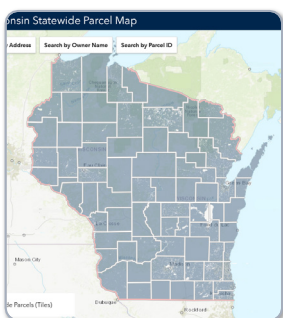
For each of Wisconsin's 1,922 counties, cities, villages, and towns, the Comp Plan and Land Regs Inventory lists last known date of comprehensive plan adoption, whether a general zoning ordinance has been adopted, whether a subdivision ordinance has been adopted, and link to the local government's ordinances webpage, if available.



### 2024 GRANT APPLICATION RELEASE

The 2024 WLIP Grant Application was made available in September, offering three types of WLIP grants totaling \$3.8 million. Each county is eligible to receive a \$10k Strategic Initiative grant for 2024. 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 55 counties that retained less than \$100k in recording fees during the previous fiscal year are eligible for Base Budget grants.

### V9 STATEWIDE PARCEL MAP DATABASE PROJECT



The Version 9 Statewide Parcel Map Database Project (V9) 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-V8, the V9 Project was a collaboration between DOA and the State Cartographer's Office. 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 June 21st, **the V9 statewide parcel database was released**—the ninth 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. Detailed analysis of V9 data can be found in the V9 Final Report.

As a part of V9, the Wisconsin Statewide Parcel Map web application underwent a significant overhaul for its 2023 release. The update included technological changes, new capabilities, and integrated a new ArcGIS Online-hosted V9 parcel layer. The redesign focused on the user interface, with attribute search tips integrated directly into the query boxes as well as a basemap toggler for easier map layer control and enhanced attribute search functionality. User feedback continues to be integrated to enhance the application and ensure it is well-equipped to meet the diverse needs of users while serving as a valuable tool for parcel data exploration.

### Statewide PLSS Layer Sub-Project

In 2023, DOA and SCO continued work to create an updated statewide PLSS database, constructed from local PLSS corner data collected as part of the V9 Project. Learn more about PLSS data in Wisconsin at [www.sco.wisc.edu/surveying](http://www.sco.wisc.edu/surveying).

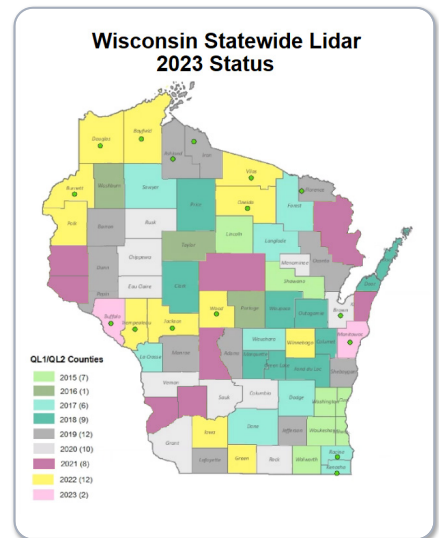
## COUNTY DATA ACCESS & OPEN DATA

For Version 9 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 2023, **385 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](http://doa.wi.gov/DIR/County_Contacts.pdf).

## FEDERAL FUNDING FOR LIDAR

With the completion of the FY22 lidar acquisition project, all 72 Wisconsin counties will have lidar elevation data meeting federal Quality Level 2 standard or better. County land information offices have been critical to the success of the statewide acquisition. In 2023, the Geographic Information Officer (GIO) Jim Giglierano helped coordinate multi-county grant applications for QL2/QL1 lidar data through the federal USGS 3D Elevation Program (3DEP).

- Both of the Wisconsin FY23 3DEP lidar projects submitted through DOA were funded— Buffalo and Manitowoc Counties—for a total of **\$250,677.51** in federal funding from USGS.
- Total cost of acquisition and processing was \$400,387.51, with counties contributing \$149,710.
- 3DEP applications will also be submitted on behalf of some counties for FY24 grants as well (Dane, LaCrosse, Portage, Shawano, Taylor, and Waushara).
- DOA also directly supports distribution of final data products as well as WLIP-funded lidar data to state partners and to the public through the UW-Madison WisconsinView imagery archive, through <https://geodata.wisc.edu> and the interactive map at [www.sco.wisc.edu/data/elevationlidar](http://www.sco.wisc.edu/data/elevationlidar).
- The Department of Natural Resources offers online streaming REST services and WI DNR Open Data.
- The status of the statewide elevation effort can be viewed at [coast.noaa.gov/inventory](http://coast.noaa.gov/inventory), with some 3DEP data available on the USGS site, <https://apps.nationalmap.gov/downloader>.



This totals **\$6,530,264.88 of federal funding netted for lidar** in 2015-2023 3DEP applications coordinated by DOA on behalf of county and other Wisconsin partners. First time coverage of publicly available, standardized lidar for the state is projected to be available in early 2024. The GIO has also engaged in other efforts investigating needs and funding sources for data derived from the lidar point cloud and/or aerial imagery. A new USGS program called the 3D Hydrography program (3DHP) may offer additional opportunities for funding in the coming year.

## 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 group provides a channel for stakeholder organizations to voice their opinions on matters relating to land information records modernization. The WLIC met twice in 2023.

# FUNDING

Since the Program’s earliest days, from 1990 through June 30, 2023, Wisconsin counties have retained a total of \$231 million for land information activities and received a total of \$87 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, if conducted
- 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 state revenue of \$5.4 million in State FY2023, 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
<b>\$30</b>	

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 \$2.2 million statewide and were awarded to 46 counties in 2023. Counties are projected to retain fees and receive grants that combined total \$13 million for 2023.

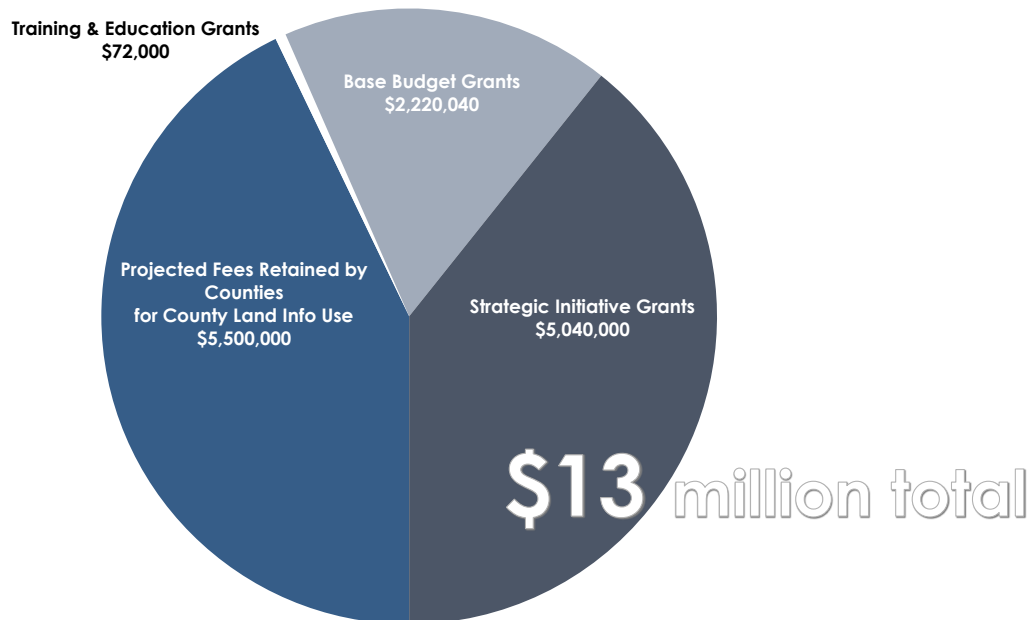


Figure 1. Projected 2023 County Land Information Funding – Fees Retained and WLIP Grants

## REVENUE TREND: 2023 UNPRECEDENTED

The number of documents recorded and thus Land Information Fund revenue varies from year to year. For each of the last 30 years, the annual total has equaled an average of about 1,274,034 documents recorded per year. This would correspond to \$8,918,238 in Land Information Fund revenue (at \$7 submitted per document recorded).

Due in large part to the increase mortgage interest rates and a limited supply of housing on the market in 2023, the register of deeds instrument recordings declined to the lowest point in 30 years. Figure 2 illustrates the revenue trend over time.

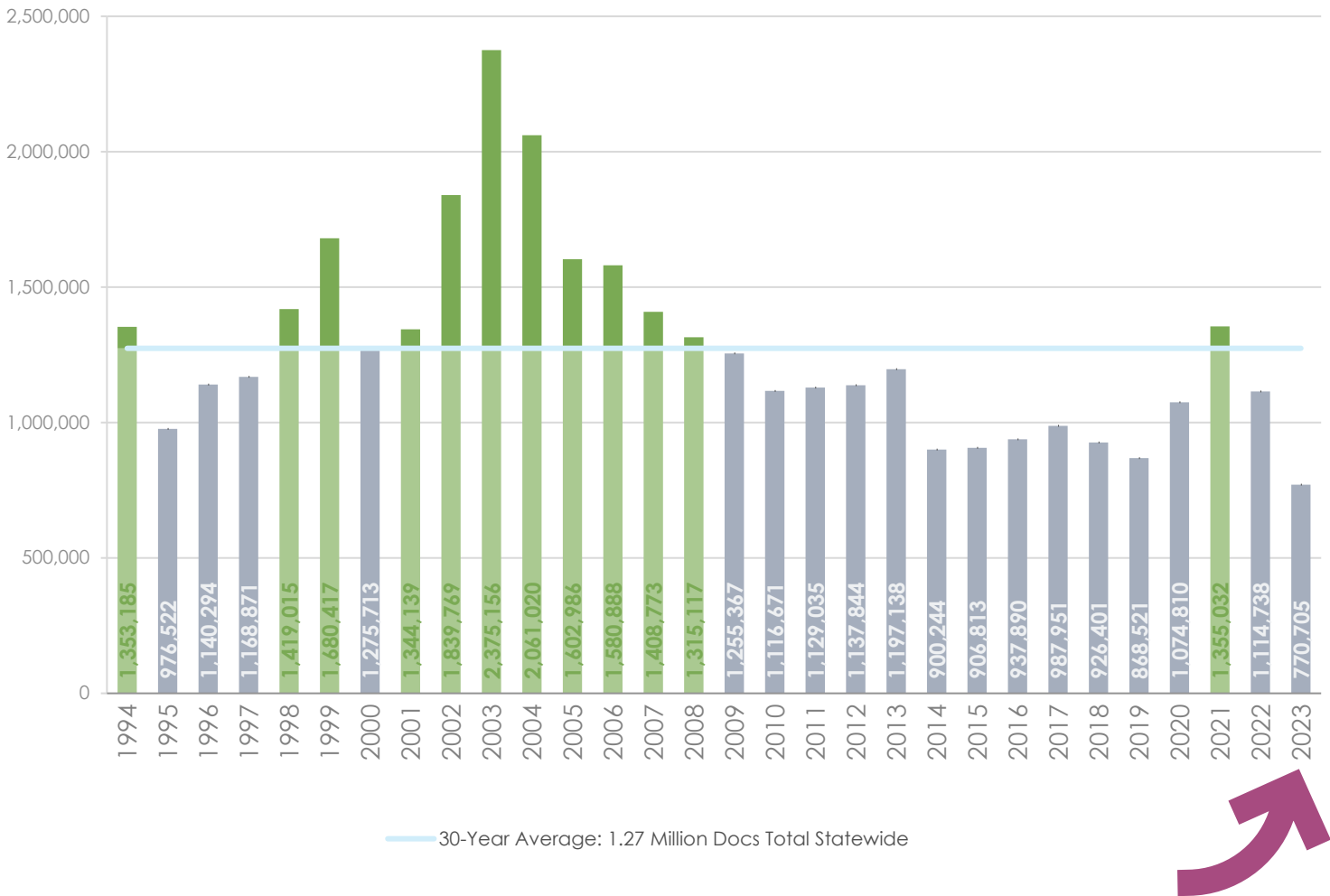
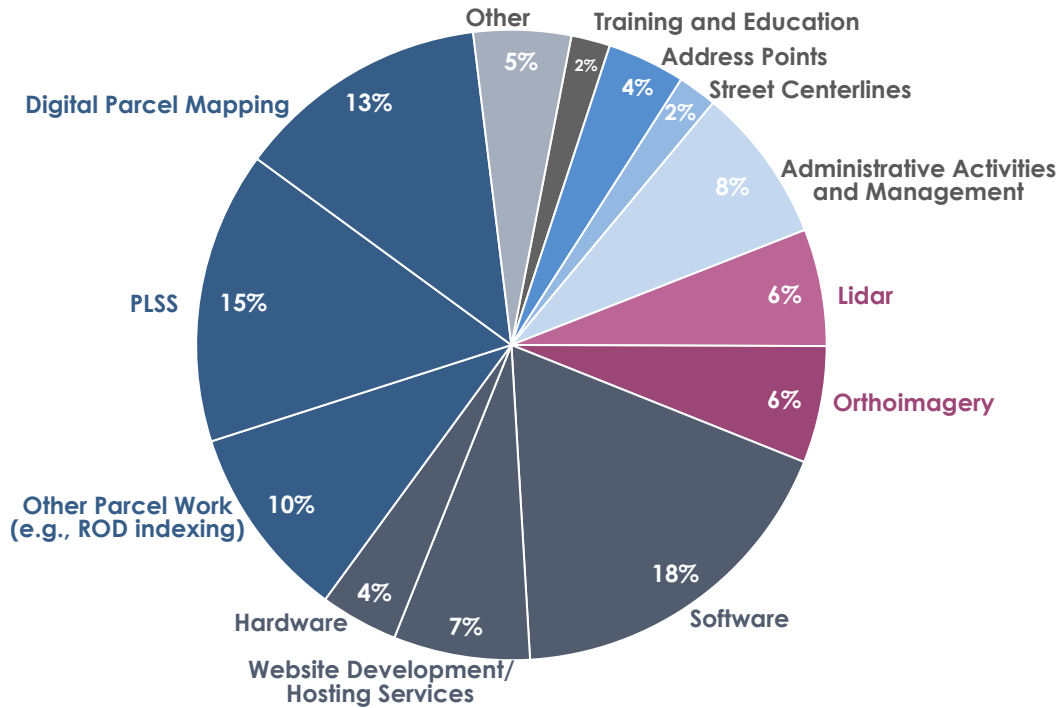


Figure 2. Number of Register of Deeds Documents Recorded Statewide Under s. 59.42(2)(ag)1 or e

## EXPENDITURE OF RETAINED FEES AND GRANTS IN 2022

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 2022, counties retained fees and received grants for land information totaling \$13.6 million. The dollars spent on land information in 2022 were devoted to the areas depicted in Figure 2.



**Figure 3. County 2022 Expenditures Reported**

Roughly consistent with previous years, Figure 3 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.

A little under 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.

Six percent was spent on orthoimagery and six percent on lidar. Some lidar and orthoimagery acquisitions are packaged together.

The remaining funding supported a diverse range of activities, including the development of address points and street centerlines to meet Next Generation 9-1-1 standards. A portion of funding also goes to administrative activities and management.

# FUTURE GRANT PROJECTIONS

Figure 4 shows grants already awarded and the projected Land Information Program budget for the next few years.

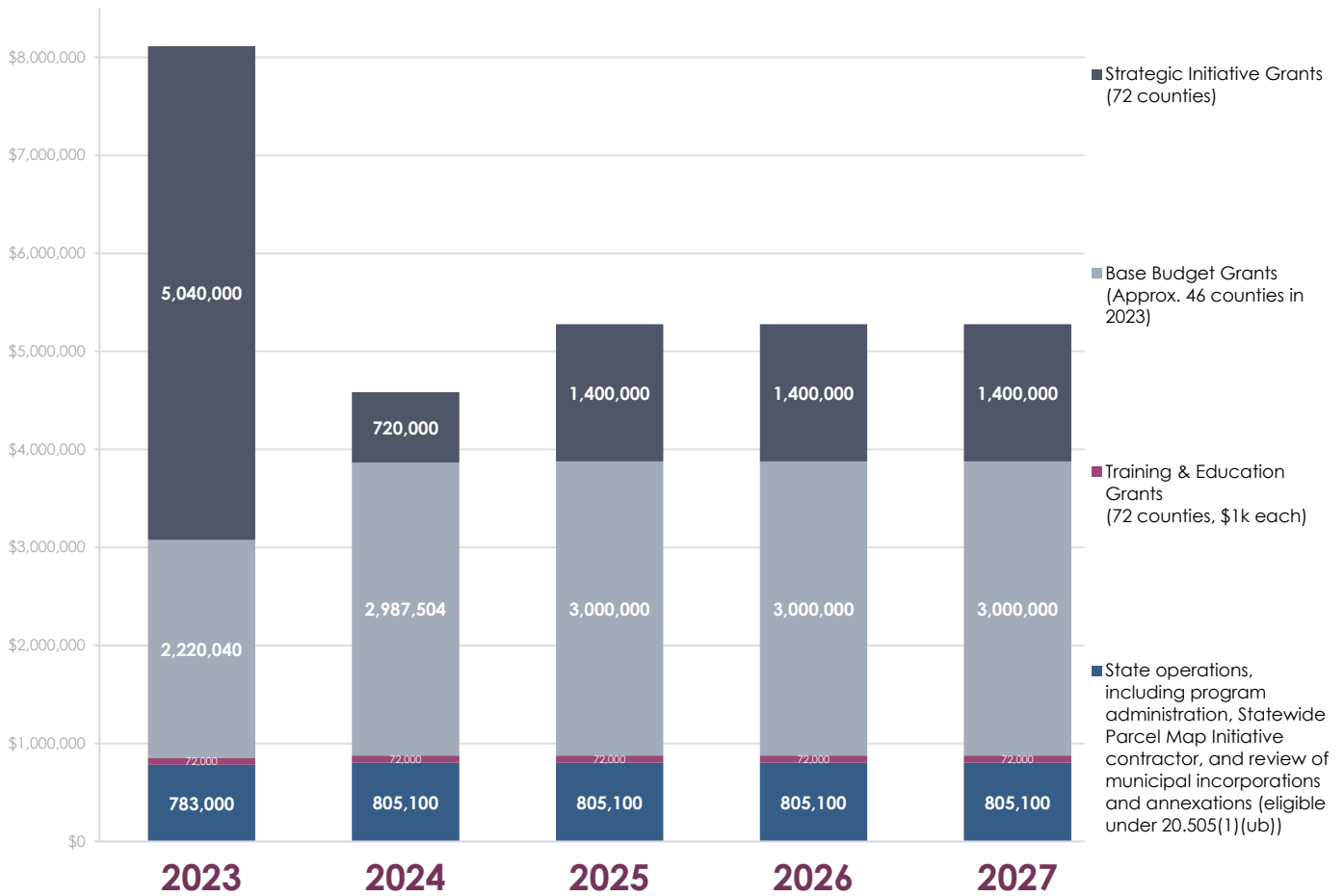


Figure 4. Projected Land Information Program Budget

If implemented as depicted in Figure 4, in 2024 all counties would receive at least \$111,000 in WLIP funding, made up of retained fees, Base Budget grants where applicable, a \$1k Training & Education grant, and a \$10k Strategic Initiative grant.

### Projected WLIP Funding to Counties

- ≥ \$100k Base Budget grant + Retained fees
- \$ 1k Training & Education grant
- \$ 10k Strategic Initiative grant
- ≥ \$111k per county

Such a scenario would mean that **about 85% 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.