



LOCAL ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (LRIP)

Statutory Authority: § 86.31 **Admin. Rule:** TRANS 206

Background: The Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) was established in 1991 to assist local units of governments in improving seriously deteriorating county highways, town roads, and municipal streets. LRIP is a reimbursement program and pays up to 50% of the total eligible project costs, with the balance matched by the local unit of government. All LRIP projects are locally let and are reimbursed by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) upon project completion.

The program has three basic components that provide funding for road improvements. Counties are eligible for funding under County Highway Improvement component (*CHI*), towns under Town Road Improvement component (*TRI*), and cities and villages under Municipal Street Improvement component (*MSI*). In addition, three discretionary programs (*TRID, CHID and MSID*) allow towns, counties, and cities and villages to apply for additional funds for high-cost projects. The program was designed to be simple, flexible and effective by minimizing administrative costs.

Current Status: Funding for the County Highway Improvement Program has remained the same since 1998. The effectiveness of CHI funds has been seriously eroded by inflation. Current levels represent 60% to 70% of the buying power the program yielded in 1998. The 19,000 miles of the County Trunk Highway System requires commitment and investment from the state transportation funds to at least restore this program to reasonable funding levels.

The County Highway Improvement Program of LRIP is a critical funding source for the County Trunk Highway System. WCA and WCHA believe that current funding for CHI and CHID need to be increased to restore the programs buying power and begin to address the backlog of work on the County Trunk Highway System. The Transportation Finance and Policy Commission recommended a \$40M annual increase for the program in 2012. An examination of the needs on the County Trunk Highway System have confirmed that a proposal should be developed for significant increases to the County portion of LRIP during the Current Budget.

LRIP was established as a flexible, effective and local government friendly program. While the need to evaluate and modify the program to fit changing conditions, may be necessary, this must be accomplished with the collaboration of local governments and without the loss of the original vision for the program.

REQUESTED ACTION: WCA and WCHA request that additional funding be allocated to the CHIP appropriation to reflect the current needs on the County Trunk Highway System.

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