



Local Roads and Streets Council

2008–2010 Biennial Report





WEB SITE

[www.dot.wisconsin.gov/
localgov/lrscl/index.htm](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/lrscl/index.htm)



DEAR SECRETARY BUSALACCHI: ≈

On behalf of the Local Roads and Streets Council (LRSC), I am pleased to submit the Council's biennial report for the fiscal period 2008–2010. This report summarizes the Council's accomplishments over the past two years, and describes its future goals and objectives as an advisory body to the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT).

Over the past two years, the Council has worked closely with WisDOT on several ongoing, LRSC-sponsored initiatives under development. For example, the Council continues to work with the department to explore ways to increase the use of the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR). We believe as local communities gain a better understanding of this tool, they will use it more fully as a resource for managing their local roads, which in turn will benefit the department with more complete local roads data. The Council also continues to monitor and provide policy direction to streamline the process for local governments to obtain environmental reviews on local road improvement projects. This initiative was formalized within the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and moneys were provided from WisDOT beginning with the 2007–2009 state biennial budget to fund these “single points of contact,” also known as transportation liaisons. Effective April 1, 2010, DNR no longer requires a fee with the following new permit applications: waterway permits under Chapter 30, Stats., TRANS 207 reviews and Wetland Water Quality Certifications under Chapter 281, Stats.

The LRSC continues to work with the department and the Midwest Regional University Transportation Center (MRUTC) to develop an online compendium for disseminating transportation information to local units of government and sharing best practices on topical issues, such as local asset management. The Council serves as a conduit for sharing information related to budgetary and economic policy topics, including the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). Finally, the LRSC shares input for improving efficiency and effectiveness of WisDOT local programs.

As we look back on the biennium, a number of long-term projects have seen successful completion and implementation. I would like to congratulate the Council and WisDOT staff for the hard work and effort that have made these initiatives a reality. The Council greatly appreciates the support provided by the department and looks forward to continuing this relationship to maintain the quality of Wisconsin's local road network.

This report is respectfully submitted this 30th day of July, 2010.

Sincerely,

David Botts, Chair

Local Roads and Streets Council



2008–2010 LOCAL ROADS AND STREETS COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP ≈

Wisconsin Towns Association

- » Marilyn Bhend,
Johnson-Marathon
- » Arlyn Helm,
Springbrook-Washburn
- » Eugene Lueck,
Bloomer-Chippewa
- » Terry McMahon,
Yorkville-Racine

Wisconsin Counties Association

- » Dan Fedderly,
Dunn County
- » Gary Kennedy,
Manitowoc County
- » Emmer Shields,
Ashland County
- » Bruce Stelzner,
Chippewa County

Wisconsin Alliance of Cities

- » Dave Botts, Chair, Beloit
- » Rick Jones, Racine
- » Jeff Mantes, Milwaukee
- » Paula Vandehey,
Past Chair, Appleton

Other Participants

- » Tracey McKenney, Federal
Highway Administration

League of Wisconsin Municipalities

- » Bill Beil, Abbottsford
- » John Edlebeck, Waupaca
- » Dennis Jordan, Lake Geneva
- » Valerie Mellon, Manitowoc

Regional Planning Commissions & Metropolitan Planning Organizations

- » Walt Raith,
East Central Wisconsin RPC
- » Sheldon Johnson,
Northwest Wisconsin RPC

WisDOT Staff

- » Mary Forlenza, WisDOT
Staff Chair, Chief, LTPF
- » Rod Clark, Director, BTLR
- » Lori Richter, Unit Leader,
Local State Programs
- » Will Kline, Unit Leader,
Local Federal Programs
- » Other WisDOT staff,
as needed

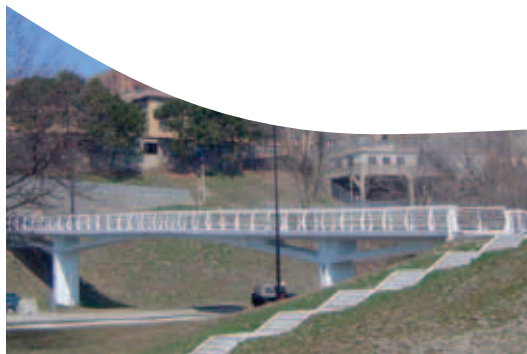
* LTPF - Local Transportation
Programs & Finance

* BTLR - Bureau of Transit,
Local Roads, Railroads & Harbors

LOCAL ROADS AND STREETS COUNCIL OVERVIEW ≈

Wisconsin's expansive 115,000-mile road network consists largely of local highways, roads and streets that are operated and maintained by counties, cities, villages and towns. This integrated system provides residents and non-residents alike with a high level of mobility for daily trips to work, school, shopping and other routine destinations, as well as for vacation travel. Wisconsin's transportation system is also vital to the state's economy and has been identified as a major catalyst in the state's progress toward economic recovery.

The Local Roads and Streets Council (LRSC) evaluates issues that have an impact on the local road system and makes recommendations to the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). These proposals promote the continued preservation, improvement and maintenance of a high quality local transportation system to meet the mobility and safety needs of the traveling public, and contribute to the state's long-term economic well being.





LOCAL ROADS AND STREETS COUNCIL ORGANIZATION ≈

The Local Roads and Streets Council was created by the WisDOT Secretary in 1995, forming a non-lobbying partnership between the state and local government representatives dedicated to improving and preserving the quality of Wisconsin’s local roads and streets. The Council is made up of representatives from all levels of local government, including counties, cities, villages, towns, regional planning commissions (RPCs) and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), along with WisDOT staff.

The role of the Council has evolved as the issues encountered by local officials and WisDOT have changed. For example, the LRSC has served as a conduit of information between WisDOT staff and local government associations following the passage and implementation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). This partnership has enhanced communications, helping both local and state staff respond to guidelines and meet rapid deadlines. Additionally, as web-based networking and information sharing has gained greater acceptance around the state, the Council has worked with University of Wisconsin staff in creating an online collaborative Compendium for Local Roads. The LRSC will continue to respond to the needs and priorities of those involved in the improvement of the state’s local transportation system.

In 2008, the LRSC was restructured to eliminate the sub-committee structure. This approach has allowed the Council to focus its efforts on high-priority initiatives through ad hoc work groups and has allowed WisDOT staff to serve the Council while meeting their multiple tasks and objectives within the department. Through these changes, active participation with the LRSC has continued to extend beyond the Council to include outside stakeholders whose special skills and expertise contribute to the committee’s efforts.

This report highlights the LRSC’s work activities and accomplishments that have occurred during the period July 2008–June 2010.

LOCAL ROADS AND STREETS COUNCIL ACCOMPLISHMENTS ≈

Over the past two years, the Local Roads and Streets Council has continued to make progress on a number of long-term objectives while working on new initiatives to further enhance the governance and operation of Wisconsin’s local transportation system.

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The Council discussed the possible development of an incentive program linked to General Transportation Aids to encourage communities to submit their pavement ratings to WisDOT. Such a program could significantly bolster the department’s ability to assess the condition of local roads and streets, particularly in conjunction with specific projects. After further discussion between the Council and WisDOT staff, it was determined that such a program was not necessary at the current time. This is partially due





to the fact that compliance with the pavement rating reporting requirement has exceeded the department's expectations.

Over the past several years WisDOT staff members, along with guidance from the Council, have been working with the DNR to create a Single Point of Contact for local officials in the various regions of the state. One significant issue involved the collection of permit

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fees by the DNR. The Council wanted to ensure these fees would no longer be charged to local communities if the DNR were to receive funding from WisDOT to support this program. After further negotiation, the agencies worked to resolve this issue and, as of April 1, 2010, permit fees are waived for communities.

The Council has continued its role as an important channel of information between the

department and local associations. WisDOT staff has continually informed Council members about progress on the state and federal local program cycles. For the state-funded Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP), the Council reviewed forms and the process to help staff successfully kick off the new program cycle. Additionally, the Council reviewed the Connections 2030 Plan during this timeframe to help the department gather initial impressions of the plan. The presentation to the Council placed special attention on local roads and bridges and how the plan addresses them. As noted above, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) was implemented by WisDOT staff during this period. This effort took a great deal of staff time but the Council continued to receive important updates to share with local associations concerning the ARRA process and project delivery.

As a result of ongoing Council efforts to improve the dissemination of best management practices to local officials, WisDOT staff worked with the Midwest Regional University Transportation Center (MRUTC) to develop the framework for an interactive,

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web-based compendium of resources for local transportation officials. The Council has worked with the MRUTC project team, providing guidance and feedback to create a practical, useful tool for local governments. Content on the compendium will be added by local officials and other interested parties, ensuring the relevance of the materials to practitioners. Additionally, the compendium will list print resources, experts and forum items across a wide array of topics of interest to local transportation officials. The Council will continue to support the development of this tool, which will be an excellent site for local officials looking for guidance and information.

For ongoing information about the LRSC and its activities, please visit the Web site at www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/lrsc/index.htm



