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Dear Local Government Partners,

Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is asking local governments to review existing local program project opportunities in a new statewide effort to use expected federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding. While the exact amount of additional funding is unknown, solid planning estimates show the increase will be significant. Once final funding amounts are known from the United States Department of Transportation, WisDOT will submit a funding distribution plan to the Wisconsin State Legislature for review and approval, or modification and approval.

Time is of the essence in planning for the use of 2022 federal funding. Accordingly, WisDOT announced at the Wisconsin County Highways Association Road School on 1/18/22 that solicitations for local program projects will begin this month to prepare for use of BIL funding.

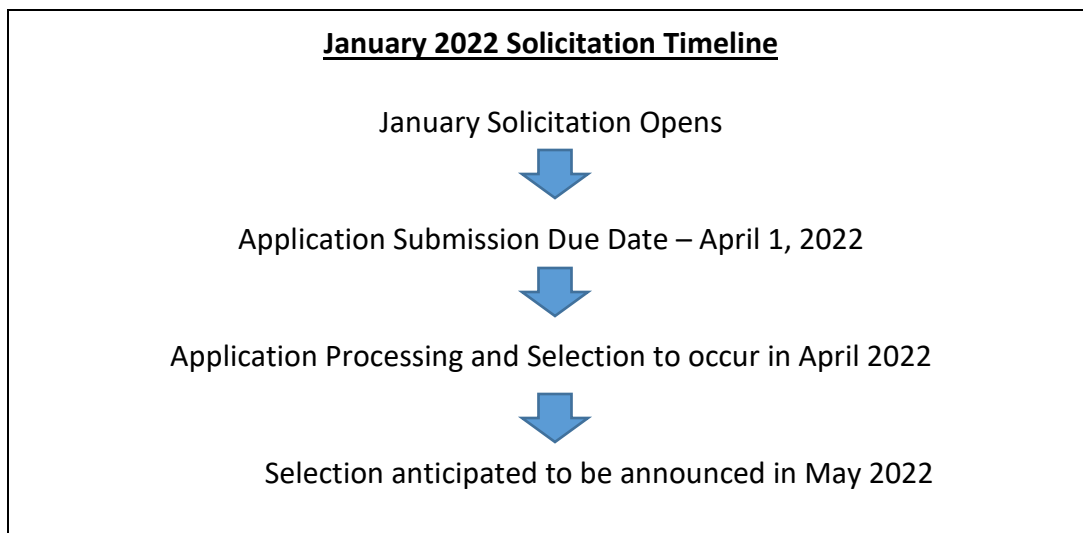
WisDOT will start with two solicitations for supplemental local program projects – a January 2022 solicitation to generate a list of construction projects that might be able to utilize the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2022 funding, and a February 2022 solicitation to generate a list of design and construction projects to utilize funding in FFY 2023 - 2026. The BIL is a five-year bill covering FFY 2022 through 2026.

What Must Be Done to Apply for FFY 2022 Funding – The January Solicitation

To apply for the January 2022 solicitation, local governments must move very quickly. The Federal Highway Association (FHWA) requires FFY 2022 funding to be “obligated” by September 30th, 2022. As such, to use the FFY 2022 funding, WisDOT will be soliciting for local program construction projects only; design will not be considered in the January solicitation. If a construction project is selected to use FFY 2022 funding, locals must submit project Plan, Specification, and Estimate (PS&E) packages no later than August 1, 2022 to facilitate project construction lettings that will meet federal obligation deadlines.

To meet the tight timelines to use FFY 2022 federal funding for construction, these projects must have designs completed or designs that could be completed quickly. Project applications submitted in the January 2022 solicitation must also be eligible for federal funding. As stated earlier, project design funding will not be considered until the February local program solicitation. The January solicitation will exclusively focus on construction projects. Examples of construction projects typically eligible for federal funding include:

- Preservation – mill & overlay
- Resurface
- Pavement Replacement
- Bridge Rehabilitation – deck repairs
- Bridge Replacement – replace deck, girders, or abutments



For the January 2022 solicitation, it is recommended to avoid projects with complexities that would add time to the construction readiness process. For example, it would be prudent to avoid projects with significant environmental work, real estate, utility, or railroad issues.

In January, WisDOT will be soliciting for projects in the following programs:

- Surface Transportation Program (STP)
- Local Bridge Improvement Assistance Program

WisDOT will be using the current Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ) solicitation processes to evaluate project readiness for these two separate programs for FFY 2022. If you have questions about the FFY 2022 TAP or CMAQ programs, please contact WisDOT.

Please also note that while FFY 2022 Local Bridge projects will be included in the January solicitation, FFY 2022 BIL bridge funding does not have to be obligated by 9/30/2022, like it does for STP. Therefore, applicants have more time to submit bridge applications and could elect to utilize the February 2022 BIL supplemental local project solicitation for those bridge projects.

What Must Be Done to Apply for FFY 2023 Through 2026 Funding – The February Solicitation

The February 2022 supplemental solicitation will start the application process for local design and construction projects seeking to receive funding in FFY 2023 and beyond. Project applications will be considered in the following programs:

- Surface Transportation Program (STP)
- Local Bridge Improvement Assistance Program
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ)

Applications may be submitted for design and construction, or construction only. Projects must be eligible for federal funding.

February 2022 Solicitation Timeline

February Solicitation Opens



February Solicitation Application Due Date – June 1, 2022



Application Processing and Selection to occur in June and July 2022



Selection anticipated to be announced in August 2022

WisDOT greatly appreciates your time and diligence in working on this call for supplemental local program projects. Both the January and February solicitations are meant to provide WisDOT with a list of candidate projects when the new BIL funding becomes available. It is expected that funding amounts will be posted to the WisDOT Local Programs website when WisDOT has the Wisconsin Legislature's approval to utilize federal dollars. Project selections are expected to be announced between May and August, depending upon the solicitation. Notification of project selection will be in both follow up emails to local governments and on the WisDOT website. WisDOT will continue to release updated program information as it becomes available.

In the next week, more details will be posted on WisDOT's website about the solicitations at www.wisconsinstate.gov. We are working to best position Wisconsin to administer and use the federal dollars, when directed, to the best of our abilities. Working together with you, our local partners, we will improve the transportation network across Wisconsin.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Murray, AICP

Director – Bureau of Transit, Local Roads, Railroads & Harbors
Division of Transportation Investment Management