



STATE HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

BACKGROUND: Although the state retains ownership over its state trunk highway system, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) contracts with Wisconsin's 72 counties to perform routine maintenance on these roadways, including winter snow removal and roadside mowing. The contracts entered into between the state and county highway departments are a model for cooperation and efficiency. This partnership has served the citizens of Wisconsin well and has existed since the inception of the Wisconsin state trunk highway system.

An inadequately maintained state highway system reduces Wisconsin's ability to attract new business and grow the economy. A major factor in business relocation decisions is the quality of local infrastructure, particularly roads. Due to a backlog of needs and limited resources, the state trunk highway system has been in critical need of additional investment. As a result, the legislature increased the funding for Routine Maintenance Agreements with counties by \$2.5 million in FY 2013-14 and \$50 million in FY 2014-15. This is a total funding increase in the current biennium of \$52.5 million. Establish a statutory separation between State Highway Maintenance dollars, used to fund Routine Maintenance Agreements with counties, and state highway operations.

CURRENT STATUS: Counties are increasing the level of service provided to the state trunk highway system as a result of the additional investments made by the legislature in recent biennial budgets. The investment made is leading to the elimination of the growing gap between actual funds received by counties for state highway maintenance and the funding necessary to meet the maintenance needs as indicated by the Level of Service (LOS) model. Such funding is necessary to meet the costs of maintaining system expansion, increased materials, equipment and labor costs and increased demand for services.

REQUESTED ACTION: WCHA and WCA support increasing the funding level adopted for state highway maintenance in the current biennial budget and in the upcoming biennial budgets, to keep pace with the increasing and ongoing system maintenance needs.

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