

WisDOT: Announces 2017 Excellence in Design Awards

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Awards recognize projects overseen by WisDOT staff and private consultants in Douglas, Portage, Brown, Door, La Crosse, Dane, Dodge and Milwaukee counties

As part of the recent American Council of Engineering Companies conference held in Wisconsin Dells, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) announced seven Excellence in Highway Design Awards for projects completed last year. Top winners include bridge design projects in Douglas and Brown counties, rural highway projects in Portage and La Crosse counties, urban highway projects in Dane and Door counties, and a local transportation project in Dodge County. Photos of the award-winning projects can be found on the [WisDOT website](#).

“These awards recognize design work completed by WisDOT engineers and our private consultant partners,” said Beth Cannestra, director of WisDOT’s Bureau of Project Development. “Determining award-winning design projects is a challenging task handled by a panel of judges from the Federal Highway Administration, WisDOT and private firms.” Categories and award recipients include:

Excellence in Structure Design:

- Ayres Associates of Waukesha for the US 2 Bong Bridge project in Douglas County. The project involved complex bridge preservation work including a new concrete deck, painting and adjustments to suspension cables to enhance the bridge’s dependability and appearance.
- WisDOT NE Region staff were recognized for work on the WIS 96 Fox River

bridge project in the Brown County community of Wrightstown. The old structure was replaced with a 14-span bridge that will accommodate larger vehicles such as trucks and farm equipment, as well as pedestrians and bicyclists.

Excellence in Urban Design:

- The Strand Team (consisting of Strand Associates, AECOM, KL Engineering, CORRE, and Ken Saiki Design) for the US 18 Verona Road project in Dane County. The project features a single point interchange that will optimize traffic flow. About 65,000 vehicles travel daily along Verona Road and 120,000 vehicles daily on the Beltline.
- WisDOT NE Region staff were recognized for work on a three-quarter-mile segment of WIS 42 from County Walk Drive to Scandia Road in the Door County community of Sister Bay. Reconstruction of the urban roadway was completed under traffic, ahead of schedule and under budget while minimizing public disruption. The corridor accommodates about 7,000 vehicles on an average day, but can experience twice that volume during peak travel periods.

Excellence in Rural Highway Design:

- Becher-Hoppe Associates of Wausau for the J-turn located at WIS 54 and County U in Portage County. The first of its kind in the state, the J-turn with auxiliary lanes is designed to reduce serious crashes by changing how vehicles cross WIS 54. While not a solution for all intersections, J-turns can help to maintain access with minimal impacts and costs compared to a standard interchange. A video demonstrating how the J-turn design works can be found on the [WisDOT YouTube site](#).
- WisDOT SW Region staff were recognized for the WIS 35 project between US 53 and Poplar St. in La Crosse County. The project made improvements to a portion of the Great River Road including new roundabouts and turn lanes.

Excellence in Local Program Design:

- WisDOT SW Region staff for the County KW bridge over Pratt Creek in Dodge County. The original aging bridge was replaced using a technique known as Geosynthetic Reinforced Soil - Integrated Bridge System (GRS-IBS). It uses basic earthwork techniques similar to retaining wall construction that minimize costs, project duration and motorist inconvenience. GRS-IBS is an innovative

alternative for smaller, single-span bridges over low-velocity waterways.