

Dept. of Transportation: 2023 projects improve quality of life in Wisconsin

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The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is wrapping up 2023 with a look back at the work done to improve communities across Wisconsin. WisDOT spent the year focused on investing in Wisconsin's infrastructure, public safety, innovation and the future of our transportation system.

"Making an investment is about more than just dollars and cents. It's about improving the safety, mobility and quality of life in every corner of the state," Secretary Craig Thompson said. "That's exactly what WisDOT has done along with our partners this year. I'm proud of the team at WisDOT and I'm excited about the work we'll do together in 2024."

The [WisDOT 2023 Year in Review video](#) recaps highlights and accomplishments from the past year.

Investing in infrastructure

Since 2019, WisDOT and partners have improved more than 7,400 miles of roadway and 1,780 bridges as Governor Tony Evers' administration continues to focus on revitalization of Wisconsin's infrastructure.

2023 accomplishments include:

- The 2023-2025 Biennial Budget is the third state budget in a row to increase funding for transportation improvements in all corners of the state.

2023 project investments funded more than 350 projects, including:

- Completed the [Zoo Interchange](#) in Milwaukee County, providing a critical hub for commerce and tourism that benefits the entire state.
- Improved the [WIS 15](#) commuter route between New London and the Fox Cities.
- Completed [US 14/South Avenue](#) reconstruction to improve safety and connectivity in La Crosse.
- Widened WIS 21 in north central Wisconsin, enhancing safety for travelers.

[Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#): Nearly \$606 million in federal funds have been awarded for more than 500 projects throughout Wisconsin.

In partnership with Minnesota, submitted federal [grant applications](#) to replace the Blatnik Bridge between Superior and Duluth – an important connection for our states.

Harbors: Invested \$6.2 million in [Harbor Assistance Program](#) grants to take advantage of Wisconsin's unique geography and reach worldwide markets using its maritime routes.

Rail: [Received federal funding](#) to study Amtrak passenger rail expansions, including adding Eau Claire and Madison along the route between Milwaukee and the Twin Cities and adding an additional round trip between Milwaukee and the Twin Cities.

Investing in safety

2023 accomplishments include:

- Safety First Initiative: Launched in 2023 to review how WisDOT divisions work together to improve safety for all transportation system users.
- Enforcement: The Division of State Patrol invested more than 400 hours in aerial speed enforcement missions and continued critical partnerships with other police agencies to combat reckless driving in communities throughout the state.
- Awareness messaging: Launched [new video advertisements](#) to encourage drivers to think of the people impacted by risky driving. Partnered with Wisconsin football legend Donald Driver for [Buckle Up Phone Down Day](#), to urge people to make good decisions behind the wheel.
- Work zone safety: Through federal grant funding, WisDOT will develop innovations to make our work zones safer for people on both sides of the barrels.

Investing in innovation

2023 accomplishments include:

- [New driver license](#): The Wisconsin Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) upgraded security features on Wisconsin driver license and ID cards to make them more resistant to fraud.
- Online services: The DMV continues to be recognized as an industry leader for expanding its [online services](#), including vehicle titling and registration renewal.
- Online maps: Published an [online archive](#) featuring 100 years of Wisconsin's official state highway maps and released more custom [geographic information systems maps](#) to help the public find certain landmarks or locations, including [Scenic Byways](#).
- 511 Wisconsin: Updated the look of the [511 Wisconsin website](#) as we continue to invest in improvements to the free information system that keeps travelers up to date on the latest traffic conditions.
- Electric vehicles: Continued rollout of the [2023 Wisconsin Electric Vehicle Infrastructure plan](#). New funding will allow for grants to build EV charging stations across the state.
- [Connected and Automated Vehicles](#): Partnered with first responders to understand how this technology impacts their work. Received a federal grant to test an Automated Truck Mounted Attenuator designed to protect highway workers from crashes.

Investing in the future

2023 accomplishments include:

- Conferences: Hosted major [regional](#) and [international](#) conferences, bringing officials and industry experts together to shape the future of transportation.
- Dual-language signs: Two more Tribes ([St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin](#) and [Forest County Potawatomi](#)) installed dual-language signs on state highways to designate Tribal lands in native and English languages.
- Long-range planning: Moved forward on the [Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050](#) and the [Wisconsin State Freight Plan](#).
- Recruitment: Created the WisDOT Office of Workforce Development to centralize workforce planning efforts and develop the next generation of professionals. Focused on diversity in recruitment by launching new campaigns to [hire law enforcement officers](#) and invested in partnerships that support

specialty programs to [train highway workers](#).