

# Dunn County: Proposed shared revenue increase would greatly benefit Dunn County

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MENOMONIE, Wis. — A proposal to increase state shared revenue currently being debated in the Legislature would increase the amount Dunn County receives by 46.4 percent or over \$1 million annually, according to a recent analysis of the legislation.

“Our shared revenue payments have been stagnant for many years, and this increase would be significant as we begin looking at our 2024 budget and tax levy,” said Kelly McCullough, chair of the Dunn County Board of Supervisors.

According to the Legislative Fiscal Bureau, the bill increasing shared revenue, which passed the state Assembly and is being considered by the Senate, would increase the county’s shared revenue amount from \$2.21 million a year now to \$3.24 million, a boost of 46.4 percent. Other counties in western Wisconsin would experience similar percentage increases, including 47.3 percent for Eau Claire County and 60.4 percent for Chippewa County.

Municipalities in Dunn County also would fare better under the bill under consideration compared to current levels. The city of Menomonie would receive \$3.79 million annually, an increase of 19.3 percent, for example. Percentage increases for the villages in Dunn County would be Boyceville, 15 percent; Colfax, 18 percent; Downing, 147 percent; Elk Mound, 21 percent; Knapp, 31 percent; Ridgeland, 52 percent; and Wheeler, 29 percent.

“We hope our local elected officials can work with their colleagues in Madison to pass a bill that will be signed into law giving our county and municipalities the

increases we all need to provide essential services for our constituents,” McCullough said.

Shared revenue is unrestricted funds the state sends to local governments and is used to provide essential services such as police and fire. The Wisconsin Counties Association has said that in the 1980s, shared revenue represented almost a third of the revenue local governments had to deliver these services, while in 2021 shared revenue made up just 11 percent of local governments’ budgets.

In addition, Kris Korpela, Dunn County manager, told the County Board recently that because of limits the state currently imposes on the amount of property taxes the county can collect, tax revenues have waned compared to inflationary increases. The county could increase its tax levy by 1.35 percent in 2022, she said, while inflation was 6.5 percent.

State aid covered 46.4 percent of Wisconsin counties costs in 1987, but this percentage declined to 25.9 percent by 2019. The local share of county revenues, made up of taxes and other fees, accounted for 51 percent in 1987, she said, and was 71 percent in 2019.

“Our local taxpayers are making up a significantly larger portion of the budget in recent years,” Korpela said. “That is why this proposed increase in our shared revenue is so important to Dunn County taxpayers.”