

Gov. Evers: Budget proposal invests \$300 million in capital projects across Wisconsin

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MADISON — In his 2023-25 biennial budget proposal, Gov. Tony Evers is proposing a \$300 million investment to continue three successful grant programs previously funded by the federal American Rescue Plan Act to support local and regionally-based capital building projects. The governor is proposing continuing the successful Neighborhood Capital Investment Fund Grant Program to expand the state's workforce by investing in local community development, housing, and neighborhood resources to help working families succeed, the Healthcare Infrastructure Capital Grant Program to expand access to healthcare in underserved communities, including rural communities across the state, and the Tourism Capital Investment Grant Program to support the continued incredible growth of Wisconsin's travel and tourism industry.

In his 2023-25 Biennial Budget Message, delivered [earlier this month](#), Gov. Evers highlighted these investments, along with a \$200 million investment to continue the Workforce Innovation Grant Program, as key components to building a strong, successful workforce and supporting working families, uplifting communities, and continuing the state's economic momentum:

“There's no one-size-fits-all solution to our state's workforce challenges. We trust our local innovators, communities, business, and economic development partners to know best what they need to support a strong, successful workforce and bring new workers to their area. They might need more high-quality child care providers, they might need more clinics and accessible healthcare, or to expand job training in high-demand industries—we must meet those unique needs, whatever they may be.

“It’s why one of the most significant investments we make in this budget is to invest nearly \$500 million into programs designed to support local and regionally-based projects in communities and regions to help expand the state’s workforce, invest in healthcare infrastructure, and other capital projects in communities across our state.

“These innovative investments will ensure communities have what they need for local workers to live here, work here, and raise a family here based on local needs—and that’s critically important.”

A breakdown of the governor’s plans to provide \$300 million to support local and regionally-based projects to help expand the state’s workforce, invest in healthcare infrastructure, and other capital projects in communities across the state is provided below.

Neighborhood Capital Investment Fund Grant Program

In addition to his [\\$200 million investment](#) to continue the Workforce Innovation Grant Program that supports long-term, local solutions to help employers find employees and workers find and maintain work, the governor is proposing providing \$150 million to continue the Neighborhood Capital Investment Fund Grant Program, which provides grants to local and Tribal governments to invest in community and regionally-based solutions to bolster Wisconsin’s workforce for the future, such as projects to build affordable housing, increase transit and transportation access, and expand child care, or other areas based on unique local workforce needs. To date, this program has provided [more than \\$200 million](#) to support 45 projects statewide, such as developing a new innovation center in the city of Kenosha to support entrepreneurs and startups and provide educational and training opportunities, expanding affordable workforce housing in the city of Eau Claire, and building a new Black Business Hub to support small businesses and entrepreneurs in Madison.

Healthcare Infrastructure Capital Grant Program

Gov. Evers is also proposing \$100 million to continue the Healthcare Infrastructure Capital Grant Program, which provides grants for investments in healthcare infrastructure necessary to expand access to affordable healthcare, build facilities in areas of high-need, and reduce disparities in healthcare outcomes and services statewide, among other key priorities. To date, [more than \\$100 million](#) in grants have been awarded to 27 projects statewide to address healthcare access needs in

communities across the state, such as building a new critical access hospital of Marshfield Clinic Health System in Park Falls, helping HealthNet of Rock County expand their services at a new free and charitable clinic in Janesville, and establishing a new mental health outpatient Day Stabilization Services at SSM Health Ripon Community Hospital.

Tourism Capital Investment Grant Program

Finally, the governor is proposing \$50 million for the Tourism Capital Investment Grant Program, which provides funding to assist local and Tribal governments and nonprofit organizations to bolster Wisconsin's tourism, travel, and lodging economies. In November 2022, Gov. Evers [announced](#) that visitor spending in Wisconsin grew 5.9 percent in September 2022 compared to September 2019, which was the largest gain of any month since the start of the pandemic when compared to the same month in 2019. In December 2022, Gov. Evers [also announced](#) that the outdoor recreation industry contributed a record-setting \$8.7 billion to the state's gross domestic product in 2021 and that the outdoor economy grew by 14.1 percent—more than three times faster than the state's overall economy. Economic impact data for 2021 also showed tourism generated \$20.9 billion in total economic impact—a 21 percent increase from 2020—and supported more than 169,000 full- and part-time jobs, demonstrating the significant economic impact of the industry in Wisconsin.

The Tourism Capital Investment Grant Program ensures the state's travel and tourism economy continues its momentum by providing support for major tourism-related capital improvement projects across the state that help promote, maintain, or bolster Wisconsin's tourism industry. To date, [\\$21.9 million](#) in grants have been awarded to 26 local governments and organizations through the Tourism Capital Investment Grant Program, including investments to support the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation for facility upgrades to better serve the more than 10,000 participants who come to northern Wisconsin each year for the "Birkie," to construct the new Experience Greater Green Bay Visitor Center in Green Bay, and to expand maritime infrastructure at Port Milwaukee to accommodate larger cruise ships. An online version of this release is available [here](#).