

# USDA: Invests \$2.3 million to improve infrastructure for rural residents in Mason, Wisconsin

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**MASON, Wis., June 13, 2023** – United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Wisconsin State Director, Julie Lassa, alongside other local officials, today visited the village of Mason in Bayfield County to help the community celebrate improvements to local infrastructure.

Today's gathering, ahead of Mason Days, marks near-completion of improvements to the village's wastewater treatment facility and start of road work within the village. The following USDA Rural Development funds have been obligated to the village since 2020:

- In August 2022, a USDA [Community Facilities Direct grant](#) of \$242,250 provided additional funding for road improvements in the village.
- In June 2022, the village received additional financing via a loan of \$100,000 and a grant of \$289,000 through the USDA [Water and Waste Disposal Loans and Grant program](#) due to increased construction costs for the wastewater treatment facility.
- In August 2020, the village received loan of \$371,000 and a grant of \$1,070,000 through the USDA [Water and Waste Disposal Loans and Grant](#) program for upgrades to the village wastewater treatment facility.
- In March 2020, the village was awarded a \$250,000 USDA Community Facilities Disaster Grant for road improvements in the village.
- In March 2020, the village was awarded a \$30,000 [Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and Households \(SEARCH\) grant](#) for development of a preliminary engineering report to address problems with the

wastewater treatment facility.

Construction staff are scheduled to begin start-up of the irrigation system at the wastewater treatment facility this week.

A local contractor based in Mason, Ritola, Inc., is the prime contractor for the road work which consists of road repair, 22 culvert replacements, and manhole rehabilitation throughout the village.

### **Background:**

The [Community Facilities Direct Loans and Grants program](#) provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. An essential community facility is defined as a facility that provides an essential service to the local community for the orderly development of the community in a primarily rural area, and does not include private, commercial, or business undertakings.

The [Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant program](#) provides funding for clean and reliable drinking water systems, sanitary sewage disposal, sanitary solid waste disposal, and storm water drainage. The program serves people and businesses in eligible rural areas with populations of 10,000 or less.

The [Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and Households \(SEARCH\) program](#) helps very small, financially distressed rural communities with predevelopment feasibility studies, design and technical assistance on proposed water and waste disposal projects.

Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities, create jobs, and improve the quality of life for millions of Americans in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety, and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural, tribal and high-poverty areas. For more information, visit <https://www.rd.usda.gov/wi>.

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