

OUR GREAT COMMUNITY

Quarterly newsletter of Washington County, Wisconsin
DISCOVER. CONNECT. PROSPER.



COUNTY EXECUTIVE
JOSH SCHOEMANN



County Launches Heart & Homestead - Earned Down Payment Incentive



Dear Fellow Citizens,

Washington County launched a new initiative this month, the Heart & Homestead Earned Down Payment Incentive in partnership with Economic Development Washington County (EDWC). It aims to make homeownership more attainable by providing homebuyers the opportunity to earn back the incentive through community service and charitable giving. It can change the lives of individuals and families by giving them the opportunity to own a home!

Home is where the heart is, and our incentive harkens back to the principles of the Homestead Act of 1862. President Abraham Lincoln said of the Act that the leading object of government is “to elevate the condition of men; to lift artificial weights from all shoulders; to clear the paths of laudable pursuit for all, to afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life.”

Due to rising costs and competitive markets, many buyers find that purchasing a home of their own has become out of reach. By creatively using community involvement as an incentive, the Heart and Homestead program helps ensure that buyers who want to put down roots and become a part of the neighborhood will be active participants in the community, using both their time and resources to support local initiatives.

The incentive is available to individuals 18 years and older who are constructing or purchasing an owner-occupied dwelling under \$420,000 located in Washington County, that serves as their primary residence. The incentive is pre-paid at the time of home closing at 10% of the purchase price, or \$20,000, whichever is less.

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Recipients accrue Incentive Earnings over the first 5 years by contributing volunteer time at the rate of \$25 earned for every 1 hour volunteered and/or contributing donations at the rate of 70 cents earned for every \$1.00 donated to participating agencies.

Heart & Homestead rewards those willing to serve their community with an incentive for the opportunity of home ownership. At the core of Heart & Homestead is creating the opportunity for making homeownership more attainable and building strong social networks that are filled with people who are invested in the community.

Our intent with Heart & Homestead is to help grow Washington County and keep our schools strong, keep our volunteer organizations strong and our community strong. This is a huge incentive and advantage to attract people to Washington County and grow Our Great Community.

For details on applying, email HeartAndHomestead@WashCoWisCo.gov, call 262-335-4445 or visit our County website to apply: https://www.washcowisCo.gov/departments/community_development/heart_and_homestead

Josh Schoemann
County Executive

Washington County Shared Revenue Dollars Translate to Shared Services

Much progress has been made at the monthly local elected municipal officials meetings hosted by County Board Chair Jeff Schleif and County Executive Schoemann, resulting in a variety of shared services to provide much-needed efficiencies and stretch the taxpayer dollar. Shared services should continue to be an important tool used to minimize cost while maintaining quality services to the citizens of Washington County.

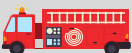
The Shared Revenue Reforms which were funded as part of the 2023 – 2025 State Budget, included an “Innovation Fund” to incentivize shared services and consolidations among government units across Wisconsin, and the repeal of the tax levy penalty for such cooperation. The time is now to push forward on shared services and consolidation. The elimination of duplicative services is central to reprioritizing savings and achieving smaller and more effective government. Shared services opportunities and grant programs have been identified for the 2023-2025 Budget cycle to achieve the mutual goals of the County and our municipal partners. Summary of the grant opportunities and shared services efforts:



LEAD LATERAL GRANTS

The public health threat that exists to occupants of homes with lead laterals is real and well documented. The county should marshal the resources of public health, engineering and finance to work with municipal partners who need support in replacing these lines, including leveraging state and federal funds. \$3M of ARPA funds have been allocated for the creation of a Lead Lateral Grant Program. The county has committed to cover the costs for the Village of Kewaskum specifically for properties impacted by the ongoing STH 45 project. Grant proposals have also been extended to the City of West Bend. See details on page 5.

GRANTS



FIRE & EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS) GRANTS

The Fire & EMS Grant Program will provide financial assistance directly to the local units of government that fund eligible fire departments and fire/EMS organizations to assist in the provision of critical staffing, training, and equipment. The dollars will be distributed based on a predetermined formula that incorporates population, property values, and calls for service into the calculation.

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PUBLIC SAFETY: RADIO SYSTEM GRANTS & DISPATCH

The County spends more than \$1.8M annually for the radio system. Grants will be issued to municipalities to reimburse their share of these costs. The cost share for each participating municipality will be calculated annually, based on a formula that is similar to the Fire & EMS Grant formula.

In 2020, the Sheriff’s Office began a four-phase project to implement a county-wide buildout of the radio system, currently in phase four - the replacement of end-user equipment. The county grants will fund the replacement radios at the standard level. Agencies wishing to upgrade their radios with additional features may do so at their own expense. Funds have also been allocated to assist our police and EMS/fire agencies in the County with new radios when the need arises in their inventory. The County intends to fund 100% of these new radios at the standard level.

Consolidation of police dispatch services in the Village of Germantown and City of Hartford are currently underway. Germantown is expected to turn over all dispatching responsibilities to the Washington County Sheriff’s Office by the end of 2024.

SHARED SERVICES OPPORTUNITIES



LOCAL ROAD MAINTENANCE

Washington County intends to use its workforce and equipment to enhance the work already being done on projects on the local roadway network. Washington County will not charge the local municipality for the administrative, small tool, workforce or equipment charges. The local municipality is only responsible for material charges. Approximately \$450,000 of additional work is anticipated to be completed on behalf of our municipal partners. Additionally, Washington County will pay for all bridge inspections. See details on page 4.



TAX BILLS/ELECTIONS



The County outsources tax bill printing and mailing, incurring costs which previously were passed on to municipalities. This process will remain the same, except the county will no longer charge municipalities.

The County incurs election costs including ballot printing, labor and training costs necessary to operate the voting machines, licensing fees for the voting machines, election publication in newspapers, and minor election supplies. The county will no longer charge municipalities for these election fees.



MUNICIPAL PLANNER

Unplanned or poorly planned development of communities is a county-wide concern, in particular development of rural land uses into suburban land uses. Washington County is in the process of hiring a Senior Planner for Planning & Community Development to support and assist local municipalities.



IT SERVICES

Significant progress has been made in shared IT services with agreements with the Town of Addison/Allenton Sanitary District, the Village of Newburg, and the Village of Kewaskum. Several other municipalities have also expressed interest. The County has been conducting an up-to-date inventory of municipal equipment and software, and creating an agreement that outlines the scope of services. The county and participating municipalities will keep their systems separate, but maintenance will be handled by the County. The County will also be responsible for services such as security, network configuration, endpoint, and server configuration, as well as general help-desk support.

Investing in Local Roads - Shared Revenue

Washington County’s Strategic Priorities document highlights shared services as a top priority. A primary concern for residents is properly maintaining roadways, a key component to the life expectancy of the pavement and maximizing the taxpayers’ investment. To assist local municipalities with roadway maintenance, Washington County will be providing grants of \$452,651 in Shared Revenue for Public Works projects in 2024 and \$461,510 in 2025. (See chart at right for 2024 project totals).

Several months ago, chief local elected officials met to determine how to distribute the funds. Many options were considered, and a motion to use a formula to have 70% distributed based on road mileage, and 30% equal share was approved.

Funding amounts provided to municipalities can be applied to the expense of the Washington County Highway Department’s labor and equipment including rental expenses. Municipalities are responsible for covering the cost of project materials.

Shared service work has already begun. The Washington County Highway Department has performed mechanical repairs to the Town of Barton’s snowplow fleet and has done mastic work for the Town of Erin. The department is also collaborating with the Town of Farmington and Village of Newburg to chip seal local roads this summer.



Municipality	Total	Percent
Town		
Addison	\$ 33,372	7.4%
Barton	\$ 26,139	5.8%
Erin	\$ 30,118	6.7%
Farmington	\$ 34,314	7.6%
Germantown	\$ 10,189	2.3%
Hartford	\$ 27,283	6.0%
Jackson	\$ 29,576	6.5%
Kewaskum	\$ 23,003	5.1%
Polk	\$ 30,850	6.8%
Trenton	\$ 33,803	7.5%
Wayne	\$ 30,824	6.8%
West Bend	\$ 25,574	5.6%
Village		
Jackson	\$ 20,832	4.6%
Newburg	\$ 10,978	2.4%
Richfield	\$ 65,669	14.5%
Slinger	\$ 20,127	4.4%
	\$ 452,651	100.0%

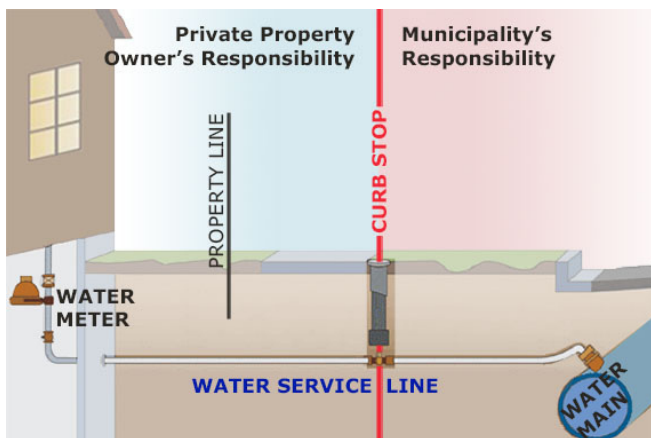
Funding amounts municipalities will be provided in highway department labor and equipment.

The Washington County Highway Department is collaborating with the Town of Farmington and Village of Newburg to chip seal local roads this summer through the shared services program.

Lead Lateral Replacement - A Public Health Concern

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) cites new national research on lead in drinking water that has raised concerns regarding the potential for increased lead levels when partial Lead Service Lines replacement occurs. The Department is advising that municipalities replace lead service lines in their entirety - partially replacing lead service lines can, in fact, increase lead levels in homes.

In most Wisconsin municipalities, the private property owner is responsible for the service line from the curb stop to the home. The municipality is responsible for the service line from the water main to the curb.



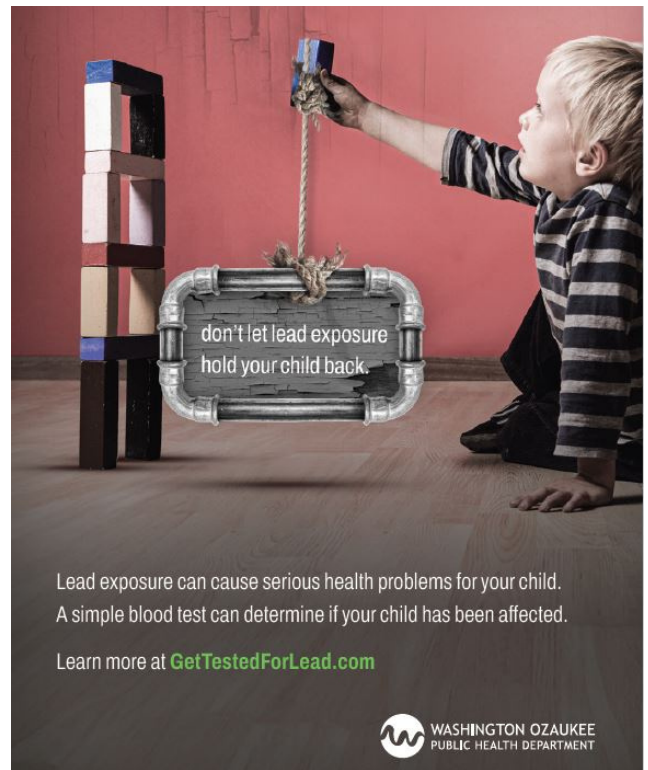
The objective of the county's *Lead Lateral Grant 1* is to remove remaining private lead laterals in their entirety from locations where previous infrastructure work already removed the public side laterals. Grant 1 would cover 100% of the costs. If funding is available, this phase may be expanded to roads reconstructed with public side lead removed in the last 10+ years that have private lead laterals.

Lead Lateral Grant 2 has a two-fold objective: 1) remove lead laterals in their entirety - water main to structure, and 2) assist in road work costs in conjunction with that removal. It would cover 100% of the costs for replacement of any private and public side lead laterals, and both must be completed if they exist.

Grant 2 would total \$20,000 per lateral, broken down as \$5,000 for the private and \$15,000 for the public lateral. This work includes trench restoration, curb or sidewalk replacement, engineering, construction inspection, interior home repair, private trench repair and vegetation removal and re-establishment.

All grants are to be administered by the local municipality that accepted the grant. Roadway eligible costs include asphalt/concrete, gravel, curb and gutter, driveway approaches, storm sewer and sidewalk.

The county has committed to cover the costs for the Village of Kewaskum to remove all lead, both private and public, on the STH 45 project. The City of West Bend is also considering this comprehensive grant program, reaching an agreement with the county that will go before their Council in April. Once approved, these significant lead removal and road reconstruction projects are expected to be completed by the end of 2026.



Building Community Through Social Capital

Following the loneliness and isolation so many experienced during the COVID pandemic, we clearly see the need for the love, care and connectivity of community, whether it's civic groups, churches or athletic leagues. Older adults and people with disabilities are uniquely susceptible, putting them at risk for significant health problems. However, suicide and substance abuse rates among young people demonstrate that this is an issue which should concern us all.

'Social networks' used to mean the couples group that bowled together, or the volunteer fire department that was a home away from home, or the local Lions Club that was a brotherhood and made the community better through its work. Today, social media has co-opted that term and ironically can contribute to a disconnect among people if used to the exclusion of in-person connections.

Unfortunately, fewer and fewer people and businesses are investing the time and resources necessary to build the personal and social resiliency that is so important to a strong community, and even more important in times of both individual and shared adversity. It is up to us to restore these ties that bind for our community, our neighbors and our own well-being.

County government can not solve these challenges, but we are working hard to create the environment and set the example for how to help combat social isolation. A wonderful example this past year involved the Washington County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) creating a program for older adults to learn smartphone technology from high school students. ADRC Director Tammy Anderson, along with students and faculty from Kewaskum High School, won the Interfaith Caregivers Judy Phillips Influencers in Aging Award in 2023 for their work in implementing 'Lessons in Technology Classes' with older adults in Washington County. The older adult participants learned from the students to download apps, create notes, lists, emails and texts, and use FaceTime.

Many of the skills allow the older adults to keep in better touch with friends and family. The class met once a week for six weeks, and three sessions were held over the year. It was heartwarming to see the older adults form friendships with others taking the course, and the students learn from the adults about old phone systems' party lines and rotary dials.

You can build connections in many ways - check on your neighbors, become a church member, or take time to volunteer, It is the love of your neighbor and for your neighbor that strengthens each of us and all of us.

- A message from County Executive Josh Schoemann



For information on the ADRC Technology classes for older adults, contact Tammy at 262-335-4494

Washington County Parks Have So Much to Offer!

Washington County Park	Event	Date	Time	What's Happening? <i>All Events are Weather Dependent</i>
Ackerman's Grove	Tap Yard - West Bend	Opening 05/01/2024	4-9 pm Wed-Sunday	Craft Beer & Great Eats & More! https://www.thetapyards.com/
Glacier Hills	Outdoor Beer Garden & Open House	05/16/2024	5-8 pm	Tour through the Hall / Chapel & Rustic Cabins. Live entertainment! www.facebook.com/washcoparks/
Glacier Hills & Ackerman's Grove	Goat Yoga & Beer Garden	05/29/2024 06/05/2024 06/12/2024 06/19/2024	Times Vary	45 min. Yoga, 15 min. of Goat Snuggles! www.facebook.com/AwakeningHealingandYoga
Ackerman's Grove	Plant & Sip	05/29/2024	6-9 pm	For more information visit: https://www.thetapyards.com/
Sandy Knoll	Barks & Brews	06/30/2024	12-3 pm	Bring your Dogs! - Food Truck & Beer Tasting! Visit the website: www.facebook.com/washcoparks/



Washington County
Natural Resources
Department
333 E. Washington St.,
Suite 2300,
West Bend, WI 53095
Questions? 262.335.4445

Washington County Clean Sweep 2024 Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Register & Pay Online!
washcoparks.com

Waste Drop-off Available at this Location:

Veolia Environmental Services
W124N9451 Boundary Rd.,
Menomonee Fall, WI 53051

NOT ACCEPTING:
TVs, Electronics,
Appliances, Tires or
Latex Paint

Hazardous Waste ONLY

Registration & \$10 Fee Required

- Monday - 11am-6pm
- Wednesday - 11am-6pm
- Saturday - 8am-2pm

A printed receipt is required and will be collected by the Veolia staff.



To Register

- 1) Pay Online at:
washcoparks.com
- 2) Visit the Natural Resources Department
333 E. Washington St., Suite 2300,
West Bend, WI 53095; *or*
- 3) Call 262.335.4808 for a form.

Note: No Payments are accepted at drop-off site!

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Listening Sessions with County Executive Josh Schoemann



Tuesday, MAY 7, 2024
5:30PM - Kohlsville Fire Dept.
7678 County Road WW

Thursday, MAY 9, 2024
9AM - Sandy's Barton Cafe
1735 Barton Ave, West Bend

Friday, MAY 10, 2024
10AM - Addison Town Hall
127 1st St., Allenton

Saturday, MAY 11, 2024
9AM - Germantown Village Hall
N112W17001 Mequon Rd



1PM - Hartford City Hall
109 N. Main Street

11AM - Slinger Village Hall
300 Slinger Road

Please join County Executive Josh Schoemann to voice your concerns, ask questions, or just listen!

Questions or need for special accommodations? Call 262-306-2200





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