



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2017 Wisconsin Act 247
[2017 Senate Bill 85]

Major Highway Project Reports

2017 Wisconsin Act 247 implements certain recommendations set forth in the Legislative Audit Bureau's January 2017 report evaluating the Department of Transportation's (DOT) management of the state highway program.

First, the Act clarifies the types of information that must be included in cost estimates for certain proposed major highway projects. Under state law, the Transportation Projects Commission (TPC) generally must approve major highway projects. Upon TPC's request, DOT must provide TPC with any studies and cost estimates with respect to a proposed major highway project. The Act specifies that when DOT provides a full project cost estimate to TPC, the estimate must include: (1) all costs associated with the project, including all costs before enumeration; (2) design engineering and construction engineering costs; (3) the costs of environmental studies; (4) costs of the project that are paid by another DOT program; (5) the expected date of completion; (6) an estimate of the effects of construction cost inflation; and (7) unexpected costs on the cost of the project.

Second, the Act requires additional information be included in DOT's semiannual report to the TPC and requires this report to also be sent to specified joint and standing legislative committees. Prior law required DOT to report to the TPC every six months on the current status of each major highway project, including the actual and estimated project costs as of the date of the preparation of the report, itemized by major cost categories, on both a cumulative basis from the project's inception and on an updated basis for the period since the last six-month report. The Act requires the semiannual report also include the following information:

- The full project cost estimate of the project as of the date of approval or, if the project is enumerated, enumeration.
- The year in which DOT expects to complete the project as of the date of approval or, if the project is enumerated, enumeration.

This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature's Web site at: <http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov>.

- The full project cost estimate of the project as of the date of the preparation of the report.
- The year in which DOT expects to complete the project as of the date of preparation of the report.
- An explanation of any difference between the full project cost estimates as of the date of approval or enumeration and as of the date of preparation of the report, if not addressed in a previous report.
- DOT's opinion as to whether the project will be completed as originally scheduled without the allocation of additional funds.

The Act specifies that the report must treat separately each project as described in the enumerating statute.

Finally, prior law required DOT to conduct a uniform cost-benefit analysis of each proposed engagement for engineering, consulting, surveying, or other specialized services that involves an expenditure of more than \$300,000. The Act requires DOT to consider and document the results of this analysis before determining whether to undertake a proposed engagement for engineering, consulting, surveying, or other specialized services.

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