

Building Commission Approves \$125.7 Million in Projects Across Wisconsin

Written by GOV Press Wisconsin
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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today announced the Wisconsin State Building Commission approved a total of approximately \$125.7 million in key projects across the state.



“These projects approved by the Commission today represent so much more than building initiatives. They are opportunities for students to learn and grow as leaders in our higher education institutions, for visitors and residents to enjoy our many incredible natural areas and state parks, and for our state to have the resources in place to work with partners to respond quickly and efficiently to an emergency,” said Gov. Evers. “We must continue to make needed investments in our state buildings and infrastructure to ensure we can rely on these essential systems for years to come, and I hope the Joint Finance Committee does just that when they take up our Capital Budget in the weeks to come.”

Highlights of the Commission’s approved projects include:

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- Phase III of a remodeling project at the Milwaukee Readiness Center for the Department of Military Affairs that will provide a more modern, efficient, and safe facility for the various units housed at this location.
- Construction of several Statewide Towers Updates for the Department of Military Affairs that will provide remediation of life-safety, equipment-safety, and code compliance issues at 24 radio communication tower sites in the eastern half of Wisconsin and 29 radio communication tower sites in the western half of Wisconsin. These towers contain the Wisconsin Interoperable System for Communications (WISCOM) radio network that allows state, municipal, federal, and emergency medical entities to communicate.
- The release of Building Trust Funds to begin design on a flush toilet and shower facility renovation project at Peninsula State Park for the Department of Natural Resources.
- Authorizing Phase II to construct the Immersive Welcome Experience, as part of the Old World Wisconsin Guest Entry Experience, for the Wisconsin Historical Society. This project includes restoration of the historic Wittnebels Tavern to its original 1930s state; restoration and a new addition to the Clausing Barn; and a new Guest Services ticketing and restroom building.
- Authority to construct the South Campus Utility Improvements project at the University of Wisconsin (UW)-Madison that will replace and construct new steam and primary electric/signal communication utilities along Dayton Street. This project is crucial in supporting the new Letters and Science Academic Building Irving and Dorothy Levy Hall and future expansion on the east side of campus.
- Authorizing two multi-building fire alarm and protection system renovation projects and one elevator modernization project at UW-Madison as part of the Minor Facilities Renewal Program group enumerations.
- A renewable energy project at UW-Superior for multi-building solar photovoltaic arrays on a former soccer field that will save approximately 500,000 kilowatt hours annually. Since 2019, the State Building Commission has authorized \$8.9 million to develop 9.5 megawatts of solar capacity. These investments will generate 13 gigawatt hours of electric energy annually, delivering more than \$600,000 per year in cost savings. This savings is equivalent to 9,200 metric tons of CO₂, and the electricity generated could power 1,800 homes. All of these projects will be online by January 2024.
- Authorizing 24 maintenance and repair projects for the departments of Administration, Corrections, Military Affairs, Natural Resources, Transportation, Veterans Affairs, Wisconsin Historical Society, State Fair Park, and the UW System, located at various locations in [14 counties](#) across the state.

Earlier this year, Gov. Evers [released](#) his 2023-25 Capital Budget proposal, which included \$3.8 billion in recommended investments for the renovation and renewal of the state's existing infrastructure and to support major projects across the state in 28 counties. The governor's proposal represented one of the strongest investments to date for Wisconsin's facility infrastructure without the burden of 20 years of debt service for general obligation debt. The

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2023-25 Capital Budget Agency Requests and Governor's Recommendations can be found [here](#)

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Following the release of the governor's plan, the State Building Commission met on March 23, 2023, to vote on the governor's recommendations. During the meeting, the Commission [deadlocked on a 4-4 vote](#) on every motion that included projects in the governor's capital budget recommendations, rejecting the governor's proposed nearly \$3.8 billion in investments in state infrastructure. Currently, the governor's 2023-25 Capital Budget proposal is under consideration by the Joint Committee on Finance.

The Building Commission is chaired by Gov. Evers and made up of the following members:

- Sen. Robert Wirch;
- State Sen. Joan Ballweg;
- State Sen. André Jacque;
- State Rep. Jill Billings;
- State Rep. Rob Swearingen;
- State Rep. Robert Wittke; and
- Citizen Member Barb Worcester.