General Transportation Aids

Calculation Process and Data Descriptions

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Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Division of Transportation Investment Management
Bureau of Transit, Local Roads, Railroads & Harbors
Local Transportation Programs & Finance Section

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Description of the Calculation Process and Data Definitions
for General Transportation Aids (GTA)

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Introduction

The General Transportation Aids (GTA) program helps local units of government offset part of their costs to construct, maintain, and operate the state's ~100,000-mile local road network. GTA funds are paid quarterly through an annual distribution of State Transportation Fund revenues.

This document offers background information to help local governments identify how their annual GTA payment level is calculated. It supplements information presented in GTA letters and provides an expanded description of the calculation process and definitions of data inputs used in the GTA calculation. The information below is consistent with terms and verbiage commonly used in GTA letters to local governments.

For general information regarding the GTA program, refer to WisDOT's GTA website. If you require additional guidance or have any questions regarding this document, please contact Megan Feeley, GTA Program Manager, at megan.feeley1@dot.wi.gov or call (608) 267-7261. There is also a **Resource** page at the end of this document.

Overview

WisDOT goes through six major steps to calculate GTA payment levels for municipalities. These procedures are based upon requirements set forth in section (s.)86.30 of Wisconsin Statutes (Wis. Stats.), which governs the GTA program. The calculation process is also derived from the related requirements provided in s. 86.302,Wis. Stats., pertaining to the local road inventory and s. 86.303, Wis. Stats., outlining cost determinations. The major calculation steps for municipalities include:

- **Calculation Preparation: Input GTA Figures** from official data sources and then enter them into a database.
- **Step 1: Calculate Preliminary Share of Costs (SOC) and Rate per Mile (RPM)** amounts for each municipality.
- **Step 2: Determine Preliminary Amount (Greater of SOC or RPM)** for municipalities by selecting the larger of the share-of-costs (SOC) amount and the rate-per-mile (RPM) amount.
- **Step 3: Calculate Minimum and Maximum Cushions (SOC or RPM)** to ensure GTA payments are within the statutory limits. Adjustments may be applied if necessary.
- **Step 4: Apply Cost Cap** to ensure GTA payments are not more than 85% of a municipality's three-year average costs or 98% of a town's three-year average costs if the town is assessed at the bottom quartile of equalized values of towns in the state for a given year.
- **Step 5: Apply Filing Penalty,** if applicable.

The county report is slightly different, as counties are only eligible for SOC payments. The major calculation steps for counties include:

- **Calculation Preparation: Input GTA Figures** from official data sources and then enter them into a database.

- **Step 1: Calculate Share of Costs (SOC)** levels for each county.
- **Step 2: Calculate Appropriate Minimum and Maximum Cushions** to ensure GTA payments are within statutory limits.
- **Step 3: Apply Filing Penalty,** if applicable.

For the purposes of this document:

[Calculation Year] refers to the calendar year for which the GTA calculation is being performed.

[Previous Year] refers to the calendar year directly before the *[Calculation Year]*.

For example, if GTA for 2025 is being calculated, 2024 is the *[Calculation Year]* and 2024 is the *[Previous Year]*. Within the calculation detail provided with your Estimate and Final Calculation, specific years are provided for the *[Previous Year]* and the *[Calculation Year]*.

Calculation Preparation– Input GTA Figures

Once GTA program staff obtains input figures used to run GTA calculations from official data sources, they enter them into a database. Official data sources for the program are specifically identified in s. 86.30 Wis. Stats., which governs the GTA program, s. 86.302 Wis. Stats., which pertains to the local road inventory, and s. 86.303 Wis. Stats., which outlines cost determinations.

CVT Code: This is a unique, five-digit identifier for each local government in the state. The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) assigns the official County- City-Village-Town *(CVT) Codes* for existing communities and newly incorporated communities. For cities and villages located within more than one county, a main county has been designated for GTA reporting purposes, and data such as population, mileage, and reported costs are included within the main county's amounts. Local government representatives should have this *CVT Code* available when contacting WisDOT program staff to facilitate quick and accurate identification of their county or municipality. A complete listing of *CVT Codes* is available on the GTA webpage.

The numbering convention for five-digit *CVT Codes* is as follows:

- Counties: the first two digits identify the county, and the last three digits are zeros. For example, the CVT code for Adams County is *01000*.
- Cities: the first two digits identify the county within which the city is located, the third digit is *2*, and DOA assigns the last two digits. For example, the CVT code for the City of Adams in Adams County is *01201*.
- Villages: the first two digits identify the county within which the village is located, the third digit is *1*, and DOA assigns the last two digits. For example, the CVT code for the Village of Friendship in Adams County is *01126*.
- Towns: the first two digits identify the county within which the town is located, the third digit is *0* , and DOA assigns the last two digits. For example, the CVT code for the Town of Adams in Adams County is *01002*.

6-Year Average Costs: Average costs for the most recent six-year reporting period used to calculate GTA payment levels. For example, when calculating GTA for calendar year 2025, the 6-year average used in the calculation process would include reported costs from 2023-2018. *6-year Average Costs* are used to calculate GTA for communities on the SOC calculation method.

3-Year Average Costs: Average annual costs for the most recent three-year period. For example, when calculating GTA for calendar year 2025, the 3-year average used for this calculation would include reported costs from 2023 – 2021. GTA payment to a municipality may not exceed 85% of its 3-year average. For a town assessed in the bottom quartile of equalized values of towns in the state for a given year, the town may not exceed 98% of its 3-year average.

[Year] Costs: Net transportation costs for the most recent reporting period (reported eligible expenditures minus reported eligible revenues). For example, for calculation year 2025, the most recent costs included within the calculation will be from 2023.

> *NOTE: GTA staff obtains cost information from the* [*Municipal Financial Report Form*](#) *each local community files annually with the Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR). Annual costs used to calculate GTA payments are net local expenditures and do not include costs funded by state or federal grants or other aids programs. Some costs – most notably those for law enforcement, street lighting, and storm sewers – are factored in or prorated based upon community type and population. The* [*Cost Reporting Manual*](#) *identifies eligible revenues and expenses, as well as factoring levels for each expenditure type.*

Name: The legal name of a community and the county in which it is located.

Mileage as of [Previous Year]: The total mileage under local jurisdiction used to calculate the prior Calendar Year's (CY) GTA for municipalities. The local community, the WisDOT District Local Road Coordinator, and the WisDOT Statewide Local Road Coordinator have certified this mileage. Mileage data is stored in the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR). Per [*s. 86.302(3) Wis. Stats*](#)., there is a lag between the date mileage is certified and when the data is used to calculate GTA payments (i.e. "…beginning in the 2nd year following the year in which the certified plat is filed…").

Mileage as of [Calculation Year]: The total mileage under local jurisdiction to be currently used to calculate GTA for municipalities. The local community, the WisDOT District Local Road Coordinator, and the WisDOT Statewide Local Road Coordinator have certified this mileage. Mileage data is stored in the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR). Per [*s. 86.302(3) Wis. Stats.,*](#) there is a lag between the date mileage is certified and when the data is used to calculate GTA payments (i.e. "…beginning in the 2nd year following the year in which the certified plat is filed…").

[Calculation Year] Aids: The total amount of GTA provided to a community for the year calculated.

Step 1 – Calculate Preliminary Share of Costs (SOC) and Rate per Mile (RPM)

(*Note: counties are only eligible for SOC payments.)*

Share of Costs (SOC) Calculation

6-Year Average Costs: Average annual costs for the most recent six-year period.

SOC Percentage: The State biennial budget provides two GTA appropriations, one for counties and the other for municipalities (towns, villages, and cities). For counties, the SOC percentage is based upon 1) the GTA county appropriation level; and
2) the statewide total *6-Year Average Costs* for counties. For any given calculation year, there is one SOC percentage for counties (other than those with penalties). For municipalities, the SOC percentage is based upon 1) the balance of the GTA municipal appropriation level after meeting the statutory RPM payment obligations; and 2) the statewide total *6-Year Average Costs* for municipalities on the SOC payment method. For any given calculation year, there is one SOC percentage for municipalities (other than those with penalties).

SOC Amount: The *6-Year Average Costs* for a community multiplied by the *SOC Percentage*.

Rate Per Mile (RPM) Calculation

Mileage as of [Calculation Year}: The total certified mileage under local jurisdiction used to calculate GTA for municipalities for the given year.

Rate Per Mile: The statutorily defined RPM figure for municipalities identified in the State biennial budget.

RPM Amount: The Calculation Year's certified mileage for a municipality multiplied by the *Rate Per Mile*.

Step 2 – Determine Payment Method Preliminary Amount(Greater of SOC or RPM)

(*Note: this step only applies to municipalities. All county GTA payments
are calculated using the SOC payment method.)*

To determine the GTA amount for municipalities, WisDOT selects the larger of the SOC payment and the RPM payment.

Preliminary SOC Amount: Amount determined in **Step 2** if *SOC Amount* is greater than *RPM Amount*.

Preliminary RPM Amount: Amount determined in **Step 2** if *RPM Amount* is greater than *SOC Amount*.

Step 3 – Calculate Minimum and Maximum Cushions (SOC or RPM)

Once the preliminary GTA amount has been determined based upon the appropriate payment method detailed in **Step 2**, GTA staff next applies *Share of Costs Cushions* and *Rate per Mile Cushions*. The statutory floors and ceilings adjust the preliminary GTA payment upward to the minimum level or downward to the maximum level of change.

Since counties are only subject to SOC funding, only *Share of Costs Cushions* appear in the county report. Municipal information is shown in the appropriate calculation section, with zeros indicating the non-applicable calculation section.

Share of Costs (SOC) Cushions

Preliminary SOC Amount: Amount determined in **Step 2** and displayed in **Step 3**, if the *SOC Amount* is greater than *RPM Amount*.

[Previous Year] Aids: The total amount of GTA provided to a community for the year prior to the calculation year.

Minimum [Calculation Year] Aids: *[Previous Year] Aids* multiplied by the *Minimum Cushion*, which is 0.90 for counties and municipalities. This means that counties and municipalities can experience no more than a ten-percent reduction from their previous year's aid levels, except for situations where the municipality is affected by the cost cap.

Maximum [Calculation Year] Aids: *[Previous Year} Aids* multiplied by the *Maximum Cushion*, which is 1.15 for counties and municipalities on the SOC payment method. There is no *Maximum Cushion* for municipalities on the RPM payment method.

Rate per Mile (RPM) Cushions

Preliminary RPM Amount: Amount determined in **Step 2** and displayed in **Step 3**, if the

RPM Amount is greater than *SOC Amount*.

[Previous Year] Aids: The total amount of GTA provided to a community for the year prior to the calculation year.

% Change in Certified Mileage: Percentage change between certified *Mileage as of [Previous Year]* and *Mileage as of [Calculation Year]*.

[Calculation Year] Adjusted Base: If a municipality on the RPM calculation method has *Mileage as of [Calculation Year] that* does not equal the *Mileage as of [Previous Year]* – in other words, the community added or lost roadways under their local jurisdiction – then the *[Calculation Year] Adjusted Base* equals (1+ their *% Change),* multiplied by their *[Previous Year] Aids*. The adjusted base provides a supplemental figure to recognize the new size of their local roadway network in the payment calculation for that year. If the municipality's mileage has not changed, the adjusted base will be the same as the previous year's figure.

Minimum [Calculation Year] Aids: *[Calculation Year] Adjusted Base* multiplied by the *Minimum Cushion*, which for municipalities is 0.90. There is no *Maximum Cushion* for municipalities on the RPM payment method: therefore, RPM communities have no *Maximum Aids*.

Step 4 – Apply Cost Cap

(Note: This step does not apply to counties.)

Once the preliminary GTA amount has been determined for each municipality and the *Minimum Cushion* and *Maximum Cushion* have been applied, the preliminary GTA amount is then reduced, if applicable, to ensure the final GTA is not more than 85% of a community's *3-Year Average Costs*. For towns assessed at the bottom quartile of the equalized values of all towns in the state, the final GTA for these towns is not more than 98% of the town's 3-year average costs. This 85% cap is statutorily defined in *s. 86.30(2)(d) Wis. Stats.,* and ensures municipalities fund at least 15% of eligible costs. The 98% cap is statutorily defined in *s. 86.30(2)(d)2 Wis. Stats.*

3-Year Average Costs: Average annual costs for the most recent three-year period.

3-Year Average Costs appear for SOC and RPM municipalities. Zeros appear in the *After Cost Cap* section for SOC communities to indicate that the cost cap does not apply to them.

85% Cost Cap: Defined as the *3-Year Average Costs* multiplied by 0.85. This applies to only municipalities.

98% Cost Cap: Defined as the *3-Year Average Costs* multiplied by 0.98. This applies only to towns assessed to be in the bottom quartile of equalized values of towns in the state in the previous year to the calculation year.

Step 5 – Apply Filing Penalty

After applying **Step 3** and **Step 4,** the GTA figure at this point may be reduced by the *Filing Penalty Amount*, if applicable, to obtain the final GTA payment level.

Per s. 86.303(5)(d) Wis. Stats.,, counties and municipalities with populations of 2,500 or higher must submit a **Municipal Financial Report (MFR)** form to DOR no later than May 15 each year.

> If a county or municipality fails to submit an MFR by the May 15 deadline, GTA for the following year year shall be reduced by 10% from the previous year's GTA.

> If a county or municipality submits their MFR within 30 days after the May 15 deadline, their GTA shall be reduced by 1% for each working day late. For towns and villages, the daily reduction cannot exceed $100/day, for a total reduction of no more than $2,200, or 10% of the previous year's GTA, whichever is reached first.

Per s. 86.303(5)(g) Wis. Stats., counties and municipalities with a population of 25,000 or more must additionally submit a **Tax 16** form to DOR no later than July 31 each year.

If a county or municipality fails to submit a Tax 16 form by the July 31 deadline, GTA for the following year shall be reduced by 10% from the previous year's GTA.

If a county or municipality submits their Tax 16 form within 30 days of the July 31 deadline, their GTA shall be reduced by 1% for each working day late, up to a 10% overall reduction.

Within the calculation detail, the **Filing Penalty Description** provides the reason for cost-filing penalty assessed in *Final Penalty Amount.*

The **Total GTA Amount** provides the final GTA payment for the calculation year after adjustments to the preliminary GTA figure have been made by *Minimum Cushion* and *Maximum Cushion*, and any applicable reductions have been applied due to the *Cost Cap* or *Filing Penalty*.

Example: RPM Municipality GTA Calculation

Note: The Rate Per Mile figure, which for the purposes of this example is $2,374, is subject to change regularly in the State Biennial Budget.

- **Calculation Preparation – Input GTA Figures**
    - Municipality type: Town
    - 6-year average costs: $200,000
    - 3-year average costs: $140,000
    - Certified mileage: 50 miles
    - Share of Cost: 0.16
    - Rate per Mile: $2,734
    - Previous Year's GTA: $136,700
    - Cost Cap: 85%
    - Late/Non-filer: N/A

- **Step 1 – Calculate Preliminary Share of Cost (SOC) and Rate per Mile (RPM)**
    - Share of Cost calculation
        - 6-year average costs x share of cost percentage
        - $200,000 x 0.16 = $32,000
    - Rate per Mile calculation
        - Certified mileage x rate per mile
        - **50 x $2,734 = $136,700**

- **Step 2 – Determine the Method of Calculation (Greater of SOC or RPM)**
    - The Rate per Mile calculation method results in a higher amount of GTA funds – as a result, the RPM calculation method is used for this municipality

- **Step 3 – Apply the Appropriate Minimum and Maximum Cushions (SOC or RPM)**
    - Maximum Cushion: does not apply
    - Minimum Cushion:
        - [Previous year's GTA x 0.9]
        - $136,700 x 0.9 = $123,030
        - **$136,700 > $123,300: No adjustment needed**

- **Step 4 – Apply Cost Cap**
    - [3-year average costs x 0.85]
    - **$140,000 x 0.85 = 119,000: cost cap applies**
    - **New GTA award amount: $119,000**

- **Step 5 – Apply Filing Penalty,** if applicable.
    - 0 Days Late – no Filing Penalty is added.

FINAL GTA AMOUNT: $119,000

Example: SOC Municipality GTA Calculation

Note: The calculation steps for a county are similar; omit step 2, as all counties are calculated using the SOC method. Additionally, omit step 4, as the cost cap provision does not apply to counties.

- **Calculation Preparation – Input GTA Figures**
    - Municipality Type: City
    - 6-year average costs: 800,000
    - 3-year average costs: 800,000
    - Certified mileage: 50 miles
    - Share of Cost: 0.19
    - Rate Per Mile: $2,734
    - Previous Year's GTA: $140,000
    - Cost Cap: 85%
    - Late/Non-filer: 5 days late (MFR)

- **Step 1 – Calculate Preliminary Share of Cost (SOC) and Rate per Mile (RPM).**
    - Share of Cost calculation
        - [6-year average costs x share of cost percentage]
        - **$800,000 x 0.19 = $152,000**
    - Rate per Mile calculation
        - [Certified mileage x rate per mile]
        - 50 x $2,734 = $136,700
- **Step 2 – Determine the Method of Calculation (Greater of SOC or RPM)**
    - The Share of Costs calculation results in a higher amount of GTA funds – as a result, the SOC calculation method is used for this municipality
- **Step 3 – Apply the Appropriate Minimum and Maximum Cushions (SOC or RPM)**
    - Maximum Cushion
        - [Previous year's GTA x 1.15]
        - $140,000 x 1.15 = 161,000
    - Minimum Cushion
        - [Previous year's GTA x 0.90]
        - $140,000 x 0.90 = 126,000
    - The initially calculated GTA amount ($152,000) falls in between the minimum and maximum cushions. As a result, no adjustment is necessary.
- **Step 4 – Apply Cost Cap**

- • [3-year average costs x 0.85]
  - • 800,000 x 0.85 = 680,000
  - • No adjustment necessary
- **Step 5 – Apply Filing Penalty,** if applicable.
  - • 1% reduction for each day late
  - • MFR submitted 5 days late – 5% total reduction ($7,600)
  - • New GTA Amount: $144,400

FINAL GTA AMOUNT: $144,400

Resources

Additional information on the GTA program is located on the GTA homepage. The eligible and ineligible revenues and expenses used to calculate GTA payment levels are identified in the *Cost Reporting Manual* that is also located on the GTA homepage.

The various versions of the *Municipal Financial Report form* (A, C, and CT) and related instructions are located at: https://www.revenue.wi.gov/Pages/Form/govmfr-Home.aspx

Please contact **Megan Feeley, GTA Program Manager**, if you have questions or comments on the GTA program or this document.

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Please contact **Kathleen Springhorn at the Wisconsin Department of Revenue** with questions or comments on the DOR *Municipal Financial Report form*:

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