

Chapter 01 | Introduction

01.01 Introduction to Roadside Facilities

The current model of the Roadside Facilities program is a partnership between the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Kapur & Associates, and Service Providers throughout the State. The goals of this partnership are to provide a high-quality experience at Wisconsin's rest areas and seasonal sites while providing employment and work growth opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

In May 1986, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) proposed the idea of providing maintenance at state rest areas while employing Wisconsin's with disabilities. This idea was based on other state's rest area maintenance programs, particularly Ohio's. Ohio's State Use Program included maintenance contracts for approximately 120 Department of Transportation sites at that time. DSPN staff visited Ohio to study their Rest Area Maintenance program.

In the fall of 1986, WisDOT provided a grant to initiate a one-year pilot project to provide custodial care and landscape maintenance services at state rest areas. Subcontracts were developed with service providers to provide these services. Maintenance services began at seven rest areas on January 1, 1987 in Barron, June and Walworth counties. The pilot project was a success.

The program was called the Rest Area Maintenance (RAM) Program, the first of two programs that now constitute the overarching Roadside Facilities (RF) Program. The Safety Weight Enforcement Facilities Maintenance (SWEFM) Program was added to the RF Program in 2001.