



The Road Newsletter, Volume 5, Issue 12

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Road Funding Expectations

Governor Rick Snyder recently signed into law a \$1.2-billion road funding package that will help fix and maintain Michigan's crumbling roads and bridges. The funding package will result in an increase in fuel taxes and registration fees, with allocations from the state's general fund to be phased in by 2021. While the \$1.2 billion in dedicated funding is less than what is needed to fully fix Michigan roads, it is a good start.



However, don't expect to see a significant change in 2016 as the first year of the funding package will not be implemented until fiscal year 2017, when the state will generate about \$450 million from new fuel taxes and registration fees. Then it is anticipated that the road funding levels will increase to \$600 million in 2018, \$760 million in 2019, \$944 million in 2020 and \$1.23 billion in 2021. Once fully phased in, the plan would mean about \$450 million a year in new and dedicated revenue for the state, \$450 million for county road agencies, \$250 million for cities and villages, and \$62 million for mass transit.

Here in Ottawa County, the Road Commission anticipates about \$4.3 million in additional road revenue in 2017, and increasing to approximately \$12.4 million by 2021. Based on recent estimates, it would take approximately \$215 million to get all of the public roads in Ottawa County to a "Good" condition. Then it would take an additional \$25 million per year above the existing revenues to keep the roads in a "Good" condition. So, as you can see, the road funding package will certainly help with needed improvements, but a long term solution is still needed.

So, How Will the Road Funding Bills Affect You? The average Michigan motorist will pay about \$60 a year more in 2017 as gasoline taxes will increase 7.3-cents per gallon, diesel taxes will jump 11.3 cents, and registration fees will increase by 20 percent for passenger vehicles and commercial trucks. Electric and hybrid vehicle owners will also be impacted with a new annual surcharge of \$100 or \$30.

Michigan residents who receive the Homestead Property Tax Credit could see some relief starting in fiscal year 2019, as the state will increase the maximum Homestead credit from \$1,200 to \$1,500 and raise the household income cap from \$50,000 to \$60,000. Beginning in tax year 2021, the state would index the maximum credit and home value cap to annual inflation.

Cost Effective Plowing

When the snow starts to fall, the Road Commission will be ready at the helm. As snow storms hit, Road Commission crews will be out there plowing and salting to ensure the roads remain as safe as possible. But it's not just major snow storms that require us to crank up our salt trucks and plows. In fact, freezing rain or a light dusting of snow that turns to ice can cause "headaches" for our crews for hours on end.



Invisible "black ice" completely covers a roadway. Would you be able to tell it was there if you were driving on this road? Most likely, you would not until your car began to slide!

To ensure we are prepared when bad weather hits, the weather is monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week during the winter using several weather services. During a typical year, the Road Commission will respond to approximately 50 winter maintenance callouts, and will use about 20,000 to 25,000 tons of salt, and 14,000 to 18,000 tons of sand. The cost of winter maintenance can easily be up to \$3.7 million annually, depending upon inclement weather conditions and the duration of the winter months.

A policy was developed in order to provide cost effective winter maintenance operations and to inform the public about the level of winter maintenance services for roadways maintained by the Road Commission. The type or method of winter maintenance operation is determined by a number of factors such as, but not limited to: road conditions, weather forecasts, nature and type of storm event, time and duration of storm event, etc. The level of winter maintenance service is conducted in accordance with the established priority system based on several factors including traffic volumes, road classification, and location. The priorities are as follows:



- 1 – State Highways**
- 2 – Multi-lane Primary Roads**
- 3 – Primary Roads**
- 4 – Local Paved Roads**
- 5 – Subdivision Streets**
- 6 – Local Gravel Roads**
- 7 – Dead End Streets and Cul-de-sacs**

It is the Road Commission's objective to minimize the utilization of overtime and consumption of materials, while achieving a primary goal of traversable roadways. Normal winter maintenance hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 7:00AM to 3:30PM except on holidays. A regular "night" winter maintenance patrol of two drivers are available Monday through Friday throughout the evening. A regular winter maintenance patrol of two drivers are also available Saturday and Sunday for the state highway system only.

What to Do if Your Mailbox is Damaged

If your mailbox is damaged by Road Commission equipment or snow thrown from Road Commission equipment during winter maintenance operations, you may receive a new standard mailbox and/or a single 4"x4" wood post at one of the garage locations listed below.



It is requested that you provide either the actual damaged mailbox/post or a photo of the actual damaged mailbox/post before a new standard mailbox and/or a single 4"x4" wood post can be issued. Upon receipt of a new mailbox and/or post, you will be asked to sign a register and provide the property address.

Please note that you are responsible for removing the damaged mailbox/post and installing the replacement mailbox/post. Standard mailboxes and posts can be picked up at any of the following locations:

Grand Haven Office / Garage
14110 Lakeshore Drive
Grand Haven, MI 49417

Coopersville Garage
526 Cleveland Street
Coopersville, MI 49404

North Holland Garage
12150 Ransom Street
Holland, MI 49424

Hudsonville Garage
2232 Chicago Drive
Hudsonville, MI 49426

Please call (616) 842-5400 to set up an appointment. The locations are open Monday through Friday, except on holidays. Appointments are made between the hours of 7:30AM and 3:30PM.

State Road Bridge

Through the MDOT Local Bridge Program, 95% construction funding was obtained to remove and replace the State Road Bridge over Crockery Creek in Crockery Township. Currently the bridge is restricted for legal axle loads only.



MDOT received bids on November 6th and J.E. Kloote Contracting, Inc. was the as-read low bidder, with a total bid of \$663,746.21. Construction is anticipated to start in late February with completion in June. The work will include the bridge removal and replacement with steel piles, 21-inch pre-stressed concrete beams over a concrete substructure, concrete decking, curb and gutter, cofferdam, hot mix asphalt approach over aggregate base, guardrail and bridge railing, and drainage improvements.

Important Dates

Thursday – December 10, 2015 | 9AM | Board Meeting

Thursday - December 24, 2015 | 9AM | Board Meeting - **Cancelled**



14110 Lakeshore Drive
PO Box 739
Grand Haven, Michigan 49417
616-842-5400
Office Hours: Monday-Friday; 7:30AM-4PM



STAY CONNECTED. SUBSCRIBE:

The Ottawa County Road Commissioners: Tom Bird | Tom Elhart | Betty Gajewski | Tim Grifhorst | Jim Miedema
Managing Director: Brett Laughlin

Who manages the roads and how are they funded? The Ottawa County Road Commission manages the roads--not the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners or County staff. The Ottawa County Road Commission is primarily funded by fuel taxes and vehicle registrations. Concerns about roads should be directed to the Ottawa County Road Commission. Questions? [Contact Us](#)

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