



The Road Newsletter, Volume 7, Issue 4

April 2017

James Street Receives State Economic Development Grant

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has awarded a state Transportation Economic Development Fund (TEDF) Category F grant for \$375,000 to the Road Commission for improvements to James Street, a major east-west corridor in Holland Township. The improvements will include the resurfacing of James Street from US-31 to Chicago Drive. This road serves multiple commercial and industrial businesses, and has become severely deteriorated over the years. This grant will help the road commission extend the life of this 2.6-mile all-season route. The overall cost of the project is \$1,269,994, using \$375,000 in TEDF Category F funding with the Road Commission providing \$894,994, or 70 percent of the project cost.



This grant is one of nine announced throughout the state, ranging from \$104,705 to \$375,000, and totaling more than \$2.5 million. The grant funding is a statewide competitive program; 42 applications were received for the nine grants awarded.

Enacted in 1987 and reauthorized in 1993, the TEDF helps finance highway, road and street projects that are critical to the movement of people and products, and getting workers to their jobs, materials to growers and manufacturers, and finished goods to consumers. TEDF "Category F" or "Urban Areas in Rural Counties" grants provide state funding for public roadway improvements that create system continuity with the secondary all-season road system. Category F grants provide funding for projects that include improving access to the state all-season system or improving safety and all-season capabilities on routes having high commercial traffic.

Eligible TEDF Category F grant road agencies include county road commissions, cities, and villages.

Road Commission Receives “Clean” Audit



The Michigan Department of Treasury has been given the responsibility of implementing the requirements of [Public Act 283 of 1909](#), as amended, on an annual basis to prescribe uniform accounting and reporting standards for Road Commissions. The primary purpose for the auditing and reporting requirements is to maintain the citizens' confidence in the Road Commission and the integrity of financial reporting by the Road Commission. The audit also helps to ensure compliance with legal requirements and continuation of fiscal responsibility.

The Road Commission utilizes an independent Certified Public Account to provide constructive recommendations which, when adopted, will enhance fiscal control and make budgets more easily understood. Vredevelde Haefner LLC performed the fiscal year 2016 audit for the Road Commission.

The auditing firm examined the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements and assessed the accounting principles used by the Road Commission, as well as evaluated the overall financial position of the Road Commission. The Road Commission received a clean opinion of the financial statements, and they found no instances of non-compliance or other matters that are reported under Government Audit Standards.

Springtime Shoulder Work

Road commission crews reshape or “pull” shoulders on paved roads throughout the county every spring before the grass begins to grow on the side of the road. This maintenance is done to restore the shoulder shape and function. A typical problem that develops is that the gravel surface of the shoulder does not meet the paved edge of the roadway. If the shoulder is too high, the road will not drain properly; if the shoulder is too low, a hazardous drop-off condition can result.

Reshaping a gravel shoulder is a routine maintenance activity performed by Road Commission staff using a motor grader. This maintenance is done to reclaim gravel that has been pushed into the shoulder as well as to remove the berm which keeps the water from flowing off the road.



A similar process is done on gravel roads where gravel is displaced onto the shoulder from either rain washing it off the road or from vehicles kicking it up from normal driving. By pulling shoulders on gravel roads and reclaiming it back into the roadway surface, the Road Commission saves thousands of tons of gravel each year.

Throughout the year, maintenance crews check on both paved and gravel road shoulders and regrade them as necessary.

Seasonal Weight Restrictions Lifted

Each spring, as roads begin to thaw out from the top down, moisture is trapped near the surface. When this occurs, heavy loads will cause the break-up of gravel and bituminous surfaces.



Weight restrictions are placed on roads to protect them from trucks and hauling operations during the thaw. When weight restrictions are being enforced, heavy trucks must reduce their axle loads, and truck speeds are reduced on many routes. The Road Commission implemented Seasonal Weight Restrictions on January 19th for all applicable roads throughout the county.

These measures reduce the impact that vehicles have on the vulnerable road surface. Loads can either be reduced by carrying partial loads, or by adding additional axles.

During a normal travel day, the State of Michigan allows more weight per axle than any of our adjoining states. Because the extent of frost action and resultant thaw are weather related, it is impossible to set specific dates to commence and end seasonal weight restrictions on an annual basis. Each year must be evaluated independently.

After monitoring the frost depths, evaluating weather patterns, and discussing with adjacent counties, the Road Commission lifted Seasonal Weight Restrictions on March 13th for all roads throughout the county.

Safe Roads for Everyone

This past fall, the Road Commission leased 4 new Michigan Cat loaders to use loading salt and other operations. The leasing program is very beneficial and has an option to buy after 5 years. As part of the lease program, Michigan Cat offered training on how to safely operate loaders.



Gordon Wearsch a certified Instructor for Michigan Cat, visited the Grand Haven and the North Holland Garages to train our operators. Gordon did a general walk around the loader, showed the safety features, and provided hands on training of how each control operates and functions.

It was a great opportunity for each one of our operators to ask questions and to see and hear how to safely perform their job while using this new piece of machinery.

Important Dates

Thursday – April 13, 2017 | 9AM | Board Meeting

Thursday – April 27, 2017 | 9AM | Board Meeting



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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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