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OCRC participates in pilot culvert data collection program

The Ottawa County Road Commission was recently a participant in a culvert data collection pilot program, a project that's part of the state of Michigan's *21st Century Infrastructure Asset Management Pilot*.

Culvert condition has been identified as a transportation issue ripe for asset management tracking. Culvert maintenance and/or replacement can be both a road safety issue and a cost issue. Culverts that fail may also mean the roadway itself fails, necessitating replacement.

About \$2 million from the state's fiscal year 2018 budget was allocated to the Transportation Asset Management Council to implement a data collection pilot to ascertain roadway culvert conditions.

The Ottawa County Road Commission applied for and was selected to be a participant in the pilot. As a participant, the OCRC received roughly \$60,000 to cover training, equipment purchases and staff expenses to conduct data collection.



The intent of the pilot program is to collect culvert data that can be used to generate the following information on Public Act 51 Certified Roads in Michigan at a statewide level:



- Estimate the total number of culverts in the state.
- Benchmark the time needed and best practices to collect data.
- Develop tools and skills for agencies to collect data.
- Estimate the overall condition, range of physical characteristics of culverts, such as material, size, and depth.
- Benchmark estimates of agency labor (time and materials) necessary to find and collect inventory data for culverts on a dollar per mile or other production rate basis.

As part of the Road Commission’s involvement, two OCRC interns aided in the collection process beginning in early May. Interns visited one township at a time, and eventually collected data from all 17 townships. This process would’ve likely taken several years to complete without the assistance of the state’s program.

Data collected for the roughly 3,000 culverts in Ottawa County includes GPS coordinates, culvert material, type, shape, and length.

Interns also collected various data about the condition of each culvert. This information was used to develop a rating scale, which ranges from 1-10. A “1” on the scale means a culvert is in poor condition, while a “10” means a culvert is in excellent condition.

This asset management technique is similar to how engineers rate the conditions of other infrastructure in the county, such as roads and bridges. The new data will give Road Commission engineers a way to schedule inspections based on each culvert’s rating.

Another benefit will be in relation to road resurfacing. If a culvert is in poor condition, data on file can be referenced so that a culvert could be replaced before a road is resurfaced – thus avoiding the possibility of additional costs when cutting into a newly-paved road to work on a culvert.

At the conclusion of the program, participating agencies submitted data to the state to help shed light on whether the program could be expanded to other municipalities and agencies.

Draft 2019-2023 Strategic Improvement Plan available to review



The Ottawa County Road Commission recently released its draft *2019-2023 Strategic Improvement Plan* for review at www.ottawacorc.com.

The plan uses road ratings for county roads, and anticipated costs and funding sources to plan improvements, and preventative maintenance on primary and local roads.

A new plan is updated each year by evaluating our resources to best improve and maintain our road system in the coming years.

Part of the SIP process is to gather comment from the general public and local units of government. Submit your comments on the plan to OCRC Managing Director Brett Laughlin at BLaughlin@ottawacorc.com. A public hearing on the plan is scheduled for Sept. 27 at the OCRC office.

Doty joins Road Commission as new Communications Administrator

The Road Commission is excited to announce the addition of Alex Doty as its new Communications Administrator.

Prior to joining the Road Commission this past August, Alex was an award-winning reporter for the *Grand Haven Tribune*, where he spent nearly 9 years covering local issues and events. Prior to working in Grand Haven, he spent time working for a newspaper in Ionia County.

Alex is a 2007 graduate from Michigan State University, and brings with him valuable communications skills. Outside of work, Alex enjoys travel, golf, skiing and photography.



Road Commission rolls out into the local community in August



The Ottawa County Road Commission was active in the community in the month of August.

One highlight was a visit on Aug. 8 to Grand Haven's Tri-Cities Family YMCA for the Big Trucks Camp.

Campers were able to get up close and personal with plow truck 1088 from the North Holland garage. Campers learned how the truck works thanks to driver Kurt Potts, who helped explain and demonstrate the truck's features.

The kids had a great time exploring our plow truck, posing for pictures and hearing all about what makes the truck work, including its horn. (See the photo to your left!)

The Road Commission was also one of the many participants in the Coast Guard Festival's Grand Parade.

Who knows where you might next spot our hard-working Road Commission crews out in the Ottawa County community!

Find us on Twitter
and Facebook:
@Ottawacorc



Visit our Website to learn
more:
www.ottawacorc.com



Important Dates

Our office is closed Friday, August 31, and Monday, September 3, for Labor Day. We're open again Tuesday, September 4, at 7:30 a.m.

Thursday – September 13, 2018 | 9 a.m. | Board Meeting
Thursday – September 27, 2018 | 9 a.m. | Board Meeting



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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.