



County Road Association
OF MICHIGAN

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Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer honored With Distinguished Service Highway Industry Award

LANSING, MI – Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer was honored this week by the County Road Association (CRA) of Michigan with a Distinguished Service Highway Industry Award at the CRA 2026 Highway Conference in Lansing.

The Distinguished Service Highway Industry Award recognizes individuals outside of county road agencies who have demonstrated exceptional leadership, partnership and commitment to advancing Michigan’s local road system.

A strong advocate for infrastructure investment for roads and bridges, Whitmer played a key role in securing the historic, bipartisan \$1.85 billion road funding package signed into law in 2025 — a transportation funding plan years in the making.

“We are incredibly fortunate to recognize a steadfast advocate for road funding,” said Jerry Byrne, CRA president and manager of the Kent

County Road Commission. “Governor Gretchen ‘Fix the Damn Roads’ Whitmer helped turn years of conversation into real investment. This is a meaningful step forward for Michigan and for the communities that depend on safe, reliable roads every day.”

CRA CEO Denise Donohue said the award reflects both the scale of the accomplishment and the collaboration required to achieve it.



Gov. Whitmer accepts her Distinguished Service Highway Industry Award from CRA president Jerry Byrne.

“This didn’t happen overnight,” said Donohue. “It took a tremendous amount of coordination and commitment to bring people together and find a way to get it done – especially at a time when there wasn’t surplus funding available. We’re incredibly appreciative of the Governor and Legislature for getting it done and what it means for Michigan’s local roads.”

The new funding framework directs significant, long-term investment into Michigan’s local road system, helping county road agencies address decades of underinvestment while continuing to balance preservation, safety and mobility needs.

The 83 members of the County Road Association of Michigan represent the unified voice for a safe and efficient county transportation infrastructure system in Michigan, including appropriate stewardship of the public’s right-of-way in rural and urban Michigan. Collectively, Michigan’s county road agencies manage 75% of all roads in the state, including 90,500 miles of roads and 5,900 bridges. County road agencies also maintain the state’s highway system in 63 counties. Michigan has the nation’s fourth-largest local road system.

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