



County Road Association
OF MICHIGAN

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**Miles of Michigan county road improvements fall far short
of benchmarks in new report from County Road Association**
CRA releases 2023 Progress Report, calls for new state funds this year

LANSING, MI – Michigan’s 83 county road agencies are struggling to make gains improving the deteriorating county road network, according to findings in the County Road Association (CRA) of Michigan’s 2023 County Road Progress Report. Increased fuel efficiency of vehicles, underpayment by electric vehicles of all types, and construction inflation are the root causes, according to CRA.

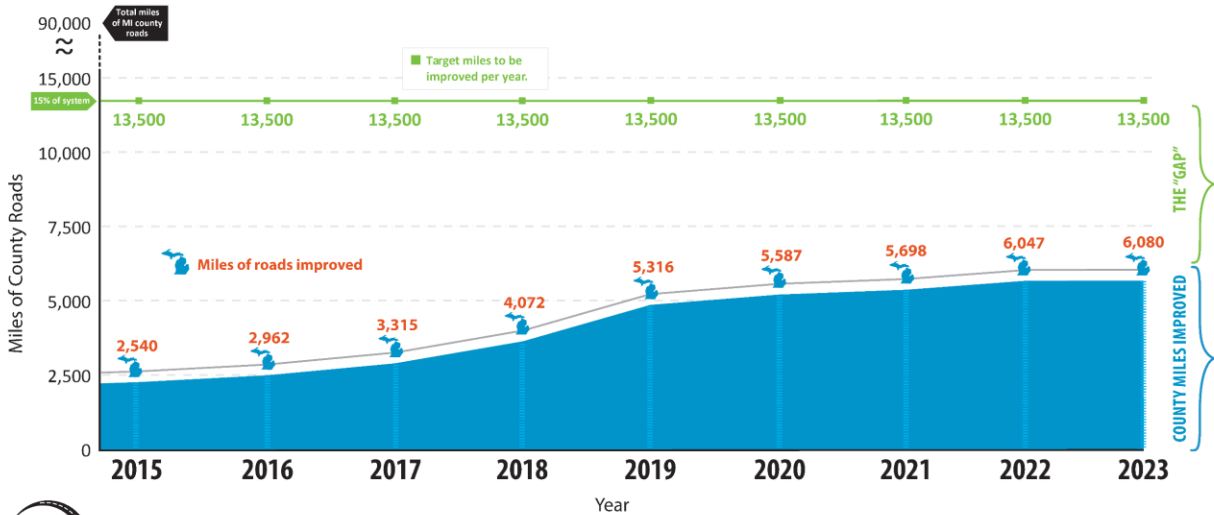
“Despite the hard work by Michigan’s county road professionals in 2023, our survey found that only 6,080 miles of county roads were improved,” said Denise Donohue, CRA CEO. “That’s an increase of just over 30 additional miles of roads improved over the 2022 level. In short, counties have stopped gaining on the problem and are fixing less than half of our 13,500-mile-goal – a benchmark set to reach a primarily good- and fair- rated county road network.”

“The 33 additional miles – a 0.5% increase – show we are now merely treading water and that our county road professionals are fighting a losing battle by trying to do the job at current funding levels,” Donohue said.

CRA’s objective of 13,500 road miles improved annually equals 15% of the 90,500 miles of county roads. Counties are responsible for 75% of Michigan road miles and 52% of the bridges. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has 8% of the road miles and 42% of the bridges, while cities and villages have 17% of the roads and 6% of the bridges.

“Increased fuel efficiency of all vehicles means less gas tax coming into the Michigan Transportation Fund. This is compounded by the increased presence of all types of electric vehicles and MDOT’s Highway Construction Cost Index that shows 25% cost increases since 2021,” Donohue said. “County road agencies cannot stretch existing dollars any further: We need more transportation funds in this legislative session, along with prompt adoption of a mileage-based pilot program for the future.”

COUNTY ROAD INVESTMENTS WITH MI ROAD FUNDING



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[\(Download graphic\)](#)

The CRA survey considers road improvements to be anything from road resurfacing, chip sealing to strengthen the surface and gravel replenishment, to occasional total reconstruction as well as crack sealing.

“Counties’ objectives are not to build new roads or major reconstruction, but rather trying to preserve and maintain the county transportation network already established in Michigan,” said Ed Noyola, CRA Chief Deputy and Legislative Director. “Without a predominantly good-to-fair county road network, the costs to passenger vehicle drivers and commercial truckers multiply.”

“At our recent Northern Michigan conference, several of our speakers focused on how county road agencies need to further reduce spending and perhaps do less-complete fixes, engage in staff attrition, and put off needed equipment purchases among other things in order to balance the budget,” Noyola commented.

CRA has established the same condition goal for paved **primary roads** as the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is utilizing: **90% good/fair on federal aid-eligible roads**. These primary roads have an average rating of 65% good/fair across all reporting counties in 2023.

For the paved **local road** system CRA has set a goal of **60% good/fair on local, nonfederal aid-eligible roads**. These roads have an average rating of 44% good/fair across all counties.

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. County road agencies maintain the state's highway system in 63 counties.

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