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County Road Association releases 2022 progress report on 75% of Michigan's road system

Member survey shows funding insufficient to meet progress goals

LANSING, MI – Today the County Road Association (CRA) of Michigan released its 2022 survey of miles improved on the county road system. It showed what motorists already recognize: That county road agencies are unable to keep up with the deteriorating road network due to insufficient funding.

Michigan has the nation's fourth-largest local road system, and county road agencies are responsible for 75% of Michigan's road miles and 52% of the bridges. For perspective, the Michigan Department of Transportation 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.

The 2022 survey of county road agencies concluded:

- Collectively among the 79 counties reporting to CRA, 6,047 miles of county primary and local roads were improved in 2022. This is less than half of the 13,500 miles that CRA's engineers have set as counties' benchmark, in order to reach the ratings goals on existing roads.
- CRA's objective of 13,500 road miles improved equals 15% of Michigan's 90,000 miles of county roads.
- The 2022 miles improved survey shows 349 more miles improved over 2021 data – or a 0.4% increase.
- In 2016 – the last year before the Transportation Funding increase (2015) kicked in – the same survey showed about 3,000 miles of roads improved.

"Last year, county road agencies repaired less than half of the road miles that we need to be fixing in order to keep up with existing infrastructure," said Denise Donohue, CRA CEO. "We simply cannot catch up with the funds presently available. While there are modest additional federal funds coming into the state, less than a third of our county road network is eligible to use them. More Michigan Transportation Funds in this budget cycle are the answer."

CRA considers road improvements to be anything from road resurfacing, chip sealing to strengthen the surface, gravel replenishment, to total reconstruction and simple crack sealing.

“We are not talking about adding lanes or roundabouts when we talk about improvements,” said Ed Noyola, CRA Chief Deputy and Legislative Director. “We are simply trying to preserve and maintain the county transportation network already established in Michigan. Without a mostly good-to-fair county road network, the costs only increase to passenger and commercial vehicle owners. This will become even more evident now as we enter the annual spring pothole season.”

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 by 2031**. These primary roads had an average rating of 52% good/fair across all reporting counties in 2021, up from 45% in 2019.

For the paved **local road** system CRA has set a goal of **60% good/fair on local, nonfederal aid-eligible roads by 2031**. These roads (23,000 miles) had an average rating of 46% good/fair across all counties, up from 36% in 2019.

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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