



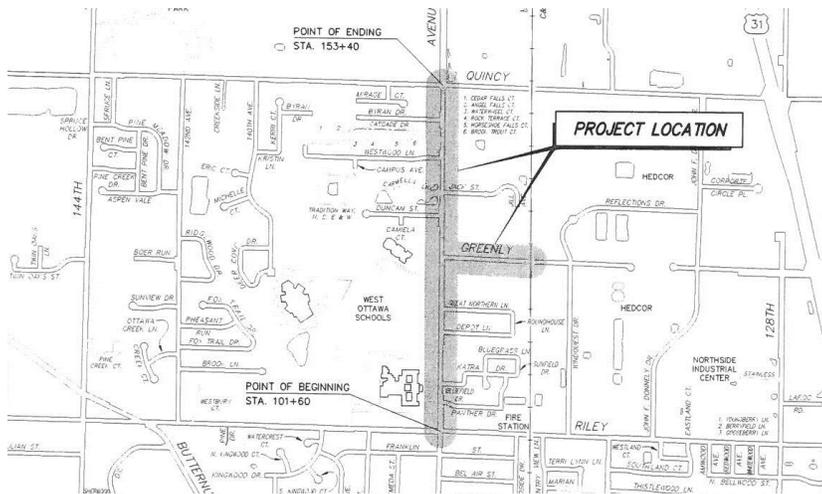
The Road Newsletter, Volume 6, Issue 4

April 2016

## 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue Partnership

In a cooperative partnership, the Road Commission and Holland Charter Township have combined improvement projects along 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue to minimize redundant impacts and provide cost savings. These combined projects include constructing sanitary sewer, water main, storm sewer, concrete curb and gutter, hot mix asphalt pavement, and shoulder and driveway restoration on 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Riley Street north to Quincy Street and Greenly Street from 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue east to the railroad tracks (see map below).

When the improvements are completed, 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue will provide 3 traffic lanes that includes a continuous dedicated left turn lane. This exclusive left turn lane removes stopped vehicles from the through lane and substantially reduces rear-end crashes. In addition, a 25 percent increase in capacity, on average, is expected for roadways with an added continuous left turn lane.



The engineering firm of Prein & Newhof was retained to design the projects and develop a combined bid package. Since some of the road improvements have federal funding, the project was bid through the Michigan Department of Transportation.

There were 6 bidders for the project with the low bid of \$2,908,259.36 from Milbocker and Sons, Inc. This bid was 22% under the engineers estimate and will yield savings for both the Road Commission and Holland Township.

It is anticipated that 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Riley Street to Quincy Street will be closed on May 16<sup>th</sup> for the start of the improvements. The project detour will utilize Riley Street, Butternut Drive, 144<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and Quincy Street. To accommodate buses and school traffic, 136<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Riley Street to the West Ottawa school driveways will remain open for the remainder of the school year. The project completion date is October 30<sup>th</sup>.

## HB 5016 Opposition

The Michigan House is currently working on legislation, HB 5016, that would require public road agencies to provide telecommunication companies a minimum one-year advance notice on projects that require relocation of their wires, cables, poles and other related facilities within the public road right-of-way. If the one-year advance notice is not provided, road agencies would be required to reimburse the telecoms for the cost of relocating their facilities.

Road agencies are already prohibited from denying the telecoms access to the public road right-of-way, which they get to occupy for free. Besides the occasional and unpredictable emergency project, the Road Commission notifies and involves utility providers early in the plan development process – well in advance of the construction work. If road agencies are required to shoulder a portion of those costs, it will take away from funding dedicated for local road improvements, and will also result in projects being delayed, scaled back, or even eliminated as a result of this one-sided legislation.

This proposed legislation sets a severe precedent and could lead to other utility providers, e.g. gas and electric companies, to seek similar demands. The Road Commission strongly encourages you to contact your representative and tell them to oppose HB 5016.

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## 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.

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## 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, 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 2015 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.

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## 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 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 February 29<sup>th</sup> 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 and evaluating the past and projected weather patterns, the Road Commission lifted Seasonal Weight Restrictions on March 18<sup>th</sup> for all roads throughout the county.

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## Important Dates

Thursday – April 14, 2016 | 9AM | Board Meeting

Thursday – April 28, 2016 | 9AM | Board Meeting



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PO Box 739  
Grand Haven, Michigan 49417  
616-842-5400  
Office Hours: Monday-Friday; 7:30AM-4PM



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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