



SAGINAW COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION

# THE MILE MARKER

## FROM THE MANAGER'S DESK



At this time of year it's hard not to sit back and smile as I reflect over the past year. We've had a lot of change at SCRC from new faces to new projects - but we have welcomed them all with open arms! This is also the time of year when our maintenance department is most-recognized. They will be working around the clock this winter to make sure your roads are well maintained and safe!

I would like to thank each and every person here at the Road Commission for their hard work and dedication. I am proud to lead such an outstanding group!

I want to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Great job team!

*Dennis*

### Asset Management

The country's transportation infrastructure has been a cause for concern in recent years. One of the biggest burdens on the transportation system is the rapid deterioration of the primary and local road systems. Transportation is essential for everyday life and the number of people using the roads and bridges continues to rise. Rising transportation needs will cause greater deterioration to the existing road system, and that is why it is essential to plan for the future needs of our transportation system. The first step to improving roads and bridges is to inventory and rate them so that decisions can be made to improve the overall system. The Saginaw County Road Commission (SCRC) has been using the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) criteria to rate county primary roads for a long time. More recently, the SCRC has started to use PASER to rate the local township roads as well. All roads are rated on a two-year cycle. As of this year, all of the ratings are compiled and published to the public and made available to the townships. It's important to have data for all of the county roads in order to determine problem areas. There are 208 bridges within Saginaw County and those have to be inspected at a minimum of every 24 months. Knowing the condition of all of the road and bridge assets is important to be able to plan repairs, rehabilitation, reconstruction and replacement projects.

Asset management is key to having a strong road/bridge system that is safe and efficient for the public. Part of asset management is having an asset management plan in place. The SCRC is currently in the process of developing an asset management plan. Developing an asset management plan starts with the collection of PASER ratings and bridge inspections. Using the data, areas of concern can be identified and addressed in the asset management plan. The purpose of the asset management plan is to have a multi-year plan of action for road/bridge maintenance, rehabilitations, reconstructions, and replacements that will improve the road system within the allotted county budget. Following the plan, the overall road/bridge system will improve and thus create a safer, more efficient, and appealing transportation system for the public. With growing transportation needs and a deteriorating road system, asset management is essential to maintain and improve the overall road system.

For more information regarding PASER ratings of your township's roads, please contact Travis Hare, Assistant-Engineer at 989-399-3779.

### New Automatic Vehicle Location System

SCRC installed its first Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) system in 2007. Like all things technology, a lot has changed in 10 years. AVL systems have become more advanced and most importantly, the wide spread adoption has driven the price down to a fraction of what it was 10 years ago. To take advantage of all the latest technologies and features, we are upgrading to a new AVL system from Verizon Wireless. The many new features include:

- A web based AVL system that can be viewed on all types of devices including: computer, tablets, and cell phones
- Full engine and system diagnostic information. DTCs (Diagnostic Trouble Code) are sent via text or email directly to Fleet maintenance
- Fleet maintenance is alerted to preventative maintenance tasks which includes: oil changes, tire rotations, etc.
- Vehicle recall alerts
- Free roadside assistance for all AVL installed vehicles. Includes towing, winch service, battery service, fuel, and locksmith service
- Reduced installation time and lifetime warranty on all AVL equipment

These are just a few of the exciting new features. The driving goal behind any AVL system is to use our fleet information to show the public the outstanding service our crews provide. AVL is an important tool that helps us make informed decisions while driving down overall fleet and service costs.

*Tom Luck, Information Technology Manager*

Do you know what SCRC is doing to protect our Saginaw Bay Watersheds? Do you know what a watershed is?

- A watershed is the land area that drains into a particular stream, river, lake or ocean.
- Everyone lives in a watershed. In Saginaw County, you may live in the Cass River, Tittabawassee River, Bad River, Swan Creek or Saginaw River Watershed or one of many other watersheds. In fact, all of these watersheds mentioned are part of the greater Saginaw Bay Watershed which is the largest watershed in Michigan. And, let's not forget the eastern half of Michigan is part of the Lake Huron Watershed, and all of Michigan is in the Great Lakes Watershed.
- Saginaw County Road Commission trains its staff to protect our watersheds by holding educational events every year to assure they are up to date on issues related to our region's watersheds.

Our staff works hard to protect our water resources and our watershed, please help us by doing your bit to help keep our rivers, streams and storm water as clean as possible before it goes to our Great Lakes!

To learn more about watersheds, go to [www.saswa.org](http://www.saswa.org) on the home page of the Saginaw Area Storm Water Authority and click on "What's My Watershed?" and see what is the name of the watershed you live in. Or, click on Public Education and learn more.

## Funding and Budget Overview

On November 10, 2015, Governor Rick Snyder signed a \$1.2 billion road funding package that has increased the funding provided to the Saginaw County Road Commission through the Michigan Transportation Fund (MTF). The MTF includes all state-collected road revenue generated from fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees. The MTF is the Road Commission's main source of funding and this is the first increase since 1997. On January 1<sup>st</sup> vehicle registration fees increased 20%. Gasoline tax increased from 19 cents per gallon to 26.3 cents. Diesel-fuel tax was brought up from 15 cents per gallon to the same as gasoline. Beginning in 2022 the rates will be increasing with the Consumer Price Index. Other sources of revenue for the Road Commission include Federal and State grants, township contributions for local projects, and fees for permits.

In 2016, the Saginaw County Road Commission received \$13.4 million from the Michigan Transportation Fund (MTF). Estimates predict that the Road Commission will receive \$16.5 million in 2017, \$17.7 million in 2018, \$19.2 million in 2019, \$20.6 million in 2020, and \$22.9 million in 2021 (if the \$600M General Fund dollars are redirected as the law intends).

Over the past decade, the costs to maintain and repair roads have steadily risen. The Saginaw County Road Commission's budget has not kept pace with the rate of inflation. Even if SCRC receives the estimated full amount of funding in 2021 there will be years of catch-up work to be done to fix the county's "poor" and "failing" roads. SCRC estimates that to get all of the county's roads into "good" condition would require over \$400 million. While the new state funding increase will help, with several more years to phase-in, roads will continue to deteriorate as we await the new funding. In addition to fixing the county's worst roads, SCRC must also balance the need to preserve the investments that have already been made in the county's "good" roads to increase their lifespans and avoid costly reconstruction projects. SCRC must also factor in the annual cost of winter maintenance, the need for new equipment, and other agency operation costs when determining how to allocate the new road funding from the state.

### 2018 Budgeted Expenses

Primary Preservation/ Structural Improvements	\$6,760,303
Primary Routine & Preventive Maintenance	\$3,795,258
Local Preservation/Structural Improvements	\$8,516,796
Local Routine & Preventive Maintenance	\$6,878,905
Equipment Direct Expense	\$3,908,766
(Equipment Rental)	\$(3,350,000)
Administration	\$543,500
Capital Outlay	\$1,650,000
(Depreciation)	\$(1,200,000)
Debt Service	\$640,000
<b>GRAND TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$28,143,528</b>

(Snapshot of the expenses for 2018)

It was a busy year for the SCRC and below is a summary of everything that was completed.

105 miles of primary roads in District 6 were chip sealed as well as all the local roads that were requested by their township. We thought 2016 was our best year in terms of quality work - but 2017 was even better! Great job!

Miles of ditches were cleaned, set back, hydro-seeded and all DEQ soil erosion and sediment control measures were completed. 35 miles of tailgate gravel or gravel lifts were completed countywide. 23A Limestone has been the primary material used for a number of years. Last year we listened to some of our township customers concerns on the performance of this product and agreed to test two other materials. Asphalt millings were used in District 3 and both asphalt millings and 23A natural gravel were used in District 3 and 4. The millings seemed to perform fine in year one, but in year two the performance was found to be unacceptable. It has been decided this product will not be an option in the future. 23A natural gravel and 23A limestone will be the options for our townships in coming years. When choosing one of these approved materials, consideration of the roadway ADT and location should be a main factor.

42 distributor loads of hot patch were completed countywide. Two new one-man road patcher machines and one older machine ran continuously. Tree removal projects took place this fall and will continue into the winter. From 12" to box culverts, numerous cross culvert replacements were completed countywide. Crack sealing was done on many primary roads in District 2. We are now concentrating on planned chip seal routes for the 2018 year and approved local roads countywide.

Brush cutting took place mainly in Buena Vista, Blumfield, Bridgeport, Saginaw, Carrollton, Kochville & Zilwaukee Township. Other locations were addressed as needed. Shoulder maintenance was done countywide. Gravel roads were routinely graded and brined. Curbs, bridge decks and chip seal routes were swept. Continuous repairs, replacements and routine maintenance were done on storm drains and catch basins countywide. We will be assisting in the collection of the remaining storm drain inventory in Saginaw County. The sign shop completed their updates in Tittabawassee, Kochville & Zilwaukee Township along with their normal routine maintenance. Line striping and pavement marking was completed on prioritized locations per budget.

Our equipment inspection was completed on 10/26/17 to prepare for our winter operations. Any issues that were found in our pre-winter inspection have already been addressed. All of our winter operation trucks have had the flashing GREEN LIGHTS installed for higher visibility during normal and blizzard conditions. Our night shift began 11/26/17 and will continue until mid-March. The end date will be determined based on forecasted weather.

Facility repairs were done at all three garages as well as the administration building to increase energy efficiency and cut costs. At the Saginaw garage, three overhead garage doors were removed and replaced with insulated doors. The heating and cooling system in the lunch room was replaced as well as the heating system in the tire room and the welding shop. The sign shop and training area's cooling system was completed. Lastly, the windows were downsized and replaced with high efficient windows in the lunch room, boiler room and welding bay. The administration building had a new heating and cooling system installed. Both Hemlock and Chesaning had repairs done to the roof and upgrades were done to the electrical panel and lighting in the welding area at the Chesaning garage.

Equipment repairs were continuous throughout the year. Equipment that is being refurbished includes three loaders being blasted and painted, three tandems scheduled for box replacements, two 1-ton scheduled for box replacements, a plow will be blasted and painted and auto grease systems have been installed in new equipment. Also, our new equipment has already been delivered. Two rounds each of equipment training on the loader, gradall and grader were completed. Employees also completed training on our chip seal distributors and chipper equipment. As soon as the weather breaks in 2018, excavator training will be held.

With another year already gone, there is always change that we must deal with, but we've been fortunate with the equipment and facilities upgrades that we were able to complete this year. I would like to thank all employees for their continued dedication to the SCRC. I would also like to emphasize a huge THANK YOU to the employees that have completed their careers this past year along with the employees who plan on completing your career in early 2018. Good luck to each and every one of you. To the new employees recently joining our team, WELCOME!! Your attitude, dedication and interest in learning all aspects of our operation to best service our customers' needs safely and efficiently will only strengthen our team.

I hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday season. Thank You to All!

*Dan Medina, Director of Maintenance*

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