

VAN BUREN COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION

NEWS RELEASE

BETTER HIGHWAYS: SAVE LIVES, SAVE TIME, SAVE MONEY

Lawrence, Michigan			2 024-19
DATE:	December 27, 2024	CONTACT:	Bret Witkowski, Managing Director
RELEASE:	Immediately		Van Buren County Road Commission Post Office Box 156 Lawrence, Michigan 49064 PHONE: (269) 674-8011, Extension 222

ROAD COMMISSION ADOPTS 2025 BUDGET

THE COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION WANTS YOU TO KNOW . . .

The Board of County Road Commissioners of Van Buren County unanimously approved the agency's 2025 budget at its December meeting. The Road Commission strives to be the best possible steward of the revenue it receives by balancing the needs and wants of the community with the funding it receives. The challenge is maintaining and improving the 1,313 miles of roadways the Road Commission is responsible for, while Michigan Transportation Funds continue to fall short and are not able to keep up with inflation.

To determine where the limited funds can best be used, the VBCRC uses the following process:

- 5-Year Asset Management Plan that is reviewed annually by the Board.
- The VBCRC submits applications for critical bridge funding annually, and every three years for road project funding.
- Equipment and facilities are maintained and improved. All equipment and facility needs are reviewed annually for a 3-Year Plan.

In addition, the VBCRC is committed to applying for as many grants as possible to maximize its limited funds. In the past few months, the VBCRC has received grants totaling \$8,000,000, with a local match of \$4,000,000 for projects taking place over the next three to four years. And the VBCRC is only able to have funds available for the local match because of the commitment of the county residents in renewing the county-wide millage. Without the county-wide road millage these projects would not be possible.

The State of Michigan recommends Road Commissions maintain a fund balance ranging between 20-25% of annual budgets. Keeping in line with this, the Road Commission's Preliminary 2025 budget maintains a fund balance of 23.97% based upon annual expenditures.

The current outlook for the Van Buren County road system is positive through maintaining a healthy fund balance, careful planning and grant awards. Unfortunately bridge funding is anticipated to DECREASE by 5% per year, statewide. Additionally, the Michigan Transportation fund has not kept up with inflation over the past 25 years, resulting in an ANNUAL DEFICIT for our Road Commission of over \$4 million. These deficits continue to place additional burden on our local funds and will result in the need for additional revenues if we are to keep up with current road and bridge maintenance and improvement plans.

The Road Commission's budget is adjusted by the Board, as necessary, and is available on the agency's website at www.vbcrc.org/budget. Any questions regarding the budget or planning process can be directed to Finance and Human Resources Director, Linnea Rader via email at linnearader@vbcrc.org or by phone at 269-674-8011 ext 233, or to Bret Witkowski, Managing Director, via email at bretwitkowski@vbcrc.org or by phone at 269-674-8011 ext 222.

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