



# OUR COUNTY ROADS IN VIEW

A periodic newsletter of the Ingham County Road Commission for public officials and citizens of Ingham County.  
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## Our New Newsletter

To all of our public officials, citizens, and friends of Ingham County, with great delight we introduce the new Ingham County Road Commission newsletter, “**Our County Roads in View.**” This is the first of many periodic newsletters that will be coming out in the future. The Ingham County Road Commission (I.C.R.C.) under the governance of the Board of Commissioners and management of Managing Director Bill Conklin is proud to provide this informational newsletter to the public. This newsletter is devoted to keeping the public informed about pertinent issues concerning our county roads.

This newsletter with the attached project lists and 2007 Financial Report is being sent to all County Commissioners, the County Controller, Elected Officials, Township Supervisors, and Neighborhood Association Presidents. The newsletter without the financial report attached is being sent to all Township Trustees. The newsletter and the 2007 Annual Financial Report can be viewed by all citizens on our website at [www.inghamcrc.org](http://www.inghamcrc.org).

## The 2007 Annual Financial Report

Included with this first edition is our 2007 Annual Financial Report. This publication illustrates our financial position for the year 2007, and summarizes how our public funds were expended. Of the nearly 20.5 million in total expenditures in 2007, the I.C.R.C. invested over \$18,135,036, or about 89%, to maintain, improve, and ensure the safety of roads for the citizens of Ingham County.

Although the I.C.R.C. is very committed to taking care of our county roads, the rising cost of vital resources to our operations is of great concern. The current cost of the resources that we utilize the most have sky rocketed.

Over the past four years, the cost of asphalt for pick-up by Road Commission trucks has increased by 62%. Additionally, over the last year our contractor’s cost for asphalt paving has increased by 70%. The cost of gasoline has increased by 68%, and by 90% for diesel fuel. The cost of winter maintenance salt has increased by 19.4%.

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While we are presently adjusting to this inflation, the public should be aware that our MTF (Michigan Transportation Fund) gas tax revenue has decreased by nearly 4% in the past year and has been flat for the last ten years. The primary source of our funding comes from the Michigan gas tax, which is a tax that is based on the gallons of gas that motorists consume, rather than by the price per gallon. Michigan’s fuel consumption has been declining as a result of high fuel prices and a poor economy, which has had a downward affect on gas tax revenue.

This current reality is forcing the I.C.R.C. to search for ways to survive this crunch of high inflation and flat revenue, as we try to maintain the same quality of care for our roads that we have done in the past. We are researching new road maintenance methods that offer longer life at lower cost. Some examples include in-place pavement recycling and thinner surface treatments to preserve pavement before it fails.

## Township Administration Fee

The I.C.R.C. has announced that the township administration fee is being waived to help offset the greatly inflated cost of asphalt in the Township Local Road Program this year. According to Act 51, MTF funds must be 50% matched by other sources for construction and heavy maintenance on local roads. Typically these costs are split with townships, or township administered special assessment districts.

The administration fee includes cost for insurance, engineering, and administration attributable to the Township Local Road Program. It was calculated based on actual cost to be typically 7% of contractor cost. Half of this has been invoiced to townships. Thus, townships have actually only been paying 3.5% for administrative cost.

A meeting will be scheduled this winter with all interested township officials to review what costs are included in this fee, and make any necessary adjustments to it for the future. Further information about the scheduling of this meeting will be announced in the very near future.

## Road Projects Update

The Okemos Road and Haslett Road intersection project is now open to traffic and is complete, with the exception of some final clean up.

The Barnes Road project between Aurelius Road and College Road is now open to traffic and near completion. The remainder of the project involves final clean up. This project will be completed by the beginning of November.

Also approaching completion is the Cedar Street project between Dallas Avenue and Hollbrook Drive. The Delhi Township Downtown Development Authority is providing funding for this project. It is scheduled to be complete by Mid-November.

Scheduled for later this Fall is the repairing and resurfacing of Grand River Avenue between M-52 and Elm Street in Leroy Township. The cost of this project is \$285,000. This project will last approximately one week.

Included with this newsletter is a listing of all of the current and upcoming road projects. This information includes details regarding project cost and project description.

## New Assistant District Supervisors

The I.C.R.C. is pleased to announce promotions of Brett Campbell and Tom Gamez to the Assistant Supervisor positions in the Road Commission's Metro and Western districts respectively. Both Brett and Tom have worked a number of years in the respective districts as crew leaders, leading various types of work. Brett and Tom join our other district supervisors as follows: Bob Guevara (Metro District Supervisor), Charley Davis (Western District Supervisor), and Dale Arnett & Jim Benjamin (Eastern District Supervisor and Assistant Supervisor respectively). Citizens and public officials are encouraged to contact Road Commission district supervisors with any questions or problems that arise.

## Winter Just Around the Corner

Although we would like for "Old Man Winter" to go south for the season, the I.C.R.C. is busy preparing for his return nonetheless. As mentioned earlier, the cost of salt has risen nearly 20%, from \$36/ton to \$43/ton this year. With this increase and the fuel cost increase, the I.C.R.C. must economize where possible without affecting road safety. We have and will use an additive that enhances salt's melting ability at lower temperatures. Also we have, and will to a greater extent, add sand to the salt to extend it particularly on lower volume rural roads.

The Road Commission's winter maintenance policy is as follows:

#BP-189 – Resolution #009-92:

*To the extent practicable with due regard to weather variations throughout the County, the day and the time of day of the inclement conditions, and the number of workers available at the time, winter maintenance will be addressed in the following manner and priority: The first trucks sent out in a snow or ice storm are to sand and/or salt signalized intersections, bridges and railroad truck approaches, hills and curves. During, or following this operation, the major primary roads that average at least 1500 vehicles per day are to be bladed and/or salted. County local roads that average at least 1000 vehicles per day or that have a school or fire department located on the road are to be bladed, sanded and/or salted next. The remainder of the county primary roads are then treated in the same manner. The remaining county local roads and subdivision streets are to be bladed only. Sub-collector street intersections and the local county road intersections, curves and hills are to be sanded and salted. The same county local roads and streets are not necessarily to be cleared first all the time. The sequence of clearing county local roads and streets may be varied from time to time.*

*Winter Just Around the Corner, from page 2*

I.C.R.C. staff patrols the roads at night Sunday through Thursday to have the most appropriate response dispatched at the right time to clear primary roads for weekday morning traffic. Supervisors are on call at all other non-business hours to respond as needed. However with budget constraints discussed in this newsletter it is not possible to keep all roads clear and dry at all times, day, night, and weekends. High volume intersections will be salted if law enforcement indicates definite need. Otherwise most snow-fighting efforts start at approximately 4:00am to have the primary roads safe by 7:00am for the morning rush hour.

Major storm clean-ups are usually completed in one day. However, in light of budget constraints, not all low volume local roads and subdivisions may be cleaned up on the same day that a snowstorm ends. I.C.R.C. will plow subdivision streets that are most likely to develop ice prior to other subdivision streets. Even with this delay, I.C.R.C. cleans up its subdivision roads sooner than most other counties. In some counties, the Road Commissions have stopped plowing subdivisions entirely. In light snowfalls I.C.R.C. plows only subdivisions' main in-out approaches to the through county roads.

A safety tip to remember during snowstorms is to watch out for snowdrifts. Snowdrifts may appear to be harmless, however they often cause vehicles to lose control. Motorists should slow down when approaching snowdrifts. It is also not a good idea to utilize cruise control on winter condition roads.

Residents should also be aware that the I.C.R.C. can't replace mailboxes that are toppled over by snow when the roads are plowed. The I.C.R.C. can only replace mailboxes that are directly struck by snowplows. Mailboxes should be strong enough to withstand any snow contact that may happen from plowing operations, but not so structurally strong as to be a hazard to vehicles.

In accordance with our policy #BP-283, *Mailbox installations must conform to U.S. Postal regulations. The box and the support should not exceed the following structural limitations: A single four inch by four inch (4"x4") square or four inch (4") diameter wooden post, or light gage pipe with a strength no greater than two inch (2") standard steel pipe embedded no more than 24 inches in the ground will be accepted as a mailbox support to avoid hazards to motorists on roads having greater than 25 mph speed limits.*

Certainly we hope for a mild winter, but are prepared for the worst.

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## Reminder to Residents

The I.C.R.C. would also like to remind residents not to blow leaves into ditches and snow into the road. We understand residents have a big job to do maintaining their yards from leaves and snow. However, leaves and snow need to be disposed of in an appropriate manner. Leaves left in ditches may inhibit drainage eventually causing road distress. Snow that is blown or pushed into roads after the plow has come through may be a traffic hazard.

Leaves should be disposed of as advised by your Township. Snow should be blown or shoveled away from the road.

In addition to leaves and snow, residents should also be aware that they should not park along side streets during a snowstorm. Parking along the street during a snowstorm obstructs our snow plowing operations from completely clearing the snow from the entire roadway.

The I.C.R.C. appreciates the cooperation of our residents, as this will help us keep our roads safe and allow us to efficiently perform our work.

This concludes our first edition of "Our County Roads in View." We look forward to bringing you more information and current events relating to our county roads in the months ahead. Please contact us with any questions or concerns that you would like answered immediately or discussed in a future edition of "Our County Roads in View."

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