

# OSCODA TOWNSHIP ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROCESS OVERVIEW

## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT TOWNSHIP ROADS AND HOW TO GET THEM IMPROVED:

Oscoda Township recognizes that roads are a major concern to the general public and to the local economy. The information provided below is important information about your local roads:

### **Road repair:**

If your public road needs pot hole repair, crack repair, plowing, or re-grading; contact the Iosco County Road Commission at: By phone @ 989-362-4433; through the internet by completing a service request – [www.ioscoroads.org](http://www.ioscoroads.org); in person at the Tawas location - 3939 West M-55, Tawas City

### **What is a road improvement or road repair?**

A road improvement is a major road refurbishment such as repaving or conversion of gravel roads. Road repair, on the other hand, is regular maintenance of road defects such as pot hole filler, gravel road grading, crack sealer, shoulder work, etc.

### **But I pay taxes, why does the township not repave my road?**

The township does not own the vast majority roads nor does it receive any dedicated tax monies for road repairs and improvements. In fact, very few townships in Michigan own any roads. Oscoda Township roads, by state law, fall under the ownership and jurisdiction of the Iosco County Road Commission (ICRC). ICRC receives a percentage of fuel tax and registration fee money collected by the State of Michigan to maintain and improve roads. However, the ICRC's allocation over the last decade has resulted in very limited funds to maintain and improve the 853 miles of road it has jurisdiction of throughout Iosco County.

### **How can I get my road improved?**

In order to help residents and Iosco County Road Commission with road improvements, Oscoda Township has implemented a three-part cost sharing program. You can read details of the official Township road improvement program here.

First part is township money. Based on this program, the Township has allocated a fixed sum of limited township money to contribute to annual road improvements. How and when the money is spent is based on projected fiscal year cycles. This means that the

amount of roads that can be improved is planned in advance by one or more years ahead of actually getting the roads improved. This prevents the township from getting into a financial crisis as a result of improving too many miles of road in any given year. How far this money will go also depends on the fluctuating costs of materials used to make roads.

Second part is Iosco Road Commission fiscal planning. Since they normally pay for 30% of the improvements, they too must also pre-plan their annual budgets.

Third part is the property owners. The first step as a local property owner is to send notice to the township road and sidewalk sub-committee indicating that you want your road improved. The sub-committee is comprised of three township board members who meet periodically to prioritize the list of road improvements and facilitate development of cost estimates. Most importantly, the property owners along the road need to come together and sign a petition to approve the special assessment needed to fund a minimum of 35% of the improvement costs.

Here is a summary of the steps for road improvement:

1. Property owner(s) submit letter of interest to the Township.
2. Township road committee meets to discuss feasibility of implementation/project merit.
3. If there is consensus to proceed, project approval and a cost estimate is sought from the road commission.
4. Township road committee formulates a recommendation for the Township board and, if the direction is to implement, approval from the Township board to incur the Township share of the project cost is sought.
5. If Township board approves cost participation, the road commission develops a special assessment petition and property owner cost estimates.
6. Interested property owners are then responsible for circulating the special assessment petition and acquiring the necessary signatures to demonstrate majority support for the project.
7. If the necessary signatures are obtained, as validated by the road commission, the project will proceed to construction (provided there is no counter petition and the hearings of necessity and assessment are successful). If the necessary signatures are not obtained, the project is deemed non-feasible at that point.

It should be noted that the above described process applies to county local roads and not county primary roads. ICRC pays 100% of the costs for primary certified roads.

### **How can I get my road improved faster?**

This may be accomplished by the affected property owners agreeing (through the special assessment process) to pay more than the minimum 35% of the cost share program. The more the property owners pay, then the earlier the improvements can be fiscally projected because of the lessened impact the improvements have on the

township and road commission budgets. The property owners can also agree to pay 100% of the improvement and receive expedited service.

In considering the above steps it is important to note that establishment of special assessment district takes many months based upon Michigan procedural requirements. Therefore, planning of road improvements in advance to allow time for Township budgeting and special assessment district establishment is important to a successful outcome. Finally, citizens should be aware that the above outline represents an overview of the normal process; the policy document does provide for exceptions under very limited circumstances.