

# Costs of county roads are shared by three parties

Months of negotiations. Mounds of paper work. Much perspiration. That's what it took, but it seems to be paying off as a \$1.5 million tri-party road construction program gets "on the ground."

Projects are being let to bidders now and are expected to be completed this year on county roads in 38 communities, said Fred Houghton, chairman of the board of Oakland County Road Commissioners.

HE SAID the necessary overall approval has been received from the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, which launched the program last year by contributing \$500,000.

The road commission is matching the county board's share. Cities, villages and townships in which projects are being conducted are contributing one-third also.

The tri-party program projects are in addition to the other \$17 million worth of construction the road commission has programmed for this year. That work involves \$6.3 million of local tax money and \$5.3 million of federal tax money.

"Unlike most projects, which we plan several years in advance and are negotiating with local communities and the federal government years in advance, the county board-assisted projects are always last minute," said Houghton.

"Rather than relatively simple two-party agreements, they require three-party coordination. Also, last year was the first time the county board required us to seek participation by cities and villages. It's surprising so many cities are participating, because the projects must be on county roads due to restrictions imposed by state law on use of the road commission's share of state-collected gas and weight taxes," he said.

"As finally worked out, the program includes projects in 20 of 26 cities, one of 12 villages and 18 of 23 townships," said Houghton.

INCLUDED in cities and villages are the following projects, which will cost \$702,971:

- Traffic signal upgrades at 32 locations, which will cost an estimated \$48,371.
- Pedestrian crossing signal installations at 14 locations, to cost \$56,000.
- Paving of passing lanes at 16 locations, to cost \$326,000.
- Pavement resurfacing for a total of 4.8 miles for \$212,000.
- Paving of gravel road approaches to paved roads at one location, to cost \$10,000.
- A ramp improvement at one location, to cost \$51,000.

Included in townships are the following projects, which will cost \$650,027:

- Signal upgrades at 25 locations; \$50,381.
- Bridge replacements at two locations; \$75,000.
- Gravel road approach paving at 23 locations; \$236,691.
- Adding three inches of new gravel to 42 miles of road; \$210,000.
- Pavement resurfacing for 0.6 mile; \$231,000.
- Paving of passing lanes at four locations; \$27,000.
- Miscellaneous gravel road improvements at one location; \$30,000.

Also part of the program, but being paid for only by the county board and the road commission on a 50-50 basis is the paving of Brown Road from Giddings to the end of pavement similarly constructed last year by the two units.

LOCAL COMMUNITIES that agreed to participate and amounts authorized by each are:

CITIES: Birmingham, \$1,332; Bloomfield Hills, \$1,156; Farmington, \$10,733; Farmington Hills, \$62,377; Orchard Lake, \$7; Southfield, \$11,393; Troy, \$91,585.

VILLAGE: Beverly Hills, \$1,282.

TOWNSHIPS: Avon, \$15,604; Bloomfield, \$12,826; Oakland, \$16,668; West Bloomfield, \$10,548.

# District judges won't get raises from county

Eight district court judges failed again last week to get a 10 percent raise from the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.

The eight judges of the 52nd district, including those presiding in the cities of Troy and Rochester, are paid \$42,358 annually - \$27,765 from the state and \$14,593 from the county.

The board's personnel committee had recommended the county increase its portion of the judges' salaries 10 percent to \$16,652.

But the finance committee said it lacked money for the raises and recommended against the increase.

Before the full 57-member board of commissioners, the proposal last week fell one vote short of the 14 needed for approval.

Judges in the 52nd District include Robert L. Shipper and Mildred A. Vlach in Rochester and William E. Bolle, James R. Hand and Bristol E. Hunter in Troy.

STATE LAW allows the county to pay the judges up to \$18,510. The district judges last fall asked for a 9 percent increase to that amount last fall.

But the board granted a 9 percent raise to \$14,593 when approving the county budget last December. A proposal from the floor to give the judges an additional 10 percent failed.

Board Vice Chairman Lillian Moffitt,

R-Birmingham, said this week that the board's resistance to a bigger raise for the judges is "nothing personal," but a reflection of its intent to keep "a firm handle on the budget." Mrs. Moffitt voted for the 10 percent increase last week, which would have been retroactive to Jan. 1.

Several months ago, the board decided against considering salary or staff increases except during its fall budget review. Some commissioners voted against the judges' increase because it didn't comply with that policy, Mrs. Moffitt said.

Personnel Committee Chairman John McDonald, R-Farmington Hills, who also voted for the increases, said enough commissioners thought a second judges' raise in a year was "too much to swallow."

A move to reconsider the matter next month can be made only by a commissioner who voted on the prevailing side, against the raise. Mrs. Moffitt said reconsideration was unlikely since the judges didn't gain any votes in the second attempt for the 10 percent raise.

THE BOARD ONLY determines a salary portion for the eight 52nd District judges. Other district judges in the county have the local portions of their salaries set by cities, such as Southfield and Farmington.

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