

## WHAT IS RCOC?

The Road Commission for Oakland County maintains Michigan's largest county road system, with 2,700-plus miles of roads (including 760 miles of gravel roads). Only the state highway system is larger.

RCOC also maintains:

- ◆ Approximately 80 bridges,
- ◆ Approximately 1,500 traffic signals,
- ◆ Approximately 150,000 traffic signs and
- ◆ More than 230 miles of state highway.

## SAFETY FIRST

As a matter of policy, major road improvement projects are conducted by the Road Commission based on a safety ranking system. At RCOC "Safety First" is



### RCOC:

- ✓ Is separate from county general government and does not receive any revenue from property taxes
- ✓ Receives the majority of its funding from the state and federal gas tax and state vehicle-registration fee
- ✓ Has congested roads due to the tremendous growth in the county
- ✓ Receives no direct revenue from growth and development
- ✓ Pays as much as \$2.5 million to pave a mile of gravel road
- ✓ Pays \$8 million or more to widen one mile of road from two lanes to five
- ✓ Is located in a state that ranks in the bottom nine states in per capita road funding

## ROAD COMMISSION for OAKLAND COUNTY

31001 Lahser Road · Beverly Hills · MI 48025

### BOARD OF ROAD COMMISSIONERS

**RONALD J. FOWKES**

**GREGORY C. JAMIAN**

**ANDREA LALONDE**

**Dennis G. Kolar, PE**  
*Managing Director*

**Gary Piotrowicz, PE, PTOE**  
*Deputy Managing Director*

### RCOC MISSION STATEMENT

RCOC strives to provide the public with leadership in:

- Safe and convenient roads
- Sound financial management
- Responsive and dependable service
- Respect for the environment
- Sensitivity to community concerns

## HAVE A QUESTION FOR THE ROAD COMMISSION?

### CALL, WRITE OR VISIT:

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES  
2420 PONTIAC LAKE ROAD  
WATERFORD, MI 48328  
**(877) 858-4804**  
TDD: (248) 858-8005  
OR, visit RCOC online at  
**[www.rcocweb.org](http://www.rcocweb.org)**



# TRI-PARTY PROGRAM



- ◆ What is it?
- ◆ How is it funded?
- ◆ How can it be used?

## TRI-PARTY PROGRAM

# WHAT IS IT, AND WHAT ARE FUNDS USED FOR?

### PROGRAM HISTORY

There are a variety of programs and funding sources available to improve county roads in Oakland County. One Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) program, however, is particularly popular with the communities in the county because it allows the community officials to select projects on county roads within their boundaries. It is known as the Tri-Party Program.



RCOC has jurisdiction over 2,700-plus miles of county roads within Oakland's cities, villages and townships. For the most part, improvements to these roads are selected by RCOC based on safety concerns, the need for congestion relief or to improve the road surface. RCOC always consults the local community about such projects and would not initiate a project without a community's support. Nonetheless, the selection of projects is ultimately made by RCOC.

In the early 1970s, RCOC did not have adequate funding for gravel road maintenance. RCOC is not part of the county government, and it went to the Oakland County Board of Commissioners seeking additional funding. As a result, the Tri-Party Program was created. The program gave townships, which do not have jurisdiction over their roads, money to spend on gravel road improvements and repairs. In the 1980s, the program was expanded to include county roads in cities and villages as well.

The program combines equal funding from the County Board, RCOC and the local communities.

### HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

Each year, the County Board of Commissioners sets the amount of money it wishes to allocate to the program. The county executive then places this amount in the county general government budget. This represents one-third of the program budget for the year. RCOC and the communities match this amount, representing their one-third shares for the year.

**COUNTY \$ + RCOC \$ + COMMUNITIES \$  
= TRI-PARTY (\$6 MILLION)**

When the program was initiated, the County Board allocated \$500,000, with program funds totaling \$1.5 million. Over the years, the program has fluctuated somewhat. Today, the County Board allocates \$2 million per year, for a total fund of \$6 million.

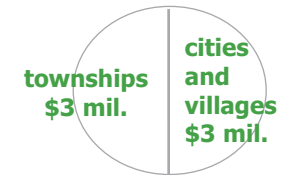
### HOW ARE THE FUNDS DIVIDED?

Of the total program money, half is given to townships while the other half is divided among the cities and villages. Both halves receive \$3 million.

Each city, village and township is given an "account" to use when selecting projects. The amount of money each community is allotted for projects is based on the following factors:

- ♦ **Cities & Villages:** miles of county roads, number of accidents on county roads
- ♦ **Townships:** population, miles of county roads, number of accidents on county roads

For every proposed project, the County Board, RCOC and that community each pay one-third of the total project cost.



### HOW CAN THE FUNDS BE USED?

RCOC provides each community with a list of possible projects based on resident complaints, as logged with the RCOC Department of Customer Services; input from the community officials, as recorded during RCOC's biennial Strategic Planning meetings; and needs reported directly by RCOC departments.

Communities are also allowed to accumulate their Tri-Party allocations over multiple years to fund projects too large to pay for with a single year's allotment.

Projects can include:

- ♦ road resurfacing and reconstructing
- ♦ drainage improvements
- ♦ gravel road "re-graveling" or paving
- ♦ signal installation
- ♦ curb and lane additions (e.g., right-turn, left-turn and passing lanes).
- ♦ shoulder paving

Communities have the option of administering their own projects, providing that the work is in the road right of way and is approved by RCOC and the County Board of Commissioners.

Communities can also use Tri-Party funds as their local match for larger, federally funded projects. For most federally funded projects, 80 percent of the money comes from federal and state funds, 10 percent from RCOC and 10 percent from the community. As part of the program, communities can pay their 10 percent with Tri-Party funds. Then, communities are realistically paying only 3.33 percent of the total project cost.