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# Local road repairs flatlining, CRA makes the case for long-term road funding solution in new report

County road associations aren't making progress on fixing the state's infrastructure, a new report released Tuesday by the County Road Association of Michigan said.

While the Legislature debates a long-term road funding solution, the CRA's 2024 County Road Progress Report found that only 491 more miles were improved in 2024 compared to 2023. That represents less than 1 percent of additional miles and is statistically insignificant.

"Our goal is to improve 15 percent of county road miles every year, which would be 13,500 miles," said CRA CEO Denise Donohue in a statement. "We're not halfway to the goal and the trajectory has flatlined. Our 2024 Progress Report should be a clear call for our legislators and governor to come together and enact a long term, sustainable road funding plan as quickly as possible."

The downward trend in gallons of gas sold in Michigan due to increasing vehicle fuel efficiency and rising costs have diminished gas tax revenue, which is a foundation of the Michigan Transportation Fund, which is the largest source of county road funding, the CRA report said.

As a result, many counties are making more minor fixes and fewer long-term reconstructions, Donohue said.

That's been the case in Kent County, said Jerry Byren, managing director the Kent County Road Commission and 2025-26 CRA president.

"In 2025, following years of double-digit road construction inflation and a revenue model increasingly impacted by more fuel-efficient, hybrid and electric vehicles, we've had to revise our strategic plan to shift nearly all emphasis to short-term asset preservation," Byrne said in a statement. "While this allows us to apply treatments to a greater number of roads, what's missing are the longer-term investments."

That approach is not keeping pace with West Michigan's economic momentum and the infrastructure demands that come with it, Byrne said.

Counties are responsible for 75 percent of Michigan road miles and 52 percent of the bridges. The Michigan Department of Transportation has 8 percent of the road miles and 42 percent of the bridges, while cities and villages have 17 percent of the roads and 6 percent of the bridges.

"County road agencies cannot stretch existing dollars any further," Ed Noyola, CRA chief deputy and legislative director, said in a statement. "We need more transportation funds in this legislative session, along with prompt adoption of a mileage-based pilot program for the future."

The CRA set a goal for 60 percent good/fair rating for local roads that do not qualify for federal aid, but local roads have an average rating of 44 percent good/fair. In its 2023 County Road Investment plan, CRA reported that \$2.4 billion in additional funding was needed annually to meet that goal, while maintaining paved primary roads.

Road funding has been a source of debate this term, as the House has passed a road funding plan, but the Senate has not taken up the House's plan or put forward one of its own. [Governor Gretchen Whitmer](#) has pushed for the Legislature to come up with a plan and get it to her desk, but the inability of the Legislature to do so, in part, led to a breakdown of budget conversations last week.

– By Elena Durnbaugh

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