



Voters to decide on renewing tax for road maintenance in Freedom Township

By Jennifer Eberach, 9/9/24

WASHTENAW COUNTY, MI — Freedom Township voters will decide whether to renew a millage for maintenance and improvements on township roads at the polls on Nov. 5.

The ballot proposal calls for 0.2497 mill collected from all property taxes in the township for a term of four years to provide funding for roadwork such as repairs, laying down gravel, ditching and other improvements.

The current millage, which is taxed at the same rate, will expire Dec. 31.

If approved, the millage will raise an estimated \$62,285.20 in the first calendar year.

One mill is equal to \$1 paid in property tax per every \$1,000 of a property's taxable value, roughly half of market value. As an example, a Freedom Township resident who owns a \$200,000 home would pay about \$25 a year for the millage.

"The key point of doing this is it keeps dollars locally within our township to improve our roads that our residents most often frequent," township Clerk Valisa Bristle said.

The township has the second most miles of gravel roads within Washtenaw County, Bristle said.

"So, it's important to us that we can use these road millage dollars to maintain our local gravel roads," she said. "Because of the amount of mileage we have, it's hard for the county to adequately maintain them."

If voters do not renew the millage, the cost of road maintenance would have to come out of the township's general fund.

"Then those dollars wouldn't be able to be used towards other infrastructure, like our fire protection for the township or trying to expand broadband infrastructure, other things that affect the township as a whole," Bristle said.

Previously, township millages for road maintenance and improvement have been for five-year terms.

“We potentially could have put it on the ballot next year,” Bristle said, “but we didn’t want it to be held off cycle for elections because then we would have had to hold our own election and pay all the cost for that.”

She said township officials changed it to a four-year millage “to try and help us stay on the election cycle to save us cost.”