

# VAN BUREN COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION

## NEWS RELEASE

BETTER HIGHWAYS: SAVE LIVES, SAVE TIME, SAVE MONEY

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Lawrence, Michigan

2023-09

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DATE: June 20, 2023

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RELEASE: Immediately

### **BOARD POSTPONES FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS AT ROAD COMMISSION**

#### ***THE ROAD COMMISSION WANTS YOU TO KNOW . . .***

In 2020, the Board of County Road Commissioners contracted with a firm to complete a feasibility study that outlined the operational needs of the County as well as the current condition of Road Commission's facilities. The study concluded that Road Commission's facilities needed substantial investment to remain effectively operational. From the study, the Board moved forward with recommendations to replace the Bangor facility and make improvements to the Lawrence Administrative facility.

Unfortunately, since that time, inflation rates have skyrocketed along with building costs. In addition, many organizations that received COVID relief funds are utilizing these funds for building improvements causing additional supply chain difficulties and even greater costs to contracts for construction. These situations have caused bids for the Bangor Garage to come in at more than double the original cost estimates with a projection that the Lawrence Administrative facility improvement costs would follow suit.

At its June 7, 2023 meeting, the Board of County Road Commissioners unanimously decided to POSTPONE both the replacement of the Bangor Garage facility and the improvements at the Lawrence Administrative office. The high cost to complete both projects would result in little to no money to maintain remaining facilities, and in fact, would likely reduce the amount funding available for road work during the payoff period of the bond. The Board, along with Road Commission leadership and staff, all agree that this result goes against the Road Commission's true mission. Therefore, for the foreseeable future, the Van Buren County Road Commission will continue to commit funds to correct deficiencies at all three Road Commission facilities and continue its mission to improve the roads in Van Buren County.

"The Board of County Road Commissioners of Van Buren County, and its staff are very thankful to the voters of the County who have committed to a county-wide millage to improve roads," said Bret Witkowski, Managing Director of the Road Commission. "Over the coming years we will continue to further the mission of the Road Commission, which is to provide a 'safe and efficient road, bridge, and non-motorized transportation network through sound financial decisions made in the best interest of the motoring public that will save lives, time and money'. In addition, we will commit to improve the effectiveness of each Road Commission facility for the benefit of both our employees, and for the motorists of Van Buren County."

VAN BUREN COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION

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