

The Millage For Roads

What the Renewal of One Mill Will Do

A REPORT TO THE CITIZENS



THREE RIVERS
MICHIGAN



ROAD MILLAGE RENEWAL BALLOT LANGUAGE

Shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be imposed against all property in St. Joseph County, Michigan be renewed at 1 mill which is one dollar (\$1.00) per each one thousand dollars of taxable value and be levied and billed for a period of ten (10) years, 2024-2033 inclusive for road purposes within the incorporated cities and villages in St. Joseph County, Michigan and to improve, repair and maintain existing local roads within the townships in St. Joseph County, Michigan, with the money to be collected and distributed in accordance with all applicable statutes?

It is estimated that this proposal would produce revenue of \$2,465,386 during the first calendar year.

Township Roads - Village Roads - City Roads



VOTE TUESDAY, AUGUST 6TH



In 1994 the citizens of St. Joseph County (SJC) voted to approve a ten-year, one mill, millage to improve local roads in the County. The millage was renewed by the voters in 2004 and 2014 and now, in August 2024, the citizens are again being asked whether they want to provide the same millage for another ten years. The intent of this brochure is to provide factual information about the proposed millage renewal. Please read and carefully consider the following information:



Is this a tax rate increase? No, the millage amount started at one mill in 1994 and the proposal on the 2024 ballot is for the millage to remain at one mill.

What is 1 mill? One mill is one dollar for every one thousand dollars of the taxable value as shown on a property tax bill. For example: a property that has a taxable value of \$100,000 will pay \$100 per year in property taxes to help maintain local roads in the County.

Do all the governmental units in the County (Cities, Village and Townships) receive the benefit of the millage? Yes, the Cities and Villages receive their share directly while the Townships receive their share through the St. Joseph County Road Commission (SJCRC).

How much money does the millage generate for local road maintenance? In 2023 the millage generated \$2,465,386.

Have the local roads in the County actually been improved by having the millage for the last ten years? Yes. Local roads are rated on a scale from 1-10. In 2014 local roads were rated at 4.415 and improved to a score of 6.126 by 2023.

Do the dollars generated by the millage pay for anything other than local road maintenance? No, the language in the ballot proposal requires that every dollar generated go towards local road maintenance in SJC. These funds are not used on primary roads.

Who decides what local roads receive the millage money? Every year SJCRC meets and works with Township officials from all sixteen Townships to determine which road projects are most important for their area. The City and Village boards determine which roads in their area are the most important for them.

Why do we have to depend on local sources for the funding of road maintenance? Shouldn't the State provide the funding through the gas tax? ACT 51 requires the SJCRC to spend 33% of its gas tax funds for the **maintenance** of local roads. If individual counties want to **improve** their local road network from gravel to hard surface additional funds are required from local sources.

What kind of projects does the millage fund? To provide matching funds with the townships for reconstruction, paving, and gravel resurfacing projects, culvert replacement, 25% required match for local bridge replacement, crack sealing, dust control, tree trimming, brush control, line striping, and signage.



What will happen if the millage fails? SJCRC has a large percentage (82%) of hard surfaced roads. You might ask how did that happen? The answer is the 1 mill local road millage. When the millage was first approved in 1994 it was used to improve many local roads from gravel to hard surface. With inflation in the middle 2000's it was used primarily to maintain these roads as hard surfaced. With the fuel tax increase in 2016 the millage was again used to improve many of those roads that were at the end of their life cycle. Without the millage, SJC will not be able to keep an 82% hard surfaced road network.

VILLAGE – CITY – TOWNSHIPS LOCAL MILES

| Village & City | Miles |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Village of Burr Oak | 7.96 |
| Village of Centreville | 9.73 |
| Village of Colon | 11.57 |
| Village of Constantine | 14.93 |
| Village of Mendon | 8.3 |
| Village of White Pigeon | 9.85 |
| City of Sturgis | 56.01 |
| City of Three Rivers | <u>47.26</u> |
| Total | 165.61 |

| Townships | Miles |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| Burr Oak Township | 44.91 |
| Colon Township | 48.19 |
| Constantine Township | 48.01 |
| Fabius Township | 55.32 |
| Fawn River Township | 33.02 |
| Florence Township | 44.49 |
| Flowerfield Township | 46.48 |
| Leonidas Township | 45.37 |
| Lockport Township | 47.35 |
| Mendon Township | 47.80 |
| Mottville Township | 28.35 |
| Nottawa Township | 52.54 |
| Park Township | 43.66 |
| Sherman Township | 45.59 |
| Sturgis Township | 20.45 |
| White Pigeon Township | <u>30.59</u> |
| Total | 685.12 |

SJCRC has 1017.88 miles of roads to maintain. Of that total 685.12 are local roads. In addition to the regular driving traffic, the county is seeing increased large truck traffic and larger agricultural machinery using the rural road system. Our local roads are feeling the impact, and more maintenance is required to keep these roads safe for the local traveling public. Nobody likes taxes but funding local road improvements, repairs and maintenance remains necessary. You, the voting citizens, will decide on August 6th whether or not to continue to see a higher level of maintenance on local roads. By renewing the millage, the county can invest a little more in the local road system which will prevent greater costs over time. Please think about it and vote.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact the St. Joseph County Road Commission at 269-467-6393.