

# Memorandum

**To:** East Bay Charter Township Board

**From:** Beth Friend

**Date:** June 6, 2008

**Re:** Roads within East Bay Township

---

It may seem that roads are recently at the forefront of many discussions. And while that may be true, it's been an issue regularly discussed at the township level, perhaps most of the time informally among residents and officials. I've put down a few of my thoughts and outlined potential steps for the township to take in addressing roads. I realize this is not any instant solution, nor is it intended to be. What it is meant to be is the beginning of addressing roads and maximizing the effect the township may have on the roads within its borders. I appreciate your consideration and comments.

**1) Develop a relationship with the Grand Traverse County Road Commission.**

Dedicate a township official to cultivate a continuing relationship with the GTC Road Commission. This would involve regular attendance at GTC Road Commission meetings by an East Bay Township official. This designated person would be the 'go to' person regarding road issues within East Bay Township. Through an ongoing relationship, the township would benefit from an individual that is up to date on road issues within East Bay Township, potential projects within the township, projects outside township boundaries that may affect roads within the township, and identification of challenges and opportunities regarding roads.

*Timeframe: immediately*

**2) Develop a road plan.**

A road plan for East Bay Township would identify values, goals and a prioritization of roads. Such a plan could use the input of the Planning Commission, township engineer, and the GTC Road Commission. The Planning Commission may have distinct viewpoints on the values and goals of roads within the township, perhaps analyzing Context Sensitive Design and its potential use in the township. The GTC Road Commission currently rates the quality of the county's roads with a PASER rating. The GTC Road Commission's involvement would be imperative to develop a priority listing for the township's roads.

*Timeframe: 6 months*

**3) Create a Special Assessment District (SAD) Fund for road improvements**

When a SAD is used to improve roads, there are upfront expenses to the township for items such as engineering and surveying, which are then later reimbursed to the township through the SAD. However, the township is at risk for losing any of these funds if the SAD falls through. Creation of a SAD fund would allow the township to allot a fixed amount which would be determined acceptable by the Board, to be used for these upfront SAD costs. In all likelihood upfront costs are reimbursed, but in the case

they may not be, the township has identified its level of acceptable financial risk by establishing this fund. The fund will generally stay at a determined level, shrink when upfront costs are used and be reestablished when the SAD reimburses the township. In the case of lost upfront costs, the township can budget, potentially over time, to bring the fund back to an acceptable level. The potential impact on the township's budget is predetermined and more stable. Additionally, the township can refer to a developed road plan to make determinations on using SAD funds. For example, the township can base the decisions of using township funds for upfront costs based on the prioritization in the road plan.

*Timeframe: 2009 budgeting process*

#### **4) Discuss utilization of PA 188 of 1954**

During discussions regarding township roads and the use of PA 188 for assessing properties, some possible limitations of the act were identified. This should again be discussed, determine the uses, challenges and potential remedies.

*Timeframe: August or September board meeting*

#### **Attachments:**

- East Bay Township PASER ratings
- GTC Road Commission meeting schedule
- Public Act 188
- Roads in Wayne County document
- Whitewater Township Road Plan