



2015 ANNUAL REPORT

Coshocton County Engineer
Frederick T. Wachtel, P.E., P.S.

CONDITION OF ROADS, BRIDGES, AND CULVERTS

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From Fred's Desk...

This report is filed annually to highlight the Coshocton County Engineer's Office activities of 2015 and to lay out the tentative plans for the year 2016.

We were able to complete two large road projects, one a federally funded resurfacing of CR 16 from the City of Coshocton to the Village of West Lafayette, and the other a full depth reclamation / asphalt surface project involving various State agencies on CR 12 from TR 212 to SR 643 in New Bedford. More to come on these two projects later in the report.

Many other improvements were completed in 2015 with a combination of force account work and contract work. None of the projects noted in this report would have been possible without the hard work of all the employees in our operation.

Funding for our operation continues to lag significantly behind what we need to address our infrastructure conditions. Contrary to what many people think, the County Engineer's Office receives no General Fund money except to fund the operation of the Geographic Information System (GIS) / Tax Map Office. Ninety-plus percent of our annual budget is provided by license plate fees and State of Ohio gasoline tax, both of which are generating less than they did in 2007. Therefore, our ability to provide the needed paving and bridge replacement work is greatly hindered by insufficient funding.

I hope you will find this report interesting and informative. As always, if you have questions with regard to the various activities of the County Engineer's Office, please feel free to contact us at 740-622-2135 or via email at fredwachtel@coshoctoncounty.net. And, for current information with regard to the County Engineer's Office please visit our website at www.coshoctoncounty.net.

As I am now completing my sixth term in office, I humbly thank you all for the privilege of being your County Engineer.

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PERSONNEL MATTERS

We had some personnel changes in the Engineer's Office in 2015. Two long time employees, Highway Maintenance Worker Dave Alexander and GIS Specialist Barb Mainwaring retired. Dave had over 25 years of service and Barb had 16 years. Hired to fill the two respective spots were Josh Thomas and Todd (T. J.) Hootman.

Six employees completed 2015 with perfect attendance: Rob Helmick twelve years in a row; Brent Everhart eight years; Brian Albertson three years; Justin Lapp two years; Jeff Staser two years; Robin Watson two years and Mark Westhoefer one year.

We negotiated a new, three year collective bargaining agreement in record time and with minimum outside legal cost. Sitting down with the negotiating team and no outside counsel we were able to reach a fair agreement for all in just three sessions. Thanks to Union president Mike Clarke and his team members, Justin Lapp and Robin Watson, for working with us to make this approach a success.

FLEET MANAGEMENT

Significant equipment purchases in 2015 were limited due to ever increasing costs and to stagnant revenue.

Our large purchases in 2015 were: a Western Star 4700 SF cab and chassis for \$88,500 outfitted by Henderson Truck Equipment with a stainless steel bed, hydraulics, and snow plow for \$65,900; one Eager Beaver tag trailer for \$24,000; one 72" wide grapple for \$4,500 to mount on our skid-steer loader; portable traffic lights for \$42,500 and a scissor man-lift for \$20,400 (see information in Safety Issues below).

SAFETY ISSUES

As of December 31, 2015, the County Engineer's Office did not have any reportable accidents. This is a tremendous accomplishment, especially for the type of work we do. Our last workplace accident took place in 2014.

The County Engineer's office received a Safety Intervention Grant from the Ohio Bureau of Worker's Compensation in the amount of \$40,000. The grant covered up to 75% of the purchase of a Portable Traffic System and a Scissor Lift to enhance employee safety. The county's portion of these purchases amounted to just over \$13,000.

The Portable Traffic System is comprised of two trailer mounted traffic lights, which run on batteries and communicate wirelessly. They will take flaggers out of the active traffic lane, which can include speeding motorists and distracted drivers to reduce the potential for injury.

All drivers are taught to obey traffic signals and sometimes interpreting flaggers' signals can result in confusion and a potential accident. In using the system, it will also free at least two employees from this high-risk activity to join the work crew or perform other tasks. This is an ODOT approved device which meets all safety and operational standards for roadway use and can be installed for long term closures, should the need arise.

The Safety Intervention Grant also covered the purchase of a Scissor Lift. This provides a safe alternative to high ladders and setting up scaffolding. The Scissor Lift has the ability to move and elevate to 26 feet without having to reset a ladder, helping to avoid a potential back injury or fall. This purchase will allow us to perform general maintenance functions, as well as painting, changing high lightbulbs, electrical work, and servicing of furnaces.



BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

We are still investigating installing solar panels at our facility to help reduce our electric bill and also to be more “green.” We will be taking a more holistic look at our facility to see if there are other improvements that can be incorporated with such an installation to make our complex more energy efficient.

We are continuing to upgrade our lighting systems to more energy efficient units.

We replaced an outside entrance door to our truck storage building.

WINTER 2014-2015 SNOW PATROL

The winter of 2014-2015 was a rather hard winter. Our first snow event was on November 17th and we ran a total of 23 times. In addition, we had 1,100 tons of salt in our bins to begin the 2015-2016 winter season.



“Winter is not a season, it’s an occupation.”
-Sinclair Lewis

FLOODPLAIN ADMINISTRATION



Floodplain permits issued in 2015 included 6 blanket utility permits and 8 specific permits. In addition, we provide floodplain administration support to both the City of Coshocton and the Village of Warsaw. However, we did not issue any permits in either Coshocton or Warsaw in 2015.

We continue to answer inquiries from property owners, and potential property owners, with regard to floodplain development conditions and limitations.

ACCESS MANAGEMENT

A total of 82 access permit applications were received in 2015, generating \$4,100 in fees. Of that total, 18 were minimum volume drives which include new field drives, oil well drives, etc.; 55 were very low volume drives being mostly residential drives; and 9 were low volume commercial drives. We are working to educate our timber cutting contactors on our permitting requirements and their responsibilities to protect the public infrastructure.

Corrective actions were worked out with property owners to correct at least 6 existing bad drives. Most of the problems were the result of bad installations or lack of maintenance.

The Coshocton County Engineer’s Office receives all OUPS tickets generated in Coshocton County. We use this information to determine if the proposed work is going to adversely impact our roads and to see if the proper permits have been acquired. If necessary, we contact the caller to get the details of the work and schedule a site visit. Twenty-nine OUPS tickets were viewed in 2015 for their potential impact to our public infrastructure. These visits resulted in corrective work at some locations, permit applications in others, and the opportunity to counsel folks on our permitting requirements.

A total of 118 proposed splits were reviewed for the Coshocton County Regional Planning Commission at no charge to the Planning Commission or the applicant. Four were not approved as presented. However, all four were resolved using common access drives to provide same, low maintenance access to the proposed new tracts.

We issued 18 utility permits for installations within the right-of-way of various county roads. These permits generated \$180. We have also entered into agreements with Monroe and Tiverton Townships to administer their right-of-way permitting program as well.

As a reminder, any work activities within the public road right-of-way requires a permit. Contact the County Engineer’s Office for details.

MAJOR ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

Our 2015 resurfacing program consisted of a combination of MVG funding, Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) grants, and County Surface Transportation Program (CSTP) funds.

We administered all aspects of the OPWC Round 29 resurfacing projects. The County Engineer's personnel administered the contracts and provided the bulk of the construction inspection. Entities that were participants in these projects included the Coshocton County Engineer; the City of Coshocton; the Townships of Franklin, Tuscarawas, and Lafayette; and the Village of West Lafayette. By collaborating and sharing services with various other governmental entities we are able to provide a better, more economical project for all involved.

County roads resurfaced in 2015 were:

- CR 55, asphalt, Corp. Limit to CR 23, 1.96 miles, Jackson Township, \$216,589.37;
- CR 1, asphalt, SR 83 to SR 643, 1.78 miles, Keene Township \$180,916.52;
- CR 401, asphalt, CR 20 to CR 22, 3.79 miles, Tiverton & Monroe Townships, \$380,170.97;
- CR 4, motor-pave, CR 436 to SR 60, 2.30 miles, Washington Township, \$163,996.87;
- CR 7, motor-pave/single-seal, TR 146 to Hook Road, 2.77 miles, various townships, \$137,533.14
- CR 12, asphalt, TR 215 to SR 643, 6.534 miles, Millcreek and Crawford Townships, \$791,195.28
- CR 16, asphalt, Coshocton to West Lafayette, 4.20 miles, Lafayette and Tuscarawas Townships, \$1,617,440.67

A truly Public-Private Partnership, the CR 12 project was a truly unique project that warrants a special explanation. In April of 2015, Coshocton County Port Authority Director Dorothy Skowrunski called and said that a group of Amish business owners in the vicinity of CR 12 wanted to have a meeting to discuss the condition of CR 12. Knowing the condition of CR 12 and how such meetings usually mean a complaint session, I was not enthused about the prospect of hearing about how bad the road was and when were we going to fix it. Dorothy assured me that the group was interested in finding a solution to the problem, not just wanting to complain. I agreed to attend the meeting.

The meeting was facilitated by Paul Nisley of Pennwood Manufacturing, a furniture building shop located on TR 212 just off of CR 12. In attendance were representatives from almost fifty businesses in the northeastern part of the county and southern Holmes County. These businesses have over 600 employees. In addition, in attendance were County Commissioners Fischer, Lee, and Shryock; Port Authority Director Skowrunski, and representatives from OMEGA, APEG, GOA, Jobs Ohio, and ODOT. After some discussion on the needs and the scope of the project all the funding agencies agreed to consider providing funds to re-build CR 12. In addition, the local businesses and property owners were charged with raising \$100,000 to help fund the work.

Director Skowrunski worked through the application process with the various agencies and Paul Nisley spear-headed the local fund raising. By early August, all of the funding agencies gave us the go ahead and Paul had amassed over \$100,000 in a fund set-up through the Coshocton Foundation for road infrastructure improvement projects in the northeast part of Coshocton County.

The County Engineer's Office then proceeded to work with the County Commissioners to bid and award the project, the County Engineer provided the construction inspection and contract administration, and the project was completed in



October. And to top things off, our community partners hosted a celebration on October 28, complete with pie and homemade ice cream.

Another major resurfacing project was the resurfacing of CR 16, a Local-let federally-funded resurfacing project administered through the County Engineer's Office which included work in the City of Coshocton and in the Village of West Lafayette. In addition to the resurfacing we included, for the first time, centerline and edgeline rumble stripes, and new guardrail.

Although no roads are classified as critical, many are deteriorating from their original road surface and sections are reverting to gravel. This is certainly not the results we want to provide to our constituents, but it is the harsh reality of insufficient funding. And, as the numbers reflect, our roads in excellent condition are moving in the wrong direction.



CURRENT CONDITION RATINGS OF OUR 350 MILES OF ROAD:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Critical
'15	37	185	106	24	0
'14	31	206	89	24	0
'13	39	215	80	18	0
'12	58	175	93	26	0
'11	56	172	88	36	0
'10	51	167	99	35	0
'09	87	121	135	9	0



For several years now we have been receiving a small donation from the Amish Roads Steering Committee, a voluntary contribution of \$25 per buggy from members of the Amish community. This money is intended to provide the local governments funds for use on roads used by animal-drawn vehicles in lieu of license plate fees and fuel taxes. The following table shows the amount contributed and the amount the County Engineer spent repairing CR 12 and CR 10 in Crawford and Mill Creek Townships:

YEAR	CONTRIBUTION	CONTRACT EXPENDITURE
2011	\$8,541	\$32,000
2012	\$8,246	\$22,936
2013	\$9,145	\$21,214
2014	\$10,008	\$29,154
2015	\$9,586	\$791,195

BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION

Our office continues to evaluate and reduce our bridge inventory as a result of the federal mandate to load rate all structures greater than 20 feet in length under our authority. This resulted in eliminating three structures and replacing them with large diameter culverts, which do not require load rating analysis to be performed.

In 2015, we were able to replace twelve structures through the use of grants and local funds. These bridges included projects on County Road 170, County Road 383, County Road 406, Township Road 89, Township Road 172, Township Road 232, Township Road 312, County Road 401, County Road 19, Township Road 475 and Township Road 399. These structures were a combination of four sided boxes, large culverts and concrete pre-stressed box beam bridges and were replaced under force account using County personnel.

Based upon ODOT's sufficiency ratings, the breakdown at year's end is as follows:

	'15	'14	'13	'12	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07
Bridges	271	273	276	277	284	288	288	289	290
Excellent	124	123	108	105	103	98	95	91	85
Good	122	116	95	90	91	91	91	93	104
Fair	18	24	59	49	52	65	69	73	72
Poor	7	10	14	29	38	34	33	32	28
Critical	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
% Posted	14.0	13.5	16.3	17.0	20.1	22.2	21.1	22.4	26.6



In 2015 we received another bridge completely funded through the Ohio Bridge Partnership Program. ODOT replaced Bridge 9 on County Road 19 in Monroe Township. This project was administered by ODOT and required no local match. The contractor was Cross Roads Construction, Inc., a contractor from Guernsey County. The cost for this project was \$369,130.

The General Appraisal Summary of our bridges is as follows:

	GA9	GA8	GA7	GA6	GA5	GA4	GA3
'15	9	27	94	56	57	22	7
'14	7	25	95	62	56	20	8
'13	3	20	93	68	57	26	9
'12	2	17	96	68	54	27	13
'11	0	14	95	70	60	34	11
'10	0	11	100	65	64	37	11
'09	0	13	94	69	67	39	6
'08	0	17	87	70	75	34	6
'07	0	4	82	76	83	30	15

DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS & CULVERT REPLACEMENTS

County crews completed a total of 39 different installations on our County road system in 2015 at a total cost of \$136,347.58. These installations ranged in size from 12" up to 60" diameter plastic pipe with a total length of 2,003 feet installed. Culverts were replaced in 15 of our 22 townships. Lafayette Township, with 7 installations, had the most replacements.

In our ongoing effort to assist our townships we completed 4 large culvert installations for four different townships at a reimbursed cost of \$28,836.52.

Three different townships purchased a total of \$3,776.40 worth of culvert through our joint culvert purchase program in 2015.

PENDING ROAD PROJECTS

Our 2016 resurfacing program will be funded through a combination of County Engineer's Office funds, and a pending OPWC grant. No general fund monies are allocated to the County Engineer's Office. The planned projects, providing funding is available, include:



- CR 4, spot full-depth reclamation and seal, and returning approximately three miles through the Woodbury Wildlife Area to gravel, SR 60 to SR 541, 6.24 miles, \$36,000;
- CR 3, full-depth reclamation and seal, CR 70 to SR 79, 1.83 miles, \$207,000;
- CR 27, full-depth reclamation and seal, US 36 & B2, 3.30 miles, \$32,000;
- CR 106, full-depth reclamation and seal, GUE to TUS, 3.03 miles, \$46,000;
- CR 12, single seal, TR 212 to SR 643, 6.54 miles, \$95,000;
- CR 10, asphalt, SR 651 to TR 214, 1.96 miles, \$222,000. However, this project may be extended if we are successful in obtaining other economic development grants and private local contributions modeled after our CR 12 project from 2015 ;
- CR 49, asphalt, SR 60 to mm 2.1, 2.10 miles, \$216,000;
- CR 19, asphalt, SR 83 to TR 312, 0.547 miles, \$66,000; and
- Various County Roads, spot pave, in various townships, \$100,000.

In addition to this proposed work, we may convert several sections of road back to gravel using the full depth reclamation process.

This list is subject to change depending upon the severity of the winter, bid prices and other factors such as the price of oil and other operational needs of the Office. With the drop in oil prices we would hope the bid prices will be the same, or even a little less than our estimates.

If we are able to complete all of this work we will have affected 25.6 miles of road and expended an estimated \$1,020,000 of which \$768,000 is from our MVG budget and the remainder from grants. This \$768,000 is approximately 18% of our total budget. However, this is only 7.3% of our total road mileage of 350 miles. And, the finished product as a result of the work, will be a lesser quality wearing surface than the previous wearing surface. This is the harsh reality of being under-funded.

PENDING BRIDGE PROJECTS

We have one bridge to be built in 2016 that is part of our OPWC Round 29 funding – Millcreek Township Road 220, Bridge 2.

Other bridges planned for construction in 2016, provided funds are available, include:

- Township Road 324, Bridge 2, Monroe Township – 2016 MVG
- Township Road 71, Bridge 3, Washington Township – 2016 MVG
- County Road 70, Bridge 1, Washington Township – 2016 MVG
- Township Road 161, Bridge 1, Lafayette Township - 2016 OPWC
- County Road 17, Bridge 4, Bedford Township - 2016 OPWC
- Township Road 256, Bridge 1, Oxford Township – 2016 OPWC
- Township Road 356, Bridge 2, Tiverton Township – 2016 OPWC
- Township Road 251, Bridge 2, Adams Township – 2016 OPWC
- County Road 236, Bridge 3, Crawford Township – 2016 OPWC
- Township Road 231, Bridge 6, Crawford Township – 2016 OPWC

In addition, our crews will be performing various maintenance activities on our inventory of 269 bridges. This includes re-decking, channel work, signage, waterproofing, and any emergency work as needed. We will also be looking for more potential bridge to culvert conversions.

GIS / TAX MAP

Our GIS / Tax Map Office is staffed by two people, Jona Lee Mikesell, who handles our survey and deed reviews and T. J. Hootman, who handles our mapping and GIS system. I provide professional support and guidance to help these two with the many challenges they face dealing with all aspects of land records in our county.

In 2015, we reviewed 1,887 documents of transfer as well as 212 property surveys.

A total of 1,995 parcels transferred in 2015. Of these transfers 213 parcels transferred twice, 16 transferred 3 times, and 6 transferred 4 times.

A total of 145 parcels were split in 2015; 39 surveys combined two or more parcels; 51 new surveys of existing tracts were put on record; and 13 parcels had their minerals separated from the fee parcel.

We performed 280 Current Agricultural Use Valuation (CAUV) calculations for the County Auditor.

We assigned 70 new addresses in 2015. We are also working with ODOT and Ohio Geographically Referenced Information Program (OGRIP) to edit our road centerline and addressing databases to be Location Based Response System (LBRS) compliant. Most of the information needed was already being created and maintained by our office. It is just a matter of editing and cleaning up some of the existing information so that we meet the standards that have

been created by the state without spending tens of thousands of additional dollars.

The GIS/Tax Map Office keeps an electronic log of every instrument submitted for approval. It can be viewed at www.coshoctoncounty.net, select Agencies, select GIS/Tax Map, select Deeds, and then click on Deed and Survey Review Log to ascertain the status of the instrument.

We are still involved with Ohio University evaluating whether they will host our website or if we return to doing it ourselves. However, we may be entering into an agreement with the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District for these services in the future. More to come on this in 2016.

We also provide GIS mapping services for many other governmental entities in Coshocton County including: the City of Coshocton; the villages of Warsaw, and West Lafayette; many of our 22 townships; the Coshocton County Offices of the Auditor, Commissioners, Probate and Juvenile Court, Prosecuting Attorney, and Sheriff; Coshocton County Coordinated Transportation; Coshocton County Emergency Management Agency; Coshocton Soil and Water Conservation District; the Coshocton Port Authority; and the Coshocton Convention and Visitors' Bureau. The GIS / Tax Map Office also posts many of our datasets on our website for download free of charge.

COSHOCTON COUNTY UTILITIES DEPARTMENT

We continue to operate the Fresno / Pearl Sanitary Sewer system delivering the cheese-making waste from Pearl Valley Cheese and the sewage waste from the unincorporated community of Fresno to the Village of West Lafayette sanitary sewer system via two pump stations. This system has been operational for five plus years now and is beginning to require increased maintenance. In the spring of 2015 the force main from Pearl to Fresno was plugged with solids from the cheese plant and was out of service for about two weeks as we worked to locate the blockage and repair the line. Fortunately, Pearl Valley Cheese was the only customer affected by this problem.

In 2015, the County Commissioners and the City of Coshocton finalized the transfer of all county owned water and sewer lines and appurtenances attached to the City of Coshocton systems from the County to the City. Along with the physical property the City also assumed the outstanding debt thus eliminating the \$150,000+ annual debt payment the Commissioners were paying out of the general fund. In addition, the customers served by these facilities are no longer paying the County Surcharge on their monthly bills.