

# **County Officials Academy**

Basics of County Offices

Highway Department

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# Highway Engineer or Highway Superintendent

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- Differences between counties
  - Engineer or Highway Superintendent
  - Engineer AND Highway Superintendent
  - County Commissioners operate districts
  
  - County Roads
  - County Road and Township Roads
  
  - No bridges
  - Few bridges
  - Lots of bridges

# What do we do?

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- Public knows us for:
  - Blading roads
  - Removing snow
  - Repairing bridges
  - Putting up road signs
- Public gets confused about:
  - State Roads
  - County Roads
  - Township Roads

# County Roads in North Dakota

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How many miles of county roads are there in North Dakota?

- a. 30,000 – 40,000 miles
- b. 40,000 – 50,000 miles
- c. 50,000 – 60,000 miles
- d. 60,000 – 70,000 miles

Information obtained from State Treasurer Report, 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2021

# County Road in North Dakota

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How many miles of county roads are there in North Dakota?

CORRECT ANSWER: c

54,635.02 miles

Information obtained from State Treasurer Report, 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2021

# Township Roads in North Dakota

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How many miles of township roads are there in North Dakota?

- a. 30,000 – 40,000 miles
- b. 40,000 – 50,000 miles
- c. 50,000 – 60,000 miles
- d. 60,000 – 70,000 miles

Information obtained from State Treasurer Report, 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2021

# Township Roads in North Dakota

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How many miles of township roads are there in North Dakota?

CORRECT ANSWER:

b

41,709.23 miles

Information obtained from State Treasurer Report, 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2021

# Funding

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- Property Tax
- Highway Tax Distribution
  - Based on the collections of motor vehicle registrations, fuel taxes, use taxes and special fuels excise tax. Distributed monthly to counties and cities.
  - NDCC 54-27-19



# Highway Tax Distribution & Costs

4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2020

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- Counties: \$7,084,823.58
  - Equates to \$129.16 per mile
- Townships: \$5,419,241.60
  - Equates to \$128.98 per mile
- State Wide Average Costs
  - Graveling (2" or 560 ton): \$9,500 - \$18,200 per mile
  - Chip Sealing: \$30,000 – \$35,000 per mile
  - Paving: \$100,000 – \$110,000 **per inch** per mile
  - Box Culvert: @ \$400,000 for a mid size box
  - Bridge Replacement: \$175/SF - \$225/SF

# What do we do?

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- NDCC 11-31
  - Outlines powers and duties
- NDCC 24-05
  - Regulates how we perform our duties

# What do we do? NDCC 11-31-03

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- Powers and duties
  - Design or make plans for county/township roads.
  - Comprehensive plan.
  - Keep complete record of costs and expenditures.
  - Check all accounts, claims and demands for expenditures with all matters and indicate recommendation prior to submission of accounts, claims and demands to the board of commissioners.

# Powers and Duties

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- Keep a complete inventory of all equipment.
- Supervise the use of all county-owned road equipment and materials.
- Employ and supervise all other personnel engaged in county road operations, terminating such employment when required in the best interest of the county.

# What do we do? NDCC 11-31-03

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- Powers and duties
  - TRUE OR FALSE
  - Highway departments must keep a complete inventory of repairs, gasoline and oil, and miscellaneous items.

# What do we do? NDCC 11-31-03

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- Powers and duties
  - **TRUE**
  - Highway departments must keep a complete inventory of all equipment, repairs, gasoline and oil, and miscellaneous items.

# What do we do? NDCC 11-31-03

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- Powers and duties
  - TRUE OR FALSE
  - Highway superintendents or engineers must prepare and submit an annual report.

# What do we do? NDCC 11-31-03

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- Powers and duties
  - **TRUE**
  - Highway superintendents or engineers must prepare and submit to the board of county commissioners a complete yearly report and such additional reports as may be required by the board of county commissioners at any time.



# Powers and Duties

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- Cooperate with the public roads administration or successors, the state department of transportation, and the townships of the county.
- Perform such other duties as may be designated by the board of commissioners.

# County Road – NDCC 24-05

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- This chapter regulates HOW we do our jobs
  - It covers items like: County Road Taxes – Allocation and Use, Payments for Completed Work, Contracts, Leasing Equipment, Right-of-Way, Responsibility for County Road System, Road Grades and Ditches, Pest Control, Intersections, Inslopes, Encroachments and Liabilities, and Removal of Obstructions in Right-of-Way.

# Other things highway departments do

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- Sign Inventory
- Permits
  - Drainage, Flowage Easements, Drain Tile and Utility
- Roadside Mowing
- Mud on Roadways
- Load Restrictions
- Legislative Issues
- Title VI
- Township Road Certifications
- Flooding
- Drainage

# What other county offices do we work with?

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- Commissioners
- Auditor & Treasurer
- County Recorder & Tax Director
- Dispatch, Emergency Management & Sheriff
- State's Attorney
- Human Resources
- Water Board
- IT/GIS

# Board of County Commissioners

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- Set Policy
- Road & Bridge Plan
- Approve Budget
- Monthly reports
- Portfolio Commissioner
- Approve Contracts

# County Auditor & Treasurer

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- County Auditor:
  - Budget
  - Monthly Reports - Balance
  - Insurance on equipment
  - Inventory
  - Pay bills
  - Employee Benefits
  - Sealed Bids
- Treasurer
  - Deposit Funds
  - Monthly Financial Reports – Balance
  - Landowner Information

# County Recorder & Tax Director

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- County Recorder:
  - Research Deeds for Right-of-Way
  - Property Owners
  - Record Right-of-way
  - Plats
- Tax Director:
  - Comparable Sales
  - Land Valuations
  - Appraisals

# Dispatch – Emergency Management - Sheriff

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- Emergency Management & Dispatch:
  - Road Closures
  - Calls on weekends or after hours
  - Flooding
  - Snow Events
  - Rain Events
  - Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Sheriff:
  - Landowner & Drainage Disputes
  - Maintenance on Patrol Cars



# State's Attorney & Human Resources

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- State's Attorney
  - Legal Council
  - Review Policies
  - Legal Opinions
  - Right-of-Way
  
- Human Resources
  - Employee Issues
  - Hiring/Firing
  - Title VI

# Water Board

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- Drainage Complaints
- Drain Tile Permits
- Flowage Easements
- Landowner Disputes
- Legal Drains

# IT/GIS

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- Update parcels
- Update computers
- Mapping

# Member Associations

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- North Dakota Association of County Engineers
  - [ndace.org](http://ndace.org)
  - Meet at NDACo Conference in October
  - Annual Conference held end of January
- National Association of County Engineers
  - Conference in April – [countyengineers.org](http://countyengineers.org)
    - 2021 – will be held virtually
    - 2022 – Buffalo, NY
    - 2023 – Orange Beach, AL

# Did you know?

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- NDCC 36-14-20 states it's the duty of the overseer of highways when carcass of dead animal is found.
  - If the owner or person in charge of a dead animal fails to comply with 36-14-19, the overseer of highways shall comply with the provisions of section 36-14-19 for the owner or person. Costs associated with the disposal can be charged to the owner.