

**YAMHILL COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
ROAD MAINTENANCE/RECONSTRUCTION  
PRIORITIZATION POLICY**

**BACKGROUND**

Adequate maintenance of Yamhill County roadways is critical for public safety and economic development. In the long term, it is much less expensive to maintain the surface and integrity of a roadway than to do inadequate maintenance and have to replace it prematurely.

Yamhill County maintains 667 miles of roads and 132 bridges. Historically, funding for maintenance of the system has fallen short of the need, although Department practices have kept the County paved roads in relatively good condition. Property taxes pay for schools, fire districts and other County services but not roads. Road maintenance is funded by gas tax, trucker's weight/mile tax, vehicle licensing fees, and some federal timber receipts. It is important to note that from 2000-2007, the County received approximately \$450,000 per year in federal timber receipts from a law called PL 106-393. This equated to about 10% of the Road budget. These timber funds have been primarily used to resurface paved roads with chip seals and asphalt overlays and to make major repairs/replacements of county bridges. PL 106-393 has expired. As of April 2008, Congress has not reauthorized this law. Without reauthorization of this funding, the pavement resurfacing program will be substantially reduced. This loss of funding impacts the ability of the department to adequately maintain the condition of the paved road system (called the "pavement condition index") and to repair/replace some county bridges.

Maintaining the roadway system, including unimproved portions of the right-of-way, includes a wide range of activities. These include relatively minor activities, such as replacing signs, to major and more costly activities, such as replacing a deteriorating roadway surface.

This policy and implementing strategies address maintaining roadway conditions at certain base-level standards, and establishing priorities for determining how available resources will be allocated to achieve and maintain these condition levels. This policy calls for continuing the practice of developing an annual Road Maintenance Program that specifically identifies maintenance projects and activities for the year and how anticipated resources will be allocated. It also calls for a county-wide prioritization policy to replace the current "quadrant" approach to road maintenance/reconstruction activities.

**DEFINITIONS**

Road classifications and maintenance activities are defined below and are prioritized in Table 1.

*"Arterial Road"* is a road that carries substantial statewide or interstate travel, or that links cities, larger towns, and other major traffic generators to provide interregional and intercounty service.

"*County Road*" means a public road under the jurisdiction of a county that has been designated as a county road under ORS 368.016. [ORS 368.001 (1)].

"*Emergencies*" are occurrences that cause a road to become impassable, or which require prompt action in order to protect human life. Examples of activities that may be required in response to emergency situations include, but are not limited to, sanding, snow removal, flooding, slides and washouts.

"*General Maintenance*" includes preventative activities required to keep a road in good condition. Typical maintenance activities include pothole patching, grading graveled roads, cleaning drainage facilities (pipes and ditches), mowing roadside grass and clearing brush, maintaining traffic control devices and replacing damaged signs. More intensive forms of general maintenance include heavy patching and sealing, asphalt overlays, and repair of damage caused by ice, snow, flooding or landslides.

"*Hazards*" are existing or pending conditions which may cause the operator of a vehicle to lose control, enter another travel lane, or could otherwise lead to an emergency situation in which a person or property is at risk of injury or damage. Examples of maintenance to eliminate hazards include, but are not limited to, pothole patching on high speed roads, gravel road reshaping, eliminating sight obstructions, cleaning up chemical spills, and replacing damaged or missing safety equipment such as guardrails.

"*Local/Resource Road*" is a road that accommodates travel over short distances as compared to collectors or arterials and primarily provides access to adjacent land and important natural resource land.

"*Major Collector Road*" is a road that serves important intra-county travel corridors, including larger towns not served by higher classified roads, and other traffic generators of equivalent county importance, such as schools, county parks, and important economic areas.

"*Mandated Services*" are activities required by Federal, State or local laws. Specific authorization varies for each type of activity. Examples of such activities include, but are not limited to, installation and maintenance of traffic control devices, signs, road striping and stenciling, and traffic analysis related specifically to road safety problems.

"*Minor Collector Road*" is a road that collects traffic from local roads, provides service to smaller communities, and links locally important traffic generators with rural destinations.

"*Minor Improvements*" include what might be considered limited and relatively low cost projects that go beyond general maintenance but are often done in conjunction with general maintenance to address a specific problem that would not be addressed by general maintenance activities. Examples include widening shoulders, improvement of sight distance at intersections, intersection improvements, large culvert replacements, and drainage improvements.

"*Public road*" means a road over which the public has a right of use that is a matter of public record [ORS 368.001 (5)].

“Reconstruction” projects rebuild substandard or deteriorated roads to County design standards. These projects are sometimes considered a comprehensive form of maintenance with a purpose to improve the roadway base rather than to address a safety or capacity problem, although building to County design standards generally has beneficial effects on safety and capacity. This includes rebuilding a gravel road as a paved road.

**ROAD MAINTENANCE/RECONSTRUCTION PRIORITIZATION POLICY**

It is the policy of Yamhill County to establish annual road maintenance and reconstruction programs that protect public safety and property, make effective use of available funds, and preserve the County’s investment in its transportation system.

**Implementation Strategies**

1. Confine county road maintenance and reconstruction program activities to roads that have been formally accepted as “County Roads”. County funds will not be expended for the maintenance or improvement of “public” or private roads. Emphasis will be placed upon maintaining those County roads that were constructed to County structural standards.
2. Prioritize road maintenance and reconstruction expenditures annually in a resolution and order adopted by the Board of Commissioners, using Table 1 as a guide.

Table 1. Road Maintenance Priority Matrix

Activity	Road Classification/Priority <sup>a</sup>			
	Arterial	Major Collector	Minor Collector	Local/Resource Road
Mandated	1	1	1	1
Emergencies	1	1	1	1
Hazards	1	1	1	1
General Maintenance <sup>b</sup>	2	3	4	7
Minor Improvements	5	6	10	12
Reconstruction	8	9	11	13

- a. 1 is the highest priority; 13 is the lowest priority
- b. Surface maintenance of paved roads will be in conformance with the base condition concept described in strategy 4.

3. The Yamhill County Road Improvement Advisory Committee (RIAC) will review procedures and response times for dealing with emergency and non-emergency requests for road maintenance service annually. RIAC will recommend revisions as needed to the Yamhill County Board of Commissioners to ensure the most effective use of available maintenance funds.

4. Implement a “Base Condition” concept for the maintenance of paved roads under which the average Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of all paved roads within a functional class are at or above the levels shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Pavement Condition Index (PCI) Base Condition

Functional Class	Average PCI	Road Miles
Arterial	80	90% of road miles greater than or equal to 70
Major Collector	75	90% of road miles greater than or equal to 65
Minor Collector	70	90% of road miles greater than or equal to 55
Local/Resource Road	65	90% of road miles greater than or equal to 50

5. Develop a “Base Condition” concept for gravel roads that will provide a systematic measurement and reporting of their condition.
6. Limit expenditures for major reconstruction projects to those County roads that are not identified as needing capacity improvements prior to 2015, identifying and prioritizing these projects in the Transportation Capital Improvement Program.
7. Except as noted in Strategy #4, finance reconstruction and minor improvement activities for Local Streets through localized funding mechanisms, such as the creation of service districts or Local Improvement Districts (LIDs) established exclusively for maintenance of these roads, as allowed by Oregon Revised Statutes and County ordinance.
8. Encourage annexation to a city for Local Roads within urban and urban reserve areas.

## PRIVATE FINANCING FOR ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

A policy for Cooperative Road Improvement Projects (CRIP) was adopted by the Yamhill County Board of Commissioners on August 24, 2000. This policy allows private parties to fund major road improvements if they pay 100 percent of the design and construction costs, with the County share limited to administrative costs for inspection and contract administration. Where private contribution is less than 100 percent of all project costs, the proposal will be considered on a case-by-case basis and the applicant must address total project cost, funding, public importance of the project, effect on jobs and enhancement of economic vitality in the area, effect on road maintenance costs, impact on the overall County road system, projected traffic volumes, and the effect of redirecting county resources to the proposed project. More information is available from the Yamhill County Public Works Department.

For a map of road types throughout Yamhill County, please click on the link

**[“Roadway Types Map”](#)**.