



How are my "County Roads" tax dollars spent?

Supporting the Vision of our Citizens

Sample

Resident of Stevens County
Assessed value of property: **100,743**

----- **Distribution of Taxes and Assessments** -----

State Levy	286.82	Current Expense	200.96
Counseling Services (Mental Health)	1.26	Counseling (Developmentally Disabled)	1.26
Veterans Relief	1.13	County Roads	196.51
Rural Library District	46.30	Fire District	34.23
School District (Maintenance & Operation)	228.07	School Bond	157.06
Weed Board	5.00	Total	\$1,158.60

This brochure explains how the "County Roads" portion of your property tax is spent on the roads of Stevens County. Last year's County Roads portion was approximately 16% of your total property tax bill. If your property was assessed at \$100,000 less than \$200 of your tax dollars were used for maintaining and improving county roads.

Department leaders and county commissioners are determined that these dollars are used effectively and efficiently. We want to hear about your concerns and your comments on the work of our county road crews. "Are property owners in Stevens County receiving a good value for their "County Roads" property tax dollars?" We are presenting this information to help you understand how these dollars are used and the value you get for these dollars.

Dear Citizens:

It is our desire to provide the best services possible for your County Roads, however, the Initiative process has created budget uncertainty and unpredictable risks for this department. Revenues are not increasing. Maintaining the existing level of service provided under County Roads will be difficult if we continue to experience reduced revenue.

We continue our commitment to serve our citizens to the best of our ability, to enhance the health and safety of the public at large; and to further promote the quality of life in Stevens County. The 2004 budget meets the challenge of providing current essential services and planning for the future.

Sincerely,
Tony Delgado, Malcolm Friedman, and Merrill Ott
Stevens County Commissioners

What services are supported with your county road tax dollars?

These activities keep your roads safe and maintained for public travel.

Construction

Over 35% of the County Road budget is devoted to construction improvements. These projects include, but are not limited to the following:

Gravel to Pavement Program

The goal of this program is to pave five miles of graveled road each year. Paving gravel roads decreases maintenance hours and reduces the level of dust stirred up by traffic. Stevens County currently has 625 miles of paved roads. During the past five years 26 miles of gravel roads have been converted to pavement. Funding for these projects was possible in part due to increased efficiency of equipment and personnel.

Grant Funded Programs

During the past five years the Road Department has acquired \$12 million in statewide competitive grants for road, bridge and guardrail improvements. These grants generally require a 10% local match, so for every local tax dollar spent on grant funded programs, the County receives an additional nine dollars. Many projects across the County would not have been possible without the Road Department's aggressive initiative in obtaining grant funding. See the entire list of grant-funded projects on the next page.

Summer Maintenance

Over 50% of the County Road budget is devoted to summer maintenance activities, which include but are not limited to the following:

Reconstructing Gravel Roads Program

Stevens County has 875 miles of gravel roads. During the past five years 45 miles of gravel roads have been reconstructed by improving the road base, ditches and drainage. Additional gravel is placed on the road to control washboards, potholes and dust.

Summer Maintenance (cont.)

Vegetation Management

Several county roads are scheduled for roadside vegetation management, which is provided by mechanical and chemical methods. The purpose of mechanical brush control is to enhance line-of-sight for drivers, reduce fixed object collision hazards and improve conditions to reduce vehicle/wildlife interactions. The chemical treatment program is intended to control noxious weeds throughout the county.

Bituminous Surface Treatment Program

All paved County roads are placed on a maintenance rotation in order to maintain their pavement surface. The bituminous surface treatment application helps lengthen the road's useful life by protecting the pavement surface from oxidation and studded tire damage, sealing small cracks in the pavement and providing improved skid resistance during winter months.

Suncrest Overlay Project

The 10-mile asphalt overlay project is the first of four phases planned for the Suncrest area.

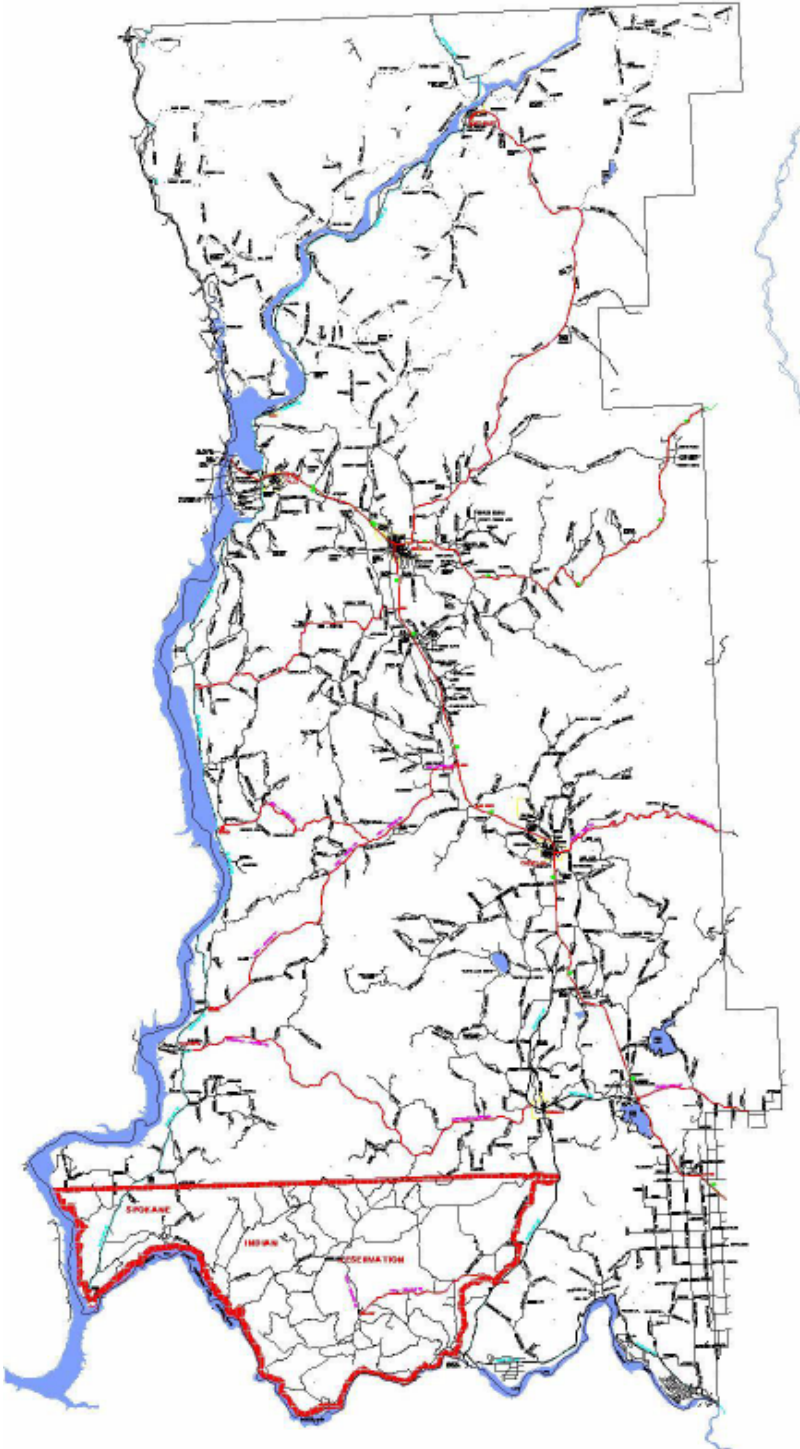
Winter Maintenance

1,330 miles of road in Stevens County are maintained during the winter. The average cost for snow plowing and sanding is approximately **\$1,000 per mile**. This figure includes the cost of sand, fuel, salary and benefits of the employee, and equipment costs. While nearly all roads are plowed the first day, all paved roads and high traffic/heavily used gravel roads receive priority winter maintenance service.



Roads that the County is Responsible for:

We are responsible for plowing and maintaining 1,500 miles.



Construction Accomplishments

Statewide competitive grants secured, 2000-2004

Roadway	
Addy-Gifford	\$ 745,000
E. Deer Lake	1,215,000
Blue Creek	502,000
Addy-Gifford	425,000
Blue Creek	1,218,000
Aladdin	181,431
Ford-Wellpinit	600,000
Addy-Gifford	84,100

Bridge	
Hedlund	\$ 3,100,000
Rocky Creek	280,000
Deep Creek	392,000
Barstow	2,100,000
Colville-Aris	535,000

Guardrail	
2001	\$ 138,366
2003	127,973
2004	202,730

Total **\$ 11,846,600**

Locally funded projects

(Gravel to Pavement Construction)

Road Name	Miles	Cost
Cottonwood Creek	2.9	\$ 745,000
Northport-Flatcreek	4.4	824,060
McKenzie-Wollard	1.2	97,160
Dry Creek	2.0	338,612
Vanasse	0.5	45,187
Rocky Lake	1.3	212,891
Aspen Ridge	0.4	60,292
Fumi Circle	0.8	83,856
Deer Creek	1.0	12,191
Lyon-Moss	2.2	257,778
Smola-Red Marble	2.5	151,000
West Jumpoff	1.2	128,773
Moran Creek	0.7	117,793*
Dry Gulch	0.7	67,017*
Philpott	2.1	102,772*
Kitt-Narcisse	2.1	230,109*

Total **\$ 3,484,874**

*estimated

Strategic Planning

Leadership at the County Roads Department have analyzed maintenance and improvement scheduling and practices to get the job done right at the most efficient cost possible. Examples of this process include county engineering and design expertise used on projects, county-wide coordination of crews for large projects and optimization of maintenance methods and materials.

The staff is composed of dedicated, highly qualified professionals with unparalleled experience. There is an excellent match among employees, equipment and maintenance responsibilities.

Given the current revenue, the department is able to provide the level of service described above. However, should levels of funding from local tax sources decline, discretionary programs such as these listed herein would be curtailed or eliminated.

Stevens County Department of Public Works Awards

In 1996 Stevens County received the Concrete Bridge Award of Excellence from the Portland Cement Association for the Rockcut Bridge. The existing bridge was replaced with a pre-cast concrete bridge. In 1997 Stevens County received the Award of Excellence for the Best County Project from the Federal Highway Administration and the Washington State Department of Transportation for this same bridge, which crosses the Kettle River south of the town of Laurier.

The Washington State Association of County Engineers (WSACE) presented the County Engineer of the Year Award to the Stevens County Engineer in 2001. The award criteria include a detailed nomination form submitted by Stevens County's Commissioners for review and selection by the Washington State County Road Administration Board and the WSACE.

The Washington Asphalt Pavement Association in conjunction with WSACE awarded Stevens County the state's First Place Quality Award for High Quality Asphalt Pavement Construction for the rehabilitation of Valley Westside/Oakshot Roads in 2002. This 4-mile project was designed and inspected by the Stevens County Department of Public Works.

Community Engagement

Every citizen in this county can benefit by knowing the functions and activities of county government and how it affects their daily lives and their pocketbook. The Commissioners and other elected officials are developing a communication plan to open a two-way discussion on the workings of our local government. The first of these initiatives is this publication on what percentage of your property tax bill goes to pay for county roads. We will soon have a system for you to give your views on issues using a web-based survey program.

We need to find ways to improve the communication flow between local government and local citizens. Effective government has always been based on the interests and involvement of its citizens, so we feel that this communication plan is critical to the effective delivery of services in Stevens County.



Board of Commissioners, 684-3751

District 1: **Tony Delgado**

District 2: **Merrill Ott**

District 3: **Malcolm Friedman**

Auditor:

Tim Gray, 684-7510

Assessor:

Al Taylor, 684-6161

Building Department:

Dave Jones, 684-8325

Coroner:

Patty Hancock, 684-7159

District Court, 684-5249

Public Works:

Jim Whitbread, 684-4548

Prosecutor:

Jerry Wetle, 684-7500

Sheriff:

Craig Thayer, 684-5296

Superior Court, 684-7520

Superior Court Clerk:

Patty Chester, 684-7575

Treasurer:

Sue Harnasch, 684-2593

Tri-County Health District:

Carol Villers, 684-1301

WSU Extension:

Al Kowitz, 684-2588

Questions? Call 684-2593

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