

# Wells County Road Levy Explanation

## TYPICAL COSTS IN '26

### Construction Costs

Chip Seal ~ \$37,500/mi.

Mill & Overlay ~ \$250,000/mi.

Crack Seal ~ \$2,000/mi.

Pavement ~ \$1,000,000/mi.+

### Equipment Costs

Blade ~ \$475,000-\$500,000

Plow Truck ~ \$225,000-\$250,000

In the 2022 Election, Wells County residents approved combining the County Road and Bridge Levy (10 mills) with the County Federal Aid Road Levy (4 mills) as the Federal Aid Road Levy was set to expire in 2024 due to action taken by the ND Legislature.

In the 2025 tax season and the 2026 calendar year, those 14 mills for the County Road & Bridge Fund on a total Wells County valuation of \$48,514,173 generates app.

\$679,198. However, the current Road Dept.'s annual payroll in 2026 projects to app. \$836,000, not including any overtime incurred during the year. Further, WC has recently reduced the employee total of the Road Dept. by two FTE's, and have not purchased any major equipment in either 2025 or 2026. These decisions, along with townships now contributing \$100/mi. annually for township road miles maintenance, and we are making headway on the deficit, but the roads and bridges are aging, and so is the equipment.

The Wells County Road Dept. currently has a Road Supervisor and eight blade operators to maintain 1,347.5 miles of township gravel roads and 93 miles of pavement in the Wells County. And, as noted above, two employees have not been replaced following their retirement over the last year and a half.

## WHAT'S THIS GOING TO COST ME?

### \$100,000 Res. Property T & F Value

- A 1 mill increase would equate to an increase of \$4.50 tax annually  
(formula:  $\$100,000 / 2 * .09 = \$4,500 * .001 = \$4.50$ )
- So, an additional 11 mills on a \$100,000 residential property would equate to \$49.50/yr., or \$4.13/mo.

### \$100,000 Ag/Comm Property T & F Value

- A 1 mill increase would equate to an increase of \$5.00 tax annually  
(formula:  $\$100,000 / 2 * .10 = \$5,000 * .001 = \$5.00$ )
- So, an additional 11 mills on a \$100,000 Ag/Commerical property would equate to \$55.00/yr., or \$4.58/mo.

Plug the T&F Value of your parcel from your tax statement into the applicable formula above to determine your actual annual cost.

## Recent Wells County Projects

### 2021-22 ~ Rebuild and Pave WC #6 from Bremen to ND-30 (6 miles)

- \$2,444,516.40

### 2022 ~ In-Slope Repair and Culvert Replacement on 3<sup>rd</sup> St SE near Sykeston

- \$652,264.98

### 2024 ~ Replace Box Culvert on 21<sup>st</sup> St. NE South of Harvey

- \$484,182.35

### 2024 ~ Mill & Overlay on WC #5 from Harvey East (7 miles)

- \$1,745,303.24

### 2025 ~ Rebuild & Pave WC #5 from Hamberg West (1.5 miles)

- \$943,710.27

## Upcoming Planned Projects

### Replace Bridge on WC #1 three miles North of Fessenden (2026)

- \$1,555,452 (est.)

### Mill & Overlay of Old 52 (14 miles) from Fessenden West to ND #3 (2027)

- \$3,986,820 (est.)

## BALLOT QUESTION IN JUNE '26

Wells County currently levies 14 mills for the County Road & Bridge Fund. However, 14 mills does not generate enough revenue to pay the salaries and benefits of the road department, let alone the cost of equipment, fuel, materials, etc. Any funding levy beyond those 14 mills requires a vote of the people. Should the Wells County Board of Commissioners have the authority to levy up to 25 mills in the County Road & Bridge Fund, per NDCC Chapter 57-15-06.7 (5)?

- YES Means you approve the measure as summarized above.
- NO Means you reject the measure as summarized above.

Our county roads & bridges are vital not only for commerce, but also emergency services, school bus routes, recreation, and the US Mail just to name a few. Whether you live in town or out of town makes very little difference, we are all surrounded by aging infrastructure. Adequately maintaining what we have will be far easier than trying to get it back after it is gone. If you have questions, please contact WC Auditor Daniel Stutlien at 701-341-0600 or [dstutlien@nd.gov](mailto:dstutlien@nd.gov), or contact any of the WC Commissioners (*Stan Buxa, Dennis Dockter, Bryan Lauth, Danny Maxwell, and Brian Miller*).