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CASS COUNTY COMMISSION

JUL 11 2016

MEMORANDUM

**Highway  
Department**

Jason Benson, P.E.  
County Engineer

Richard S. Sieg  
Superintendent

Thomas B. Soucy, P.E.  
Assistant County Engineer

TO: Cass County Road Advisory Committee  
FROM: Jason Benson, Cass County Engineer  
DATE: July 8, 2016  
SUBJECT: Road Advisory Committee Meeting  
July 18, 2016 2:00 p.m.

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A Road Advisory Committee meeting has been scheduled for Monday, July 20, 2015 at 2:00 pm in the Cass County Commission Room. The agenda is as follows:

2:00 – 2:05	Introduction and Recognition of Outstanding Highway Employee	<b>Information</b>
2:05 – 2:15	Update on 2016 Construction Projects	<b>Information</b>
2:15 – 2:25	Review and Approve the 2017 Construction Projects	<b>Information/Action</b>
2:25 – 2:40	Review and Approve the 2017-2021 Highway Plan	<b>Information/Action</b>
2:40 – 2:50	Discussion on 65 MPH Speed Limit	<b>Information</b>
2:50 – 3:00	Other Business	
3:00	Adjourn	

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## MEMORANDUM

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Background Information

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2017 Recommended Highway and Bridge Projects.

#### **Grading and Surfacing Projects:**

Cass 38 from ND 46 to Cass 6. (9 miles, \$7,652,000. All local funding.) This section of Cass 38 is narrow with a 24 foot paved surface and 3:1 side slopes. It was last paved in 1996. Due to the age of the pavement, lower PCI rating, and safety improvements, this segment is needed for full reconstruction. This project will be Phase 1 of 3 as this road is rebuild from ND 46 to I-94. Total project cost for both phases is \$21 million

#### **Bridge Projects:**

C1 -19 Tower Township. This bridge has a length of 32 feet and was built in 1965. It will be replaced with a concrete box culvert. Estimated cost is \$200,000.

C10 -19/30 Tower Township. This minor structure bridge has a length of 18 feet and will be replaced with a concrete box culvert. Estimated cost is \$200,000.

13/24 Stanley Township – Bridge Removal. This bridge has a length of 25 feet, built in 1959, and has a Code 3 alert. It only serves one home, has sustained significant flood damage over the years and requires \$15k worth of tree removal every year. Estimated cost is \$150,000.

27/34 Cornell Township. This bridge over the Maple River has a length of 61 feet and was built in 1955. It is a Code 3 bridge and will be replaced with a concrete box culvert. Estimated cost is \$400,000.

19/21 Casselton Township. This bridge is in overall good shape but a repair is required to the existing southwest wing wall. Estimated cost is \$150,000.

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65 MPH Speed Limits:

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The 2005 ND Legislature changed the ND Century Code to authorize Counties to post two lane highways at 65 MPH. Nearly every year we get questions regarding raising the speed limit to 65 MPH, however all Cass County roads are currently posted at 55 MPH or less. I was recently approached by Brooks Burgum of the Arthur Companies in Arthur, ND and he requested to bring this subject to the Commission. I suggested the best starting place for this discussion is the Road Advisory Meeting. I'm bringing this subject as a starting point for discussion on the topic.

When looking a raising speed limits, Counties across ND have taken different approaches. Many Counties left the speed limit at 55, some changed only a few roads to 65, and some Counties increased all of their paved highways to 65 MPH.

For Cass County I feel the first thing we need to determine is if we are interested in raising some of our highways to a 65 MPH speed limit. If the answer is yes, I believe the best approach is to look individually at highways and not universally raise all paved roads to 65 MPH. This means looking individually at each paved highway to determine whether it meets certain criteria. When raising the speed limit engineering guidelines indicate we should look at the following conditions:

1. Does the design meet 65 MPH design standards to include horizontal and vertical curves, shoulders, 4:1 or flatter slopes, and sight distance
2. Road surface conditions
3. Clear zone, intersections, and roadside hazards
4. Crash history

While many of our paved roads meet the above conditions, not all do. In some cases there may be segments of a road that need to remain at 55 MPH while the rest of the road could be increased to 65 MPH. Many of the residents that use our rural paved highways also use ND Highways 18, 38, and 46. These state highways area posted at 65 MPH and in many cases are in poorer condition than our County highways. Of course with any change, there are liabilities that may change and not everyone will be in favor of. I feel a thorough discussion with the States Attorney and Sheriff's Office should occur prior to making any decisions.

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