

# The Life of a Road

Preserving our investments with preventative maintenance



Road work is an expensive endeavor. The Washtenaw County Road Commission (WCRC) works very hard to apply the principles of asset management with the available preventative maintenance tools to maintain the more than 1,600 miles of road under WCRC's jurisdiction. Check out the graphic below to get an idea of when each tool is the best option, depending on the road condition and budget constraints. Visit [wcroads.org](http://wcroads.org) to learn more.

## Crack Seal

**Estimated Cost\*:** \$10,000 per mile

**Impact:** Can last up to 3 years

**What:** Fills cracks (less than 3/4" wide) with asphalt sealant. Seals pavement from water and debris.

**When:** The best time to crack seal is when cracks start to develop and are still relatively small.

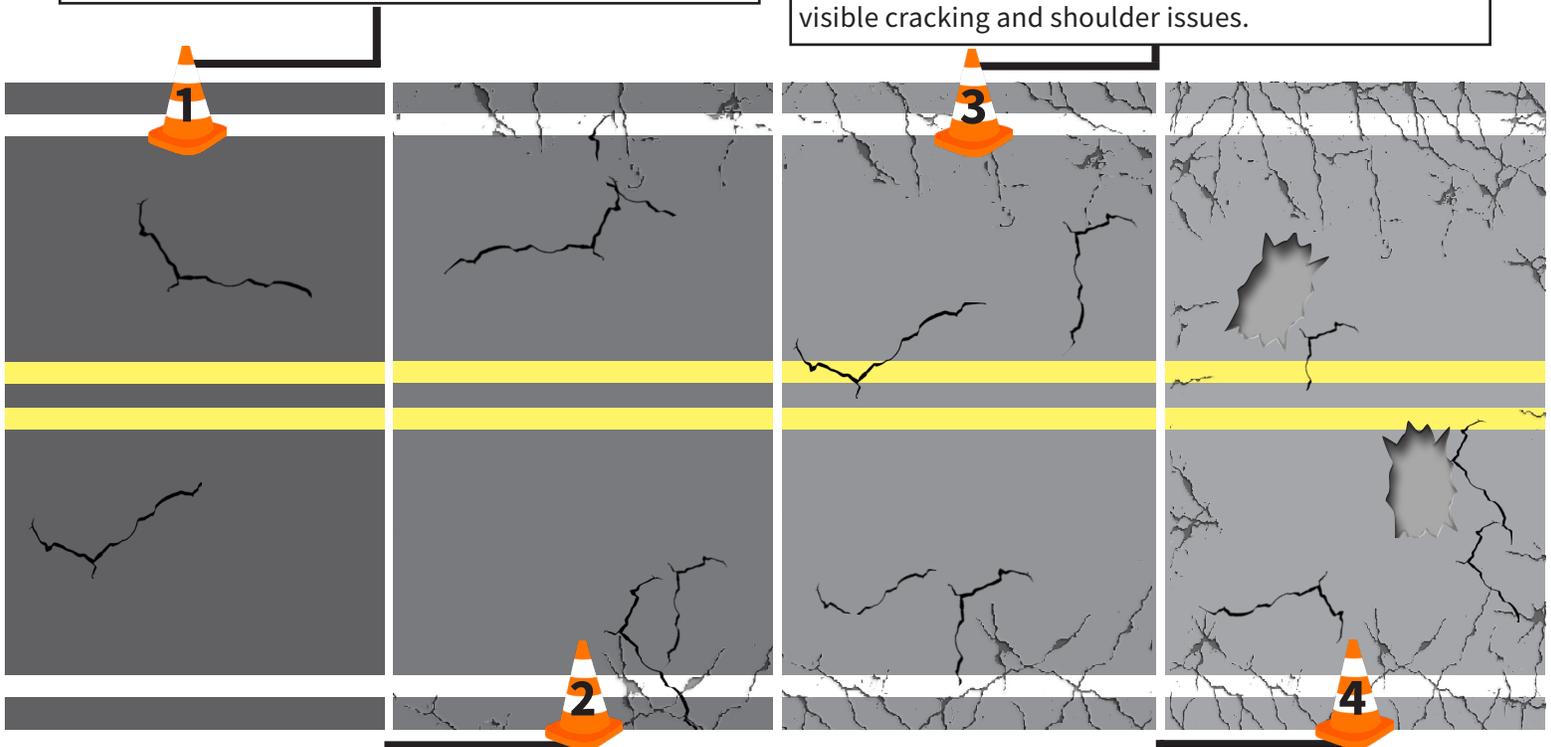
## Mill and Overlay

**Estimated Cost\*:** \$180,000 per mile

**Impact:** Can extend the life of the road by 5 to 7+ years

**What:** One layer of existing asphalt is removed and the road is resurfaced with a new layer of asphalt.

**When:** The best time to mill and overlay is when the top layer of pavement has started to deteriorate with visible cracking and shoulder issues.



## Chip Seal (Seal Coat)

**Estimated Cost\*:** \$23,000 per mile

**Impact:** Can extend the life of the road by 3 to 5 years

**What:** Liquid asphalt, followed by aggregate chips, that seals pavement from water, sunshine and debris.

**When:** The best time for a chip seal is when the road is still in good or fair condition with slight cracking starting to show. WCRC is working to chip seal new pavement within a year or two after it has been placed to extend the pavement life.

## Pulverize and Resurface

**Estimated Cost\*:** \$350,000 per mile

**Impact:** Can extend the life of the road by 10 to 15+ years

**What:** A pulverizer, capable of breaking up 6 to 10" of existing asphalt and aggregate base, recycles and compacts the pulverized asphalt to create a new road base, and then covers it with two layers of new asphalt.

**When:** This is one of the last options due to cost. It is used when the road is in very poor condition with large potholes and heavy cracking.

\*Estimated costs are based on 2019 prices for two-lane roads

Questions? Contact WCRC

(734) 761-1500

[wcroads.org](http://wcroads.org)

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