



# CITY of NOVI CITY COUNCIL

**Agenda Item 1**  
**June 23, 2014**

**SUBJECT:** Approval to temporarily raise the load limits on Beck Road south of Ten Mile Road from 13,000 pounds per axle to 16,000 pounds per axle for the duration of the Road Commission for Oakland County's Eight Mile Road (Taft to Beck) project.

**SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT:** Department of Public Services

*BA*

**CITY MANAGER APPROVAL:**

*[Signature]*

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) began work on Eight Mile Road between Taft and Beck Roads in Northville and Northville Township on June 16, 2014 by closing a section of Eight Mile to all traffic just east of Beck. The project's detour route for truck traffic is Novi Road, Ten Mile Road and Beck Road; however, Beck is rated a Class B-Restricted route per the City's Roadway Weight Classification Map (attached), and truck loads are limited to 13,000 pounds per axle for axles that are spaced between 3.5 feet and 9 feet wide. Ten Mile and Novi Road are rated Class A-Restricted and All-Weather, respectively, and therefore can handle the highest allowable load of 16,000 pounds per axle for trucks with axles that are similarly spaced.

Council initially considered this matter at its June 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, but it was tabled in order for staff to get more information regarding other possible alternative detour routes. The attached memorandum describes actions taken since then. In summary, RCOC asserts that there are no other practical alternate detour routes in Oakland County; staff is unable to identify a practical alternate route in Wayne County; staff strongly believes that the likelihood of damage to Beck Road from increased loadings through the expected closure end date of August 16<sup>th</sup> is low; and, halting the project would place an undue additional financial burden on community partners RCOC, the City of Northville, and Northville Township. In addition, Beck Road from Eight Mile to Nine Mile Roads is listed in the City's Capital Improvement Program and slated for rehabilitation and resurfacing in FY 16/17 after receiving Federal grant funding support from the Oakland County Federal Aid Committee this past February.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Approval to temporarily raise the load limits on Beck Road south of Ten Mile Road from 13,000 pounds per axle to 16,000 pounds per axle for the duration of the Road Commission for Oakland County's Eight Mile Road (Taft to Beck) project.

	1	2	Y	N
Mayor Gatt				
Mayor Pro Tem Staudt				
Council Member Casey				
Council Member Fischer				

	1	2	Y	N
Council Member Markham				
Council Member Mutch				
Council Member Wrobel				

## MEMORANDUM



**TO:** VICTOR CARDENAS, INTERIM CITY MANAGER  
**FROM:** ROB HAYES, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICES/CITY ENGINEER *RH*  
**SUBJECT:** EIGHT MILE ROAD CONSTRUCTION DETOUR  
**DATE:** JUNE 18, 2014

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Following the City Council meeting on Monday, June 16, we contacted RCOC to determine if there is an alternative to using Beck Road as part of the detour route for the Eight Mile Road Reconstruction Project, which re-started on Monday (see current detour plan from RCOC, attached). The overall project spans along Eight Mile from Napier to Taft. The Napier to Beck segment bordering Novi was completed last year. The section now being worked on is between Taft and Beck. A section of Eight Mile just east of Taft has had to be closed. The issue now at hand is whether to temporarily raise weight limits on Beck south of Ten Mile from 13,000 pounds per axle to 16,000 pounds per axle – a proposed 23% increase – for the next two months to allow diversion of traffic from Eight Mile around the closure. Attached is a letter I received this morning from RCOC that requests the detour remain in place.

I spoke with RCOC's Chief Construction Engineer Mike Torres immediately after Monday night's meeting. Besides Pontiac Trail, the only possible option he could identify would be to use Napier Road in lieu of Beck. He noted, however, that because that stretch of Napier between Ten Mile and Eight Mile is unpaved, routing trucks down Napier there would result in significant damage.

I also spoke with Tom Blust, RCOC's Engineering Director. He stated that RCOC only detours trucks onto paved roads, so Napier would not be an option. He noted that using the next north-south paved road to the west – Pontiac Trail – is also not an option because of its distance from the closure (roughly seven miles). He did not believe that routing heavy truck traffic through downtown South Lyon and Lyon Township, especially during the severely congested AM (southbound) and PM (northbound) weekday peak periods was reasonable, as it would have a greater impact on existing traffic and traffic safety than would the proposed route. Mr. Blust indicated that the only other alternative is to halt the project, which would very likely result in a costly delay claim from the contractor.

Of course, halting the project does not solve the problem—eventually, the closure needs to happen and the traffic needs to be routed somewhere. Attached is a map showing that there are no viable detour alternatives in Wayne County. All Class A and All-Weather roads capable of handling increased loads are shown in red, yet in order to detour truck traffic, one or more Class B roads would need to be used (as Beck Road in Novi is currently being used). For instance, Beck south of Eight Mile is a Class B-Restricted



road just like it is within the City of Novi, so even if other east-west mile roads were available, there would be no way to connect to them at the west end of the closure without having Wayne County temporarily raise Beck's load limits south of Eight Mile.

Novi DPS does not believe the proposed RCOC routing is an issue for concern. Despite its Class B rating, the likelihood of damage to Beck Road south of Ten Mile is low for several reasons:

- There will be a low volume of commercial truck traffic diverted onto Beck. RCOC estimates that an additional 432 trucks per day will use the detour, but it is important to note that only a fraction of these trucks would be overweight. This is because only trucks that have axles spaced between 3.5 feet and 9 feet and impose an axle load greater than 13,000 pounds would be considered overweight and **not** trucks that have closely-spaced axles, such as gravel trains.
- The detour will be in effect when the roadbed will neither be saturated nor subjected to freeze/thaw cycles - factors that otherwise could cause significant damage to the pavement.
- Beck Road south of Nine Mile is slated for rehabilitation in FY 16/17, so in the unlikely event there is damage, a long-term fix would be made at that time.
- The closure is expected to be lifted and the detour removed by August 16.

In terms of the legal basis for the City's determination whether to temporarily allow the increased weight, the City Attorney has advised that the process for accomplishing that increase is somewhat unclear. The Motor Vehicle Code, MCL 257.725, does specifically contemplate the potential for issuance of "special permits" for certain vehicles, on an annual basis, for "good cause." More applicable to this situation, however, the Motor Vehicle Code at Section MCL 257.722(2) grants the City the ability to increase a weight designation up to 16,000 pounds "as needed":

(2) When normal loading is in effect, the State Transportation Department, **or local authority with respect to highways** under its jurisdiction, **may designate** certain highways, or sections of those highways, where bridges and road services are adequate for heavier loading, **and revise a designation as needed**, in which the maximum tandem axle assembly loading shall not exceed **16,000 pounds** for any axle of the assembly, if there is no other axle within 9 feet of any axle of the assembly. (Emphasis added.)

After a thorough review of the City's own ordinances, it appears that such authority has actually been given **to the Director of Public Services** at Section 33-741 of the Traffic Code:

(b) When normal loading is in effect, **the Director of Public Services may designate certain highways**, or sections of those highways, where bridges and road services are adequate for heavier loading, **which**

**designation may be revised as needed**, in which the maximum tandem axle assembly loading shall not exceed sixteen thousand (16,000) pounds for any axle of the assembly, if there is no other axle within nine (9) feet of any axle of the assembly. (Emphasis added.)

\* \* \*

(f) **The director of public service may suspend the restrictions imposed by this section when and where, in his discretion, conditions of the highways so warrant**, and may impose the restricted loading requirements of this section on designated highways at any other time as the conditions of the highway may require it. (Emphasis added.)

Given the representations of the RCOC following the City Council's questions, I believe it would be appropriate to grant the temporary increase in the weight restriction, because I think the roads can handle the occasional added weight and because I do not see a reasonable alternative. Because the issue was tabled Monday night, RCOC intends to keep the existing detour signage in place until the matter is resolved at the June 23<sup>rd</sup> special Council meeting. <sup>1</sup>

cc: Chief David Molloy, Director of Public Safety  
Lt. Jerrod Hart, Assistant Police Chief  
Officer Tim Harper, Police Department  
Tom Schultz, City Attorney  
Brian Coburn, Engineering Manager

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<sup>1</sup> It is my understanding that the City Attorney has cautioned against writing overweight tickets in the meantime as to trucks in that range between 13,000 and 16,000 pounds, as they would have been directed to the road by a governmental agency, which would provide a likely defense to such a ticket. The Police Department has been in the area monitoring traffic and has issued citations for other violations (primarily speeding on Nine Mile), and will continue to do so for the duration of the project as necessary.



SIGNS THIS SHEET BY CONTRACTOR		
ITEM	UNIT	QTY
Sign, Type B, Temp, Prismatic, Fluo	SR	380
Sign, Type B, Temp, Prismatic, Oper	SR	350
Sign, Type B, Temp, Prismatic, Special, Fluo	SR	600
Sign, Type B, Temp, Prismatic, Special, Oper	SR	600
Barricade, Type II, High Intensity, Double Sided, Lighted, Fluo	Ea	10
Barricade, Type II, High Intensity, Double Sided, Lighted, Oper	Ea	10

**SPECIAL 'B'**

8 Mile Rd Closed  
East of Beck Rd  
Follow Detour  
Starting XX/XX/XX

**SPECIAL 'T1'**

8 Mile Rd Closed  
East of Beck Rd  
Commercial Vehicles  
Follow Truck Detour

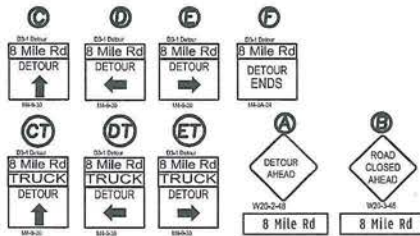
**SPECIAL 'T2'**

8 Mile Rd Closed  
Commercial Vehicles  
Follow Truck Detour

SPECIAL SIGNS FOR EIGHT MILE RD CLOSING SHALL BE IN PLACE ONE WEEK PRIOR TO CLOSURE.

**CONSTRUCTION D3-1**

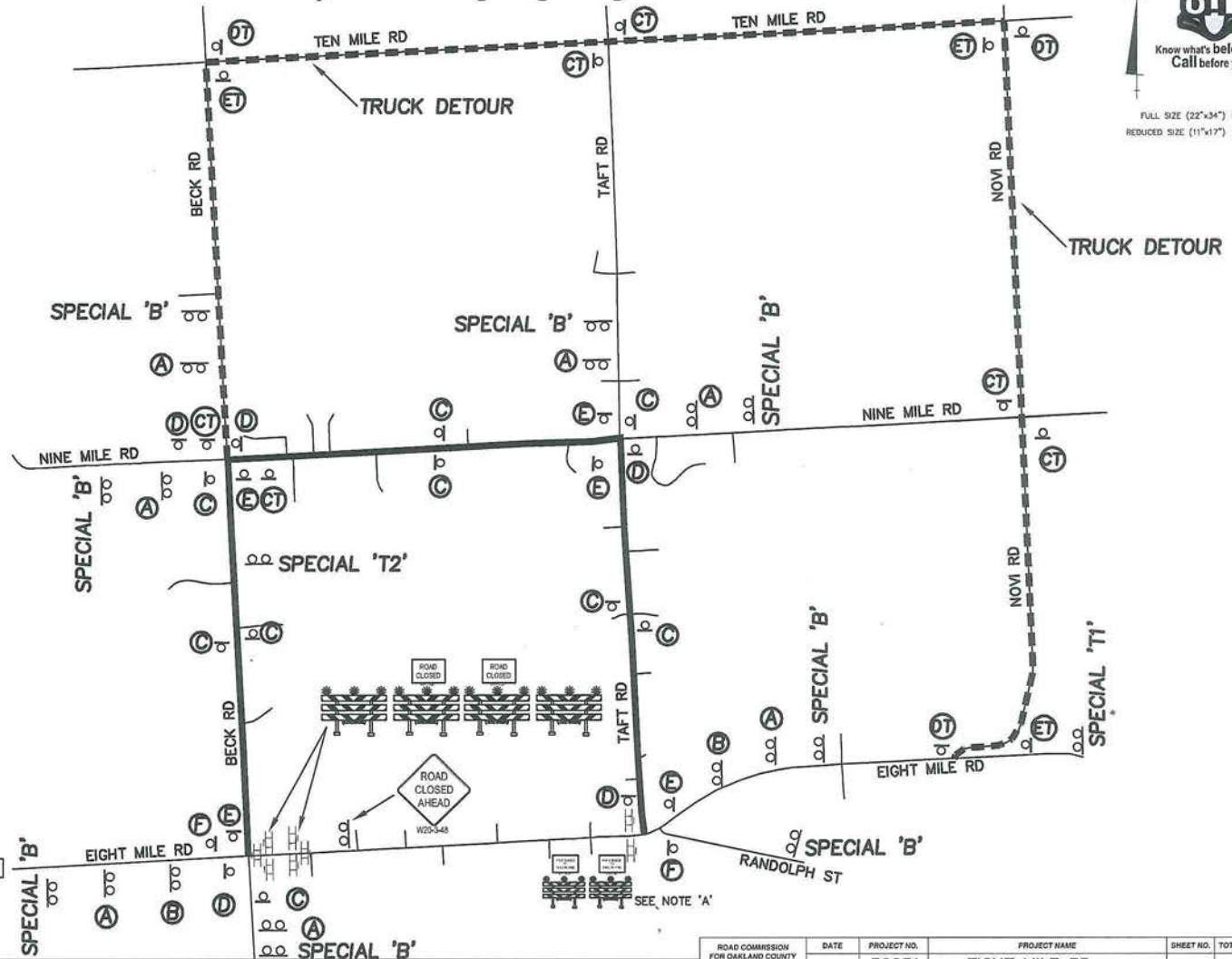
8 Mile Rd



**NOTE 'A'**

BARRICADE WITH ROAD CLOSED TO THRU TRAFFIC SIGN TO BE PLACED ON SHOULDER OF ROAD NEAR TAFT RD INTERSECTION.  
\*DO NOT BLOCK LANE OF TRAFFIC.\*

# Traffic Safety Detour Signing Diagram



**811**  
Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.

FULL SIZE (22"x34") Custom  
REDUCED SIZE (11"x17") 1" = 200'

ROAD COMMISSION FOR GARLAND COUNTY Beverly Hills, Michigan	DATE	PROJECT NO.	PROJECT NAME	SHEET NO.	TOTAL SHEETS
		50651	EIGHT MILE RD		

C:\USERS\TRAFFIC\TECHNICAL\DOCUMENTS\TRAFFIC\AUTOCAD DRAWINGS\PROJECTS\08051 8 MILE ROAD\08051 TS DETOUR (REV) Jun. 4, 14 - 9:20 AM



June 18, 2014

Mr. Rob Hayes, P.E.  
Director of Public Services  
City Engineer  
45175 W. Ten Mile Road  
Novi, MI 48375

RE: 8 Mile Road Detour Route  
RCOC Project #50651

Dear Rob:

As you will recall, last year during the reconstruction of 8 Mile Road between Napier and Taft it became apparent we could not maintain traffic on 8 Mile Road east of Beck Road while placing gabions and proposed pathways. The Gabions, with their tiebacks, are needed to fit the pathways within the existing Right-of Way (R.O.W).

Additionally, it was decided not to close 8 Mile between Beck and Taft during the school year. Therefore, the closure of 8 Mile between Beck and Taft was delayed until 2014, with the anticipated detour route for trucks being Beck Road to 10 Mile Road to Novi Road.

Dan's Excavating recently resumed the 8 Mile Road Project, and RCOC is requesting approval from the City of Novi to use Beck Road from 8 Mile Road to 10 Mile Road as part of the detour for commercial vehicles. Regrettably, RCOC did not seek this formal approval earlier, and I apologize for our oversight on the matter. We request the City's approval at this time.

In considering RCOC's request to use Beck Road from 8 Mile Road to 10 Mile Road, please understand there are no other practical alternative routes. The truck detour should be on paved roads and the nearest north-south road would be Pontiac Trail, approximately 7 miles to the west. This detour route would be impractical due to its 16 mile length, and the trucks would be detoured into downtown South Lyon. Many commercial vehicles would ignore the posted route and take one of the gravel roads instead. The gravel roads cannot accommodate the truck loads.

**Board of Road Commissioners**

Ronald J. Fowkes  
Commissioner

Gregory C. Jamian  
Commissioner

Eric S. Wilson  
Commissioner

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**Dennis G. Kolar, P.E.**  
Managing Director

**Gary Piotrowicz, P.E., P.T.O.E.**  
Deputy Managing Director  
County Highway Engineer

31001 Lahser Road  
Beverly Hills, MI  
48025

248-645-2000

FAX  
248-645-0618

TDD  
248-645-9923

[www.rcocweb.org](http://www.rcocweb.org)



QUALITY LIFE THROUGH GOOD ROADS:  
ROAD COMMISSION FOR OAKLAND COUNTY

"WE CARE"

8 Mile Road detour route  
Page 2 of 2  
June 18, 2014

We note Beck Road is a paved, class B route with a legal limit of 13,000 lbs/axle. We do not anticipate any damage by temporarily increasing the allowable load to accommodate legal loads of 16,000 lbs/axle. This is not a significant load increase, the amount of commercial vehicles is fairly light, and the number of trucks which weigh between 13,000 and 16,000 lbs/axle will be relatively few. Additionally, this closure is requested during the summer when the pavement and base are dry and not susceptible to flexing.

We ask the City of Novi for approval of Beck Road as a detour route for the 8 Mile Road closure, and recommend allowance of up to 16,000 lbs/axle during the 8 Mile Road closure your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Respectfully,

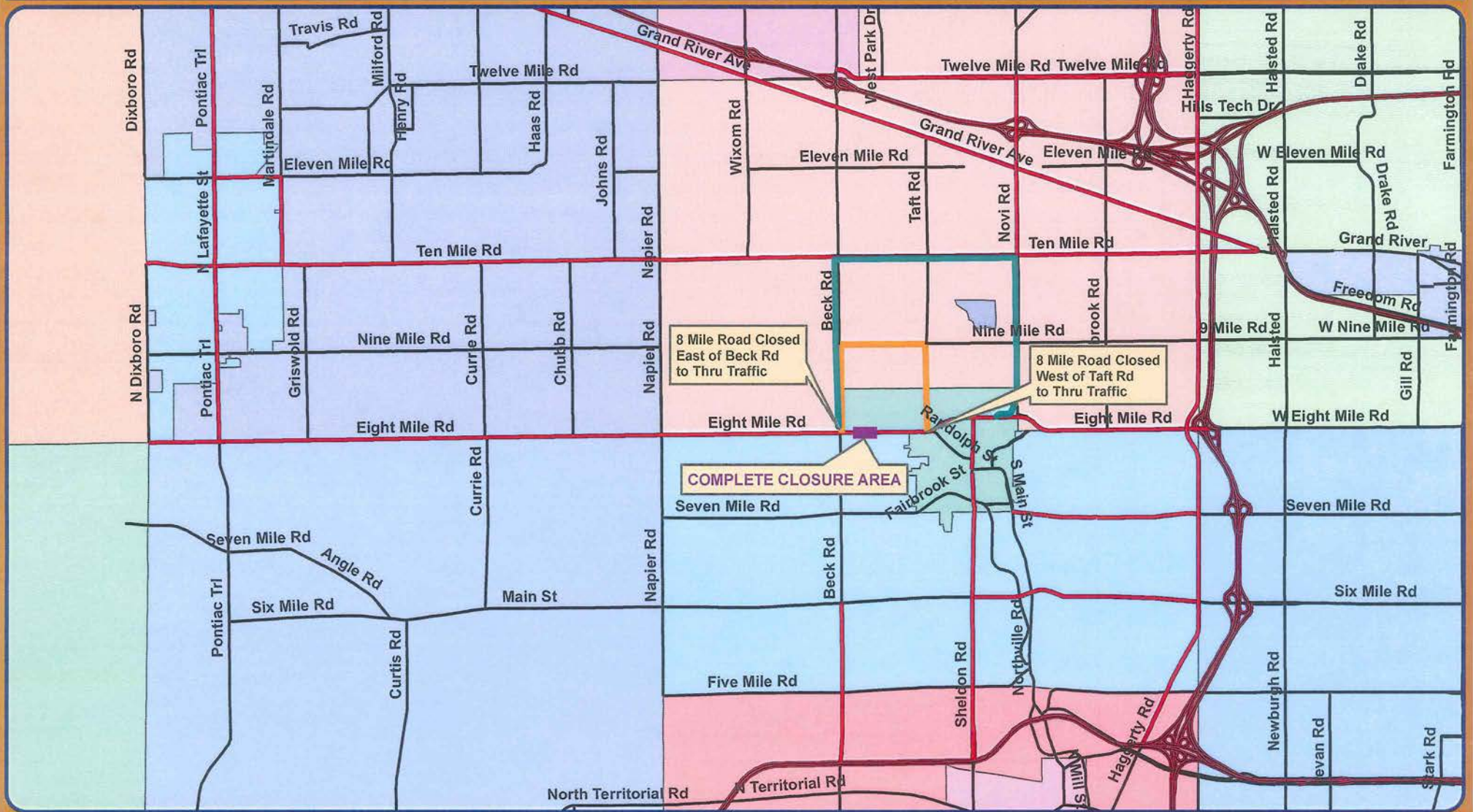
  
Thomas G. Blust, P.E.  
Director of Engineering

Cc: Gary Piotrowicz, P.E., P.T.O.E.  
Mike Torres, P.E.  
Danielle Deneau, P.E.



# 8 MILE RECONSTRUCTION (TAFT TO BECK)

All-Weather and Class A Roads



Map Author: Keri Blough  
Date: June 18, 2014  
Project: 8 Mile Detour Routes  
Version #: 2.0

Amended By:  
Date:  
Department:

**MAP INTERPRETATION NOTICE**

Map information depicted is not intended to replace or substitute for any official or primary source. This map was intended to meet National Map Accuracy Standards and use the most recent accurate sources available to the people of the City of Novi. Boundary measurements and area calculations are approximate and should not be construed as survey measurements performed by a licensed Michigan Surveyor as defined in Michigan Public Act 132 of 1970 as amended. Please contact the City GIS Manager to confirm source and accuracy information related to this map.

**Map Legend**

- Truck Traffic Detour Route
  - Passenger Vehicles Detour Route
  - All-Weather or Class A Roads
  - Freeway
  - Major Streets
- |                       |                 |              |
|-----------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| <b>Municipalities</b> | Lyon Twp        | Plymouth     |
| Farmington            | Northfield Twp  | Plymouth Twp |
| Farmington Hills      | Northville City | Salem Twp    |
| Green Oak Twp         | Northville Twp  | South Lyon   |
| Livonia               | Novi            | Wixom        |
|                       | Novi Twp        |              |



**City of Novi**

Information Technology  
GIS Division  
45175 Ten Mile Rd  
Novi, MI 48375  
cityofnovi.org



1 inch = 1.6 miles

