

*This brochure has been prepared to provide information about abandonment of roads under the jurisdiction of the KCRC. If you have further questions or concerns, we invite you to call us, visit our office or website.*

**Keeping Kalamazoo  
County Roads Safe for  
Over 100 Years**



3801 East Kilgore Road  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001  
Telephone (269) 381-3171  
Fax (269)381-1760

[www.kalamazoocountyroads.com](http://www.kalamazoocountyroads.com)

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# ***ABANDONMENT OF ROADS***



*A preliminary guide for the abandonment of roads under the jurisdiction of the Kalamazoo County Road Commission by petition.*

Michigan Common Law; Act 283 of 1909/  
MCL 224.18. MSA 9.118

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The Kalamazoo County Road Commission (KCRC) has authority, pursuant to MCL S224, MSA S9.118 to abandon all or part of a county road.

To begin the process of abandonment a written request must be provided to the KCRC along with the appropriate fee and survey to begin the petition process. Please note any additional expenses necessary to research an abandonment will be applied to the individual making the request.

Once the written request is reviewed, KCRC will review requirements with the petitioner. An abandonment information package may be provided.

A petition must be signed by seven (7) or more freeholders (land title holders) of a township in which the abandonment is being sought. The petition must also be accompanied by a true and correct list of the names and mailing addresses of the occupants of each parcel of land abutting the portion of right of way which they seek to be abandoned.

If the petition for abandonment DOES contain the signatures of all the abutting landowners, the KCRC may determine without a public hearing the advisability of such abandonment within twenty (20) days after receiving the petition. However, the KCRC can require a public hearing if deemed in the best interest of the public.

Where there is water access, township and DNR have the right to timely notification and decision to maintain the road as a public access site.

If the petition for abandonment does NOT contain the signatures of all the abutting land owners, or the right of way has a building upon it, the Road Commission will:

- a) Appoint a time and place for a public hearing within twenty (20) days of receiving the petition.
- b) Serve notice, by first class mail, on all abutting landowners and township officials at least ten (10) days prior to the hearing and post a notice of said hearing in three (3) public places within the township.
- c) Publish notice of hearing in a local newspaper on two (2) consecutive days prior to said hearing.

The Board of County Road Commissioners of Kalamazoo County must determine, at the time of passage of any resolution abandoning a right of way, if the abandonment is in the best interest of the public. The KCRC may reserve an easement for public utility purposes.

If abandonment is determined to be in the best interest of the public, the resolution will be recorded at the Register of Deeds. The determination will also be published in a local newspaper, once for each week for three successive weeks. Within thirty (30) days of making their decision, the KCRC must also file a record with the State Department of Transportation.

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### **Notes on ownership:**

When the public right of way consists of a Statutory Easement (unplatted) only, and the land is held privately in fee, the title will remain with the property owner to the title line (usually the centerline) of the road involved. Only the public right to the use of the land will be eliminated.

In recorded subdivisions or platted areas, the KCRC can only relinquish jurisdiction of the right of way to the township. The KCRC does not hold title; it only holds the right of way in "the public trust". Once relinquished by the KCRC, jurisdiction of the right of way returns to the township that can then pass a resolution to abandon its interest. It then becomes a private road. In order to terminate the private road right of way and claim ownership of the property right of way, the abutting property owners must go through Circuit Court to amend the plat. This is done at the owner's expense. Person's seeking this action should consult an attorney.

Public right of way which was acquired in fee title by the KCRC by purchase or condemnation will be reviewed on a case by case basis. The KCRC and prospective recipients should act under the guidance of their respective attorneys.

**This is meant as a preliminary guide only, for additional information please refer to:  
PUBLIC HIGHWAY AND PUBLIC ROADS  
Act 283 of 1909  
Website: [www.legislature.mi.gov](http://www.legislature.mi.gov)**

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