

RoadSoft

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RoundUp

RoadSoft helps us communicate with our townships and show officials the condition of the roads, and the mix of fixes available to improve them.

—Kathy Bunker, Engineering Tech.
Cheboygan CRC

A New Look for RoadSoft: Customizable work space, new tools, and streamlined functionality

The next major version of RoadSoft will have a new map interface, which will give RoadSoft users more options to customize their screen and to adjust it to their preferences for specific tasks, like building road networks or analyzing crash information. The changes include moveable windows, and new map functions and features based on suggestions from RoadSoft users.

Selection Information More Visible

Users will now be able to select a feature on the map, like a sign or road segment, and immediately see all of its associated data listed in the Selection Information pane, a spreadsheet format that appears below the main map. Everything from physical and design characteristics to ratings and planned construction will be right at the fingertips of RoadSoft users, giving them a snapshot of each selection, without having to open a module window.

New Map Tools

A Measure tool will be added in response to RoadSoft users' requests. By selecting the Measure tool, users will be able to select a start and end point or a series of points anywhere on the map, and the length of the segment or series will be measured automatically. This tool provides more flexibility to measure distance on the map by allowing users to measure without requiring an intersection as the reference point. This will be particularly useful, for example, to measure specific distances like snow plow routes.

The Map Legend and the Layer Properties windows will include some new functionality. For example, in the Layer Properties window, users will be able to select what labels they want displayed with each map layer from multiple choices based on the data contained in each layer. In the Road layer for instance, users can choose another label other than the road name, for example, Act 51 designation.

The Map Layers window will be more prominent and will display all available map layers, including layers without any collected data, and those that need to be imported, like the Intersection and Crash layers. If a user tries to view a map layer that does not contain collected or imported data, RoadSoft will indicate that it does not yet include data. This will make it easier for users to see all of the layers that are available to them.

New Capabilities with External Map Layers

External map layers will be able to be dragged and dropped from the

location they are saved in, directly onto the main RoadSoft map. Multiple external layers can be added to the map and viewed at the same time. Users will be able to manipulate external layers as well, by adding legends, adjusting the opacity of the layer as it appears over the main RoadSoft map, and by using map tools, like the Zoom and Pan controls on the external layer. For example, a Soil Conservation Service (SCS) map can be attributed using the map tools to set shading, opacity, and colors for the external layer, making it more useful and easier to use with the main RoadSoft map. With this new functionality, users will be able to view the features of external layers, like soil types, wetlands maps, property parcel maps, etc., more clearly in RoadSoft.

More Display Options

The map interface will be more modular, and users will be able to set up their own, personalized work space. All window panes will be moveable, so they can be shifted around the screen and "pinned," or attached to any edge of the screen, or hidden altogether.

"It's great for users with multiple monitors, who will now be able to move windows outside of the RoadSoft screen to a different monitor," said Nick Koszykowski, a RoadSoft software engineer. "Users with a single monitor or lap top also benefit because they can minimize windows and tabs they don't need."

This modular aspect of the main map interface will be applied first to the sign module and eventually to all RoadSoft modules as well. Instead of switching back and forth between windows, users can detach a window pane or tab and move it and pin it to another edge of the screen, or hide it depending on what they need to see or do. This feature will be particularly useful in modules like Sign, Road and other modules that have multiple information tabs.

The new map interface is part of an overall update to RoadSoft code, which in addition to updating the interface and the Sign module, also ensures its compatibility with new hardware, software, and operating systems. "It enables us to make the software more scalable and upgradable, so it will be sustainable as computing technology changes," said Koszykowski. This version of RoadSoft has a targeted release by the end of January, 2010. Upon its release it will provide an enhanced and flexible map interface and will have an increased capacity to meet the future needs of users.

Users will be notified of updates by e-mail, or they can visit the RoadSoft web site at www.roadsoft.org for updates.

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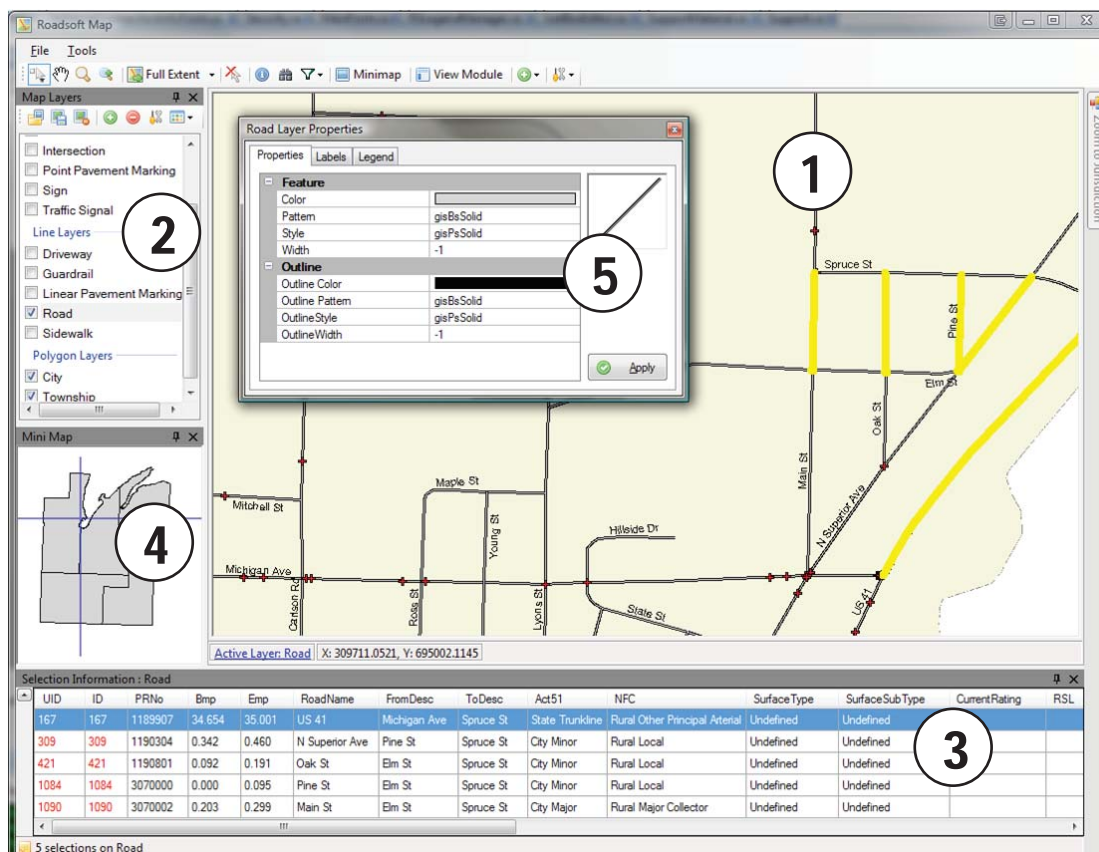
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RoadSoft RoundUp



Coming soon: RoadSoft's new look—and it's more modular so you can easily customize your work space!

Shown here:

1. New Map Interface
2. Map Layers ("pinned")
3. Selection Information Pane
4. Mini-map ("pinned")
5. Layer Properties window

See inside this issue of *RoadSoft RoundUp* for more details. The next version of RoadSoft has a targeted release date of the end of January, 2010.

Users will be notified of updates by e-mail or by checking for updates at the RoadSoft web site:
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