



THE OAKLAND COUNTY TREASURER HAS AN OFFICE in the Road Commission's Administrative Building at 31001 Lahser (at 13 Mile Road) in Beverly Hills. Staffing the office have been Carmen C. Guilleau, left, and Phyllis Tokar.

90 Per Cent of Travel Is On Roads

More Local Funding Is Needed for Roads

Do you know how to solve this problem?

You weren't able to build a larger home in the 1960's when you had only one child. Now you have four children and need a still-larger house. But you still can't afford it.

Your paycheck hasn't increased. Costs are up. The boss has already ruled out a promotion and has diverted some income always used for your task to another task that will do only one-ninth of the work you do.

Meanwhile, some of your children scream to retain the charm of your present bungalow while the others shout for separate bedrooms.

The solution, unless you're going to just plain give up, has to be: struggle along as best you can, or

get a second paycheck. Right? The best place to turn for a second paycheck is to those who want your skills for tasks they need done. Right?

That problem is very close to the one faced by your Board of Oakland County Road Commissioners. And the most realistic solution is exactly the same, they said.

Oakland County's road system was underfunded for years, with the result that it fell behind the needs. In 1970, the cost just to catch up would have been \$300 million. Development pressure within the county pointed to a \$1.8 billion price tag to both catch up and meet the projected need of year 1990.

The primary source of Road Commission funds, the state and federal governments, haven't increased their contributions, however. Now the emphasis at the federal level is rapidly switching to diverting some of the funds that have been available to maintenance of existing roads.

Both the state and federal govern-

About 14.61 miles of new roads will be added to the Oakland County system as the result of new subdivision platting during 1976, said John L. Grubba, Road Commission Managing Director.

The Oakland County Road Commission, which sets the standards to which roads must be built, was presented with 44 new subdivision plats in 16 townships. All but 12 of those subdivisions included new roads. Those 12 will be using existing roads.

The most miles of new subdivision roads platted that year were in Avon

Township, where 4.43 miles are called for in five new subdivisions.

West Bloomfield Township was second with 3.60 miles of new roads in seven subdivisions being platted.

Bloomfield Township was third, in new mileage with 1.78 miles in six new subdivisions.

Other communities with new subdivision roads platted in 1976 are Addison (0.41 miles), Brandon (0.21 miles), Commerce (0.76 miles), Highland (0.28 miles), Milford Township (0.26 miles), Oakland (0.88 miles), Orion (1.27 miles), Oxford (0.27 miles), Waterford (0.26 miles), and White Lake (0.20 miles).

ments have taken steps to dip into the road funding pot to pay for mass transit. The most optimistic estimates are that mass transit will serve only 10 percent of the public's trips, and then largely by use of buses, which will put more demands on the road system.

In the 1970s, also, the concern for environmental protection—both to conserve ecological resources and to protect lifestyles—has made it increasingly difficult and costly to build anything new.

Still, the public that uses the roads for 90 percent of its travel continues to demand improvement.

As concluded by a Citizens Research Council of Michigan (CRC) study, the only place your Road Commission can turn for a "second paycheck" is to the local sources of funds: property taxes or city income taxes.

The Board of Oakland County Road Commissioners neither has nor wants taxing authority; you can be assured.

The only proper way to earn a

"second paycheck," in the Road Commissioners' opinion, is to ask for a public vote on a county-wide millage proposition. If the voters want road improvement seriously enough, they'll be willing to pay for it. If they don't obviously the Road Commission will have to make do despite its limitations.

Such a public vote was proposed during 1976, but it never made it to the ballot.

Again in the near future, your Board of County Road Commissioners will do its part by proposing such a millage program for vastly stepped-up road improvements. If the Oakland County Board of Commissioners sees fit to put the question on the ballot, your Road Commission will do everything in its power to assure that a "yes" vote is justified.

Like the harried breadwinner with the growing family, your Road Commission will struggle along doing the best it can—and offer its skills for the task at hand in order to earn the important "second paycheck."

Millage Vote Sought To Help Many Areas

The Board of Oakland County Road Commissioners attempted in 1976 to learn whether or not voters of the county were willing to pay for a vastly stepped up road construction program.

The road commission asked the Board of Oakland County Commissioners to place a proposition on the November ballot seeking a two-mill property tax levy for five years. The owner of a home with a sale value of \$40,000 would pay about \$40 in each of the five years.

That would have raised about \$14.5 million annually, or a total of \$72 million during the five years, that could be used for road improvement projects. The road commissioners said that amount, coupled with regular construction revenues, would allow the equivalent of three and one-half years of road improvements in each of the five years.

Compared to the \$100 million a

year for 20 years—or \$2 billion—of improvement needs identified in a 1974 study, the millage proposal seemed modest, said John L. Grubba, Road Commission Managing Director.

"But, compared to the approximately \$8.5 million otherwise available annually for construction, the \$14.5 million of new funds would have been most useful," he said.

As examples of what could be done with \$118 million of combined

regular revenue and millage funds during the five years, the road commission suggested:

- Paving of all unpaved primary roads in the county system, except for a single half-mile of Dequindre.

- Reconstruction, with three inches of gravel, all local gravel roads.

- Reconstruction, with three inches of gravel, all gravel subdivision streets for which residents or townships provide the usual 50 percent matching funds.

- Paving of 40 miles of unpaved local roads without the usual requirement of 50 percent matching funds from townships.

- \$11 million worth of improvements to 59 high-accident intersections.

- Widening of 55 miles of two-lane primary roads to four or more lanes.

- \$1 million to improve critical bridges.

- Resurfacing of 58 miles of work worn two-lane pavement.

- Three bike paths totalling 32.6 miles.

- \$1 million for public transit related needs.

A detailed program for such uses of the millage funds was presented.

Such projects were considered important based on more than 50 years of road commission experience. But the road commission also offered to give the elected county commissioners and the elected county executive final say in how the millage funds would be used.

ROAD COMPLAINTS?

For Help, Call Us!!

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