

## OCRC defends own transit plan

The Oakland County Road Commission says the staff of the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) doesn't know what it's talking about in criticizing the road commission's light rail rapid transit plan.

And the OCRC said it has better planning data than SEMCOG, which it charged is biased against any idea except a costly heavy rail transit system.

The OCRC reply came in response to a memo from SEMCOG Executive Director Michael M. Glusac to the seven-county planning agency's executive committee. Glusac charged the road commission with advancing its alternative plans as a "public relations" gimmick and with having "inadequate technical knowledge" of rapid transit planning.

The road commission consists of John Genu, chairman, and members William Richards and Fred Houghton. They are appointees of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.

THE ROAD COMMISSION quoted Gov. William G. Milliken as saying its transit plans deserved to be "carefully considered."

To the charge that the road commission's plan assumes no effect on land use and on Detroit redevelopment, the road commission said "very little private development would occur from any heavy rail system because:

1. Limited riderships are projected for the Woodward, Gratiot and Michigan (Ave.) corridors. 2. Detroit employment and population are declining. 3. Transit ridership is declining here as elsewhere. 4. Developers are not showing much interest in transit as a cornerstone for redevelopment as evidenced by the lack of new building along the BART system in San Francisco.

As regional planning agency, SEMCOG pipes its data into the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority (SEMTA), which has received a promise of \$600 million from Washington for a heavy rail transit system. The road commission envisions a smaller, lighter, but more extensive light rail (streetcar-like) system.

THE ROAD commission said its data base is a current (last September) origin-destination survey, while SEMCOG and SEMTA are using a 1966 study and a 1971 forecasting procedure.

To the SEMCOG charge that the road commission's transit plan would fail to serve the New Center and Medical Center areas of Detroit, the road commission replied that the SEMTA current plan would fail to serve Dearborn, Southfield and Troy, all heavy traffic generators.

And it said its own plan would serve the Detroit downtown, Pontiac, Royal Oak, Wayne and Dearborn business districts and several industrial centers.

THE ROAD commission response, distributed by a public relations counsel, became angry in tone as it replied to SEMCOG charges that it had failed to register its objections to SEMCOG's population forecasts in technical committees.

"William Fognini, of the Oakland County Road Commission transportation planning and environmental concerns department, has noted several times that such objections have not been included in the meeting minutes," the road commission said, adding:

"It was through our participation on SEMCOG and SEMTA committees that we discovered the weakness in the population and employment forecasts and the region."

To SEMCOG's charge that the road commission's consultant is "unknown to this agency," the road commission said:

"SEMCOG doesn't know much about transit planning or transit consultants. The president of Transportation Planning Associates is well known by many of the people at SEMTA and others in this region because of his leadership in developing transit systems for Ford Motor Co. and his planning of the civic center people mover."

"SEMCOG seems to only know those transportation consultants who prepare plans for heavy rail transit systems, which cost huge sums of money and get lost in publicity."

## Countywide programs pledged by C of C

The North Oakland Chamber of Commerce is seeking a broader appeal.

New officers of the chamber, long associated with Pontiac, pledge countywide programming for 1977 and will seek to drop the word "North" from the organization's name.

Carl A. Brooks, recently elected president for 1977, said the name change will be placed before the membership for a vote at the Feb. 16 annual meeting.

The name change has political implications. The North Oakland chamber was sponsoring organization for the fledgling Oakland County Tourist and Convention Bureau.

The convention group has obtained \$50,000 a year funding from the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.

but commissioners from the south end of the county have always fought the appropriation, charging the group is oriented too strongly toward Pontiac Stadium.

THE NEW president, Brooks, is with the Kirby Co. of North Oakland, with offices at Sylvan Lake. He will be installed formally during the annual meeting.

Other officers are: Treasurer—Richard Rudloff of Fleet Ambulance Service, Pontiac.

Secretary—Ruth McCarthy, of A & W Gershenson Corp., owners and operators of Pontiac Mall.  
1976 president-elect—Harold Cousins, City Beverage Co., Pontiac.

### Law school

A five-year moratorium on the establishment of a new state-supported law school was recommended by the state board in a 46-page report it prepared at the request of Gov. Milliken. The governor had asked the state board to determine if Michigan needed another law school.

### Courthouse

#### houses reps

Oakland County's fifth courthouse was constructed in 1960, and unlike its predecessors, it was designed to keep pace with the growing community.

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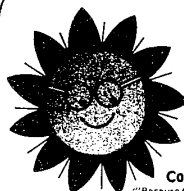
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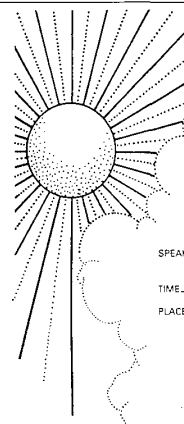
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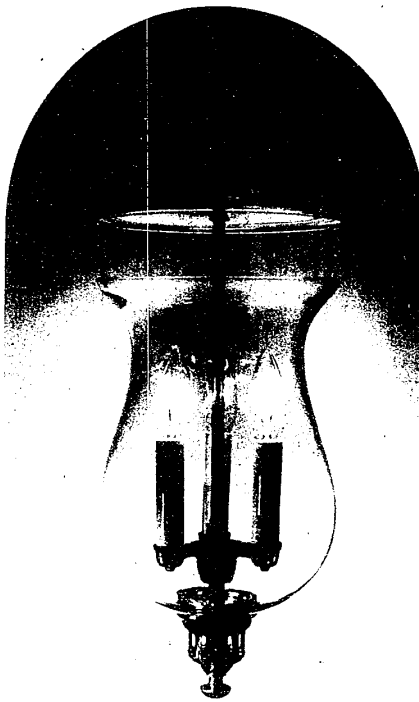
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