

## Hedging on Oakland's future

# Milliken, Brickley pass on M-275

By TIM RICHARD

While advocating preservation of Michigan's natural resources, neither Gov. William G. Milliken nor his new Community Development Cabinet has taken a position on whether the controversial M-275 freeway should be built across western Oakland County.

"No, I have not been in contact with the transportation commission. It's their responsibility," Milliken said last week as he hurried into a Republican fund-raising affair in Livonia. "You'll have to talk to the lieutenant governor on that."

Indoors, Milliken told the assemblage that the 1980 Republican platform should show "sensitivity toward the urban problems of America. . . We've allowed our cities to deteriorate while expanding into agricultural areas."

THE LIEUTENANT governor, James Brickley, chairs the state's Community Development Cabinet, announced with great fanfare last April. Its chief goal: to coordinate state policies to avoid "urban sprawl."

At the time, Brickley said M-275 might be discussed. M-275 would run from the I-95/I-695/I-275 intersection in Novi to I-75 at Clarkston.

Last week Craig Ruff, Brickley's executive assistant, said the Community Development Cabinet (CDC) has spent 45 minutes to an hour discussing M-275 but has yet to take a position on either the freeway or any of the handful of



GOV. WILLIAM MILLIKEN  
"No contact"

alternative proposals.

"They heard a presentation by John Woodford (director of the Michigan Department of Transportation, which favors a freeway) on the pluses and minuses of the alternative proposals. They also received from the transportation department an analysis of the cost implications."

"It has been discussed in general terms as the type of issue the cabinet should become involved in because it impacts on such urban issues as housing development."

## analysis

"THE CABINET has not made any recommendation. Its guidance has not been sought by either the Michigan Department of Transportation or the Transportation Commission."

Ruff added the Community Development Cabinet has "an irregular schedule. It meets about monthly. Last week it met twice. There will be another meeting in about two weeks."

The CDC consists of the directors of the state departments of Social Services, Labor, Commerce, Treasury, Management and Budget, and Natural Resources along with the head of the state Housing Development Authority and the governor's Detroit-based executive assistant for urban affairs.

M-DOT Director Woodford and his staff are strongly in favor of a freeway.

Even after the old State Highway Commission voted in January of 1977 to cancel the project, Woodford and staff continued to insist a freeway would be better than any of the alternatives — a parkway and upgrading of various local roads.

WOODFORD's and his staff's insistence once led Peter B. Fletcher Jr., then chairman of the Highway Commission, to chastise them publicly, complaining: "What do I have to do to get the attention of the bureaucracy?"

Oakland County observers generally

felt Fletcher reflected Milliken's views because Fletcher was Republican National Committeeman and a confidante of the governor.

Fletcher quit his highway commission post the day after the 1978 election in which voters abolished it and replaced it with a six-member Michigan Transportation Commission. All members of both commissions are gubernatorial appointees. The 1978 election also made Woodford a direct appointee of Milliken.

Thus, Milliken's statement that he has not been in contact with the new transportation commission comes as a surprise, considering his previous close association with highway chairman Fletcher.

The M-275 battle shapes up as a classic confrontation between developers and preservationists, between semi-rural townships and older cities.

Favoring a freeway are the western Oakland townships and young cities, the Oakland County Road Commission and land developers. Local governments and developers alike have based their land use plans for years on the assumption M-275 would be built.

Opponents are a range of environmental groups, League of Women Voters leaders, the Rouge Basin Coalition and homeowners groups. Among other arguments, they point to "the disruptive social and economic drain created when a freeway draws the population outward" — much the same rhetoric used by Milliken in his speech to Livonia Republicans.

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## 'Ike' dinner to hear 'the best orator'

A Michigan man reputed to be "probably the best orator in the House" will be the after-dinner speaker for the 17th Congressional District Republican Committee Eisenhower dinner. It is set for 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 3, in the Glen Oaks clubhouse, 30500 W. Thirteen Mile, Farmington Hills.

The orator is U.S. Rep. Guy Vanderjagt, R-Luther, who has made more than 2,400 speeches in 27 countries in his eight terms in Congress.

Vanderjagt is best known as chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee, which seeks to build up the GOP's ranks in Congress. He is also active in the National Prayer Breakfast program.

## Female finance whiz to speak

A Texas stockbroker known as the "first lady of financial planning" will discuss her brand of dollar sense when she comes to Troy Oct. 1.

She is Venita VanCaspel, author of the bestselling "Money Dynamics" and its sequel, "The New Money Dynamics." She was the first female to become a member of the Pacific Stock Exchange, and is president of her own Houston-based stockbrokerage firm.

VanCaspel will speak at 7 p.m. in Michigan State University's Management Education Center, 811 W. Square Lake Road, Troy. Her topic is financial

planning for the 1980s, and her appearance is sponsored by MSU's Development Fund.

THE STOCKBROKER claims she came by her money management skills out of necessity, not choice. In 1959, her first husband was killed in an airplane crash.

She studied economics and finance at Duke University, the University of Colorado and the New York Institute of Finance before starting VanCaspel & Co., Incorporated Stockbrokers in 1968. The business has been economically successful since its inception.



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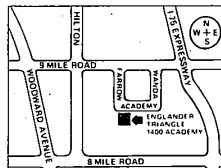
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