

Safer crossings — fewer crashes

Better intersections mean fewer accidents, according to an analysis by the Oakland County Road Commission.

Comparing 56 "high accident locations" in 1977 and 1981, the road commission found:

- At 15 improved intersections, accidents dropped more than 40 percent — from 809 in 1977 to 481 in 1981.
- At non-improved intersections, crashes dropped 13 percent — from 1,971 to 1,714.

"WE MADE safety our number one priority at the beginning of 1978," said John R. Gnuau Jr., chairman of the board of Oakland County Road Commissioners.

"We launched a comprehensive highway risk management program that included an analysis of high accident locations and efforts to channel available resources to them on a priority basis."

Gnuau called the results "conclusive proof that improving the highway environment

does pay off in substantially increased safety."

"Although we know the results have been significant, these accident comparison numbers are the first dramatic evidence," Gnuau said.

FOR EXAMPLE, Gnuau said, at the Southfield and 10 Mile intersection — rated the worst in 1977 — there were 46.3-percent fewer accidents in 1981. That's because the road commission installed a computer-assisted traffic signaling system there, he said.

At the Maple and Cranbrook intersection, where 43 accidents occurred in 1977, traffic signal improvements resulted in 83-percent fewer crashes. There were only seven accidents at that intersection in 1981.

Other intersections where traffic signal improvements resulted in fewer accidents include: Telegraph and 12 Mile, Telegraph and Maple, Lahser and 12 Mile, Telegraph and 13 Mile, Telegraph and Square Lake, Orchard Lake and Northwestern, Rochester and Long Lake, Telegraph and Long Lake.

THE ROAD Commission improved another 17 of the high-accident intersections in 1981-82. It has earmarked \$4.24 million to improve 13 intersections in 1983-84.

Traffic improvement projects completed in 1981 include the Crooks and Big Beaver intersection, where 89 accidents occurred in 1977, compared to 30 in 1981.

Others in 1981 include: Southfield and 12 Mile, Greenfield and 10 Mile, John R and 12 Mile, Evergreen and 10 Mile, Southfield and 11 Mile.

Traffic signals were improved at the following intersections in 1982: Southfield and 13 Mile, Telegraph and 10 Mile, Telegraph and Elizabeth Lake, Lahser and Maple, 12 Mile and Northwestern, Crooks and Maple.

Projects slated for improvement in 1983 include: Rochester and Big Beaver, Woodward and Long Lake, Woodward and 11 Mile, Orchard Lake and 12 Mile, Orchard Lake and Maple, Greenfield and 12 Mile, John R and 13 Mile, Rochester and Avon.

Stewart announces for sheriff in '84

James Y. Stewart, director of public safety for the city of Huntington Woods, will seek the Republican nomination for sheriff in Oakland County in 1984.

Stewart, the 1980 nominee against Democratic Sheriff Johannes Spreen, said, "Having the support and being encouraged by many Republican leaders, including the former Republican state chairman, the Republican gubernatorial candidate and many Republican precinct delegates, I have definitely decided to seek my party's nomination for sheriff in 1984."

Stewart won more than 47 percent of the vote against Spreen. "To come within an eyelash of capturing the only county-wide seat held by a Democrat, I feel confident that the citizens of Oakland County want a change in leadership, and I feel that I have the

qualifications to bring about that necessary change," Stewart said.

Stewart may face primary competition. Other Republicans are urging John Nichols, Farmington Hills public safety director and former Detroit police chief, to make the run.

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Divorce, family series to start

A series of workshops on divorce and family counseling will be sponsored by the Oakland County Friend of the Court each week beginning Monday.

They will be held from 7-9 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 1589 W. Maple, Birmingham.

The programs also provide a forum for children to discuss their feelings about divorce. They include films, skits and puppet plays for children and visits from Oakland County Circuit Court judges.

PSYCHIATRIST Paul Pearsall will present the first session on "How Did I Get Into This Mess in the First Place?" on Monday.

Attorney John Schaefer will speak on "The Law and Divorce — American Style," and John J. Houghton, Oakland County Friend of the Court, will discuss the Friend of the Court system March 28.

"Financial Planning Around Divorce" will be the focus of attorney Ivan Barris' talk April 4. Judge Robert C. Anderson will present the children's program.

CAROLYN VERESH of Rochester, a specialist in marital and family relations, will discuss "What Divorce May Do to Your Children" April 11. Judge Steven N. Andrews will meet with the children.

The final workshop will focus on "How to Cope with the Trauma of Divorce" and will be presented by psychologist Sandra Lyness. The teen and children's program will be given by Judge Gene Schmetz.

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