

Beleaguered I-696

It's down to the wire for highway

By Jackie Klein
staff writer

Freeway fighters from Lathrup Village and Pleasant Ridge are readying for another battle to try to block construction of the missing link of I-696.

Federal Court Judge Anna Diggs Taylor set May 17 to hear arguments for a temporary restraining order against construction of the final eight-mile stretch of the proposed expressway through southern Oakland County.

But the main legal battle will be June 17 when the two communities and a citizens group present arguments for a preliminary injunction.

Construction of I-696, which would generally follow 10 Mile and 11 Mile between Telegraph and I-75, is scheduled to begin in June. Much of the land and many buildings along the right-of-way have already been cleared.

But opposition continues from Lathrup and Pleasant Ridge and from

an organization called COUPON (Community Organization United to Preserve our Neighborhoods).

The group has proposed widening the east-west mile roads and installing north-south overpasses as an alternative to I-696. Representatives of the two communities say they fear the freeway will split their cities.

COST OF the six-year project is estimated at \$305 million. Southfield, which favors the proposed freeway route, will pay \$1.78 million as its share of the construction cost.

The first construction in Southfield, between Lahser and Santa Barbara, is tentatively scheduled for the second half of 1984, according to Paul E. Terrain, I-696 coordinator.

Each segment should take approximately three years to complete, Terrain said. The earliest final completion of the entire freeway is projected for 1989.

When the last section is completed, the freeway will extend 20 miles through the northern suburbs of the Detroit metropolitan area, connecting I-94 with I-96.

Within Southfield, the freeway will be along the 11 Mile corridor from west of Lahser east to Lexington Parkway (east of Southfield Road). The expressway will proceed southeast to Greenfield at Goldwin.

Throughout its entire length, the freeway will run below ground level and will have approximately 20-foot high vertical concrete retaining walls to minimize the width of the right-of-way, Terrain said.

East of Greenfield, the freeway runs along the 10 Mile corridor to the existing I-75 freeway.

THERE WILL BE three freeway lanes in each direction from Lahser to Southfield Road and four lanes each way from Southfield to I-75. Full-width

shoulders will be provided on each side of the traveled pavement.

Two-lane service drives at grade level on both sides of the freeway will widen to 3-4 lanes at off ramps and to 4-5 lanes at major intersections.

Limited access ramps will allow entrance and exit to major intersections at Lahser, Evergreen and Central Park Blvd., Southfield Road and Greenfield.

Eleven bridges will handle Southfield's through traffic at Lahser, Lois Lane, east of Lois Lane, Central Park Blvd., Evergreen, Santa Barbara, Southfield Road, Lathrup Blvd., Coral Gables, Lincoln and 11 Mile at Greenfield.

Seven bridges for crossover traffic will be located west of Harvard, west of Evergreen, east of Evergreen, east of Santa Barbara, west of Southfield Road, east of Southfield Road and west of Greenfield.

Register now

Regular registration for the 1983 spring semester at Oakland Community College will be held from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. May 2 and 3 according to an alphabetical schedule.

Classes for the spring semester officially begins at 8 a.m. May 4.

Students may register at any one of the following OCC campus locations: the Auburn Hills Campus in Auburn Heights (583-4200); the Highland Lakes Campus in Union Lake (360-3000); the Orchard Ridge Campus in Farmington Hills (471-7500); and the Southeast/Royal Oak Campus in Royal Oak (967-5700).

Applications for the 1983 spring semester are being accepted. New students should contact an admissions counselor at the campus of their choice for a schedule of classes and information on admissions procedures.

Quit smoking

Smoke NoMore, a program which helps smokers quit the habit, is beginning an eight-session, three-week clinic at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 4 at Oakland Community College, Orchard Ridge campus in Farmington Hills.

The fee is \$35 and the class size is limited. The strategy includes techniques for coping with the desire to smoke, behavior change, group support and follow-up.

For registration and information, call Oakland Community College, 471-7561 or Smoke NoMore, 356-6000.

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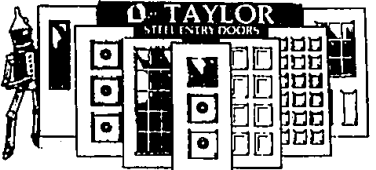
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