Property taxes drop Murphy to reduce county operations

By Kathy Parrish staff writer

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Oakland County's chief executive wants to slow down the growth of government spending.

In his 1946 budget recommendation, Daniel T. Murphy Thursday fold county commissioners that if present programs are merely extended, the county is now spending at a rate of \$129.7 million ayear.

In 1984, he'd like that to be \$129.2 million — a reduction of of \$483,000.

"This recommendation reflects spending constraint and service delivery at levels demanded by your constituents," the executive told his audience.

IN IIIS MESSAGE, Murphy also proudly reported that Oakland progrety owners as a whole will pay \$1.1 million less in county property taxes in 1884 — 944.4 million compared to last December's \$65.5 million. Reason: While the tax rate will remain at 4.8391 mills, assessments will drop, reflecting depressed property values. On balance, the reduction is 2 oerecent.

percent.
And for the first time in history, properly taxes will bring in less than balf of the total county budget — 49.8 percent. In 1983, properly taxes raised \$5.5 percent, he said.
To reduce programs, Murphy recommended cutting 25 positions from the county executive operations and 18 vehicles from the fleet.

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— Daniel Murphy

He also cited near completion of funding for the solid waste plan and elimination of payments for the east wing of the courthouse due to suffi-cient reserves to pay off the bonds.

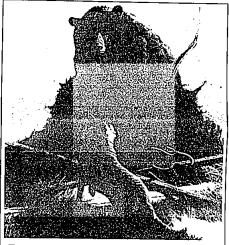
THOSE COST reductions would fact substantial increases in mental ealth, utility and election costs, he

health, utility and election costs, he said.

If approved by the commissioners, who will mull it over for a month, the budget would not mean layoffs. With 3,000 county employees, there is expected to be enough turnover to avoid cutting positions.

Murphy hopes to achieve the lower spending rate through willingness of employees to absorb additional work-loads, efficient management, a cost control program and reluctance to expand government.

"The budget I am recommending is a balanced one and one that restrains growth in government," explained Murphy. "As I have told you in the past, I am now, have been, and always will be opposed to the philosophy of tax and spend."



Best painting

David Conklin, 34, of Kincheloe in Michigan's upper peninsula is winnter of the fourth annual wildlife artist of the year competition aponsored by the Michigan United Conservation Clubs. His oil painting of an encounter between a black bear and a red tox won him a \$1,000 check. The painting of the cover of MUCC's monthly magazine Michigan Out-of-Doors in December.



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