

Roads, roads, roads

Bulk of public works funds targeted for repaving

By Tim Richard
Staff writer

The Blanchard Administration boasts that its 1984 investment in public works will generate more than 34,000 full-time construction jobs and be worth more than \$1.3 billion.

That's up from the 1983 level of 20,000 jobs and \$859 million, according to Robert Mitchell, a state Department of Transportation official who has the new title of "coordinator of public investment."

And how does that compare to previous administrations?

"At no point in the past did we even know the extent of public investment, until today," answered Alan Feuer, Mitchell's assistant in the first-of-its-kind project.

THE \$1.3 BILLION of public investment which Blanchard announced Monday includes federal, state and local spending on public facilities, Feuer said in an interview.

The Southfield resident, who ran an unsuccessful campaign for Democratic state Senate nomination in 1982, hired on as Mitchell's assistant after working last summer as assistant director of the Michigan Job Corps under Doug Ross.

"We found each department had a capital budget. But they were always working in isolation," Feuer said.

"Look at a new auto plant. What it will need cuts into several departments of state government. When Transportation wants to build a highway to the plant, Natural Resources needs to know if a sewer will be needed, too, and

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— Gov. James Blanchard

local government needs to know when a school will be built," he said.

SO THE BLANCHARD team Monday distributed a 34-page book — largely written by Feuer — detailing the construction plans of nine departments of state government.

Halling it were members of the Michigan Infrastructure Coalition, meeting in a ballroom in the Westin

Hotel in Detroit. The group is composed of members of the Michigan Road Builders, the Building Trades, Michigan Manufacturers Association, State Chamber of Commerce and anyone else interested in construction as well as local government officials.

Blanchard, Mitchell and the audience had a lot of fun with the word "infrastructure" — the word economist and bureaucrats use to mean highways,

streets, sewers, water lines, steam lines, public transportation facilities and so on.

"Much of our infrastructure is out of sight. To much of the public, it is out of mind," quipped Blanchard.

"MICHIGAN HAS built one of the finest infrastructures in the world. But our modern marvels are wearing out, and wearing out badly. We have been reluctant or unable to repair them," the first-term governor said.

"How great are our infrastructure needs we don't really know," said Blanchard, adding his administration's goal, as part of revitalizing the recession-torn Michigan economy, would be to inventory the needs and find ways to meet them.

Blanchard didn't reveal his administration's plans for the proposed M-275 freeway extension in western Oakland County or what position it might take on a tax proposal for the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority.

Good suburban showing for Hart

Presidential hopeful Gary Hart won a split with front-runner Walter Mondale in the 18th Congressional District during last Saturday's Democratic caucuses, but Mondale was an easy winner in the 17th District.

Detailed caucus-by-caucus results were still unavailable from Democratic State Central Committee headquarters as of late Tuesday.

Statewide, Mondale, former vice president who was heavily backed by organized labor, received 49.21 percent of the vote and won 55 of the 93 Democratic National Convention delegates from Michigan. Hart, senator from Colorado, received 31.27 percent of the vote, enough for 32 delegates. The Rev. Jesse Jackson received 16.26 percent and eight delegates.

Raw vote totals statewide were: Mondale 66,555, Hart 42,293, Jackson 21,994, and a scattering of 558 for drop-out John Glenn of Ohio and George McGovern of South Dakota or to the "uncommitted" column.

In area results:
• 17th Congressional District — Mondale 5,355 votes, 50.03 percent, four delegates. Hart 3,710 votes, 34.66 percent, two delegates. Jackson 1,555 votes, 14.53 percent, no delegates. Scattered, 29.
The 17th District includes Southfield, Lathrup Village and southeastern Oakland County, northwest Detroit and the eastern suburbs of Wayne County.

• 18th Congressional District — Mondale 2,507 votes, 44.8 percent, two delegates. Hart 2,833 votes, 50.63 percent, two delegates. Jackson 192 votes, 3.43 percent, no delegates. Scattered, 38.

The 18th District includes Greater Rochester, the Birmingham-Bloomfield community, most of Troy, the West Bloomfield community and the Farmington community.

Delegates will be elected Saturday, April 14 at district conventions at sites to be announced. The at-large portion of the Michigan delegation will be picked April 28 by the Democratic State Central Committee.

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