

Chrysler 'real anchor' to Oakland tech park

Chrysler Corp. announced it is purchasing approximately 500 acres in the Oakland Technology Park for a new \$500 million technical center.

The site is in Auburn Hills, along I-75 and just north of M-59. It is adjacent to Oakland University and Oakland Community College's Auburn Hills campus. Chrysler envisions cooperation with the colleges on technical research.

"We are committed to technological leadership," said Chrysler President Harold K. Sperlich. "The testing and development facilities we plan to locate on the site over the next several years will assure that we stay out in front."

Chrysler last week got a favorable response from Oakland University's board of trustees in its effort to buy 39 acres of OU land for the project.

OAKLAND COUNTY Executive Daniel T. Murphy called the Chrysler project "a real anchor for the technology park. It's good for southeastern Michigan that Chrysler's staying here and building in this area."

While the county economic development office did work directly with Chrysler on the transaction, Murphy said the county's role was to be "a facilitator. We created the concept of a

technology park. We worked with the university to get developers.

"To me it's a sign that in Oakland County we're heading in the right direction. We have an atmosphere that entices business to come to our county."

Sperlich said, "Engineering and manufacturing requirements for additional technical and laboratory areas exceed the space available at Highland Park, where Chrysler's corporate headquarters will remain."

"The land purchase will allow for the expansion of our technical capabilities

over the next several years," he added.

"One important addition planned for the site is a track, which will give Chrysler engineers immediate access to drive-testing." Chrysler's major proving grounds are near Chelsea.

Sperlich said the Oakland County location was chosen because of the large amount of land available in one contiguous parcel, and its proximity to major highways and educational institutions. He said the Chrysler operation "will be a major additional high-tech facility for the greater Detroit area."

THE OU BOARD authorized two board members to join President Jo-

seph Champagne in negotiating the sale of 39 acres to Chrysler. The board Wednesday endorsed and authorized the sale in a 6-0 vote.

The OU land is southwest of Squirrel and University roads and south of the Auburn Hills city offices.

Trustees named to the negotiating team were David Handelman of Bloomfield Hills, and Wallace Riley, Grosse Pointe Farms. The OU board made the sale conditional on a price of at least \$12,000.

Champagne said Oakland Technology Park will provide research, student internships, educational and employment opportunities to both the faculty and student body.

He also said the Chrysler project will benefit the university by giving it access to advanced technical equipment and research projects.

CHAMPAGNE called the OU portion of the land "unbuildable." He noted the marshy topography of the site and its susceptibility to flooding.

He said the university had no critical or long-range need for the property. It is not included for development in OU's master plan.

He said that since the Chrysler plans to develop the site are conditional on conveyance of the OU property, the university believes it's in the best interest of OU and the state to enter negotiations.

Blues boss likes state PPA law

Prudent Purchaser Arrangements (PPAs), authorized last week by the Michigan Legislature, will balance Americans' desire to choose their doctor with economic reality, according to John C. McCabe, president of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan (BCBSM).

"Patients, too, for the first time must think about costs and make choices based on economics," McCabe said in a speech. "They still have access to the best health care, but no longer totally at will. They must be selective or bear an economic penalty."

Speaking before the mid-Michigan chapter of the Industrial Relations Research Association, McCabe noted that

PPAs are a key element in the "informed choice plan" contained in the new General Motors-United Auto Workers agreement.

McCabe CALLED that agreement "historic" because both groups recognize that:

- Health care costs are high and rising fast.
- Abuses exist and can be curbed.
- By eliminating waste, abuse and overuse, quality care can be maintained at less cost.

"The previous 40 years were characterized by expanding health care benefits, growth of hospitals, and more and more doctors of every specialty, and

spending that now absorbs a sizable fraction of the nation's wealth," McCabe said.

"We witnessed titanic achievements, but we also became aware of great waste which we have now seen catch up with us. Employers — the major payers of our health bills — have called a halt."

"GM AND the UAW agreed that by eliminating waste, abuse and overuse, quality care can be maintained at a lower cost, but that can only happen if there is a change in the life-long habits of doctors, hospitals and patients."

McCabe said that the agreement enforces change.

"Doctors and hospitals must share the economic responsibility for their decisions with the employer and the insurer. Preselection is one mechanism for doing this. The PPA is another."

"I see these programs as a step up to responsibility, to a new maturity. A few years ago, we learned to conserve oil, and that saved us from a crisis worse than the one we had."

"Now we're doing the same in health care, and it could save us from the 'British solution' — rationing health care by denying it selectively to people on the basis of age or prognosis."

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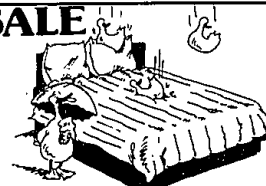
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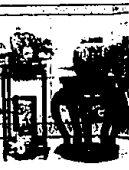
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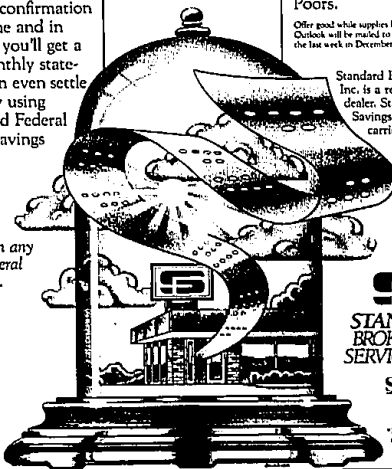
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