

Opinion

Steve Barnaby editor/477-5450

33203 Grand River Ave./Farmington, MI 48024

Phillip Power chairman of the board
Richard Agnien president
Dick Isaham general manager
Dan Chovanec advertising director
Nick Sharkey managing editor
Fred Wright circulation director

O4/E Thursday, January 3, 1985

Our economy County execs' message: 'Open for business'

TODAY'S EDITORIAL page is devoted in large part to county government's role in economic redevelopment and a role that deserves everyone's recognition.

We invited Executives Daniel T. Murphy of Oakland County and William Lucas of Wayne County to write about their efforts to keep current business and attract new investment. Not surprisingly, these two very different men with different backgrounds write about the same problems, the same solutions, even the same events. It's heartwarming.

Their guest columns contain several of the same messages.

NO LONGER is county government the musty preserve of the courthouse and its recordkeepers. Once considered a throwback to the medieval era, counties are emerging as a positive force for change.

In part, this is due to the wisdom of voters in adopting a county executive form of government (Oakland) and a home-rule charter with executive (Wayne). Not all the good that has happened is due entirely to the executives, despite anyone's boasts. But there can be no question that an executive can lead a county in setting goals and focusing resources to achieve them.

Business is welcome in metropolitan Detroit, they emphasize. No longer does the "hate-the-boss" mentality of the 1930s set the tone of local government. No longer is "corporation" a dirty word.

Government and most citizens realize that federal government stimulation of consumer demand is insufficient to stir a region from the economic doldrums. Supply-side economics — the positive wooing of investors — is official policy today in Oakland and Wayne counties.

BOTH EXECUTIVES recognize that we are in an interstate and even international marketplace. Our region is being

challenged by other states and other nations. We are in the Big Time.

Murphy and Lucas have attitudes of respect and cooperation toward neighboring entities. Hurrah and three cheers for that! They tell us in so many words that county A isn't out to steal business from county B or community C. It's all right, they tell us, if a neighboring entity gets a new industrial plant and our entity doesn't — just as long as the plant doesn't land in another state.

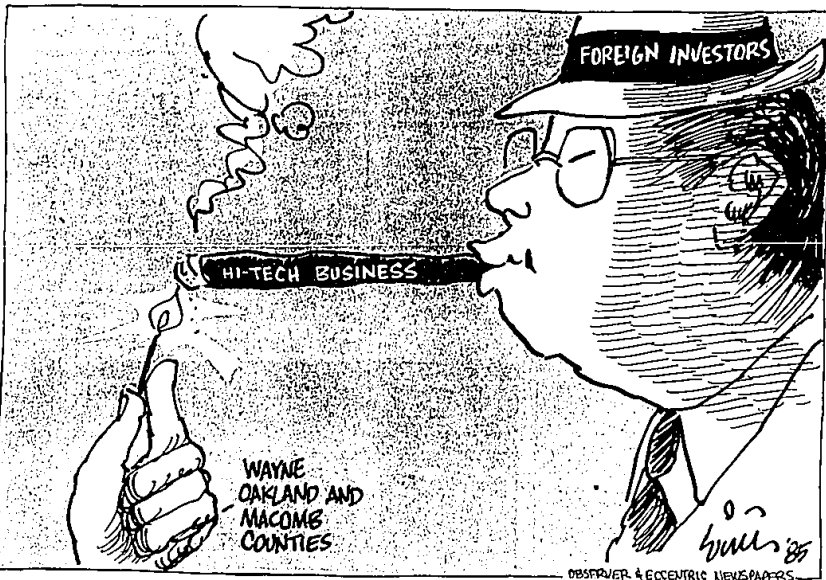
Without hurting anyone's feelings, they imply that local government doesn't always have the resources or expertise to go it alone in economic development. So they stress that county government is willing to lend a hand to local efforts. There are some programs to teach business people how to be better managers and financiers. There are other programs to teach potential workers new skills.

IT IS SAFE. At last, to declare this region's old anti-business climate dead.

Our region learned the harsh lessons that we could not remain prosperous through 1) dependence on heavy manufacturing and 2) constant hassling of manufacturers with union demands, governmental regulations and just plain disrespect. Indeed, those attitudes helped throw us into a profound economic decline. We have learned from adversity to appreciate all honest paychecks.

By becoming a region that could host a national political convention, a Super Bowl and a World Series, we absorbed the attitude that mass hospitality, by every man, woman and child, can bring long-term benefits.

County governments are capitalizing on their new executive tools and the public's new attitudes to resurrect our economy. It's good news, and we delight in reporting it.



What helps one helps all

By Daniel T. Murphy
Oakland County executive

WE IN Oakland County are being recognized in international markets as a boom area, a place which boasts a high quality of life and offers a business climate attractive to highly technical industries.

Certainly we struggle with the image problem of our central city. But more and more during my travels and from listening to members of my Economic Development Group staff, I learn that we can offer what the people want.



Although our Economic Development Group staff has been in place only five short months, they have made tremendous strides. Example: the Oakland Technology Park, the group's first major project.

In a close working relationship with Oakland University, Oakland Community College, local officials and private developers, we've been able to designate a highly desirable area with close proximity to freeways that is perfect for a campus-like high-tech office center. So far:

- Comerica has built a beautiful building.
- Electronics Data Systems (EDS) is building.

- Chrysler Corp. plans to move thousands of employees to a new tech center.
- Schostack Brothers is building a large office center.
- GMF Robotics has selected a site.

In Southfield, meanwhile, Nipponenso Co., a leading Japanese automotive component manufacturer, plans to build a \$25 million research and development center. In Troy, Ameritech Publishing has located its 200-person headquarters. Hundreds of spinoff jobs will be created because of this influx.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT must extend beyond Oakland County boundaries into our neighbors' yards. What is good for southeast Michigan is good for Oakland.

We do not compete with our neighbors, but rather work together so these firms stay in the area and don't move to other states.

About six months ago, I began having regular meetings with Wayne County Executive William Lucas and Chairman Patrick Johnson of the Macomb County Board of Commissioners. We discussed issues which affect all of us.

Recently we sponsored a dinner honoring foreign firms which do business in metropolitan Detroit. Soon Johnson will host a seminar to help small- and medium-sized local businesses develop export markets.

BUT OUR FOCUS is on firms already located here. About 75 percent of our efforts are concentrated on retaining local firms and helping them expand; 25 percent of our efforts are to attract new business.

During the past five months, 2,600 jobs were created as a result of our economic development efforts.

Many of our businesses are being wooed by other states. We want to identify those industries and concentrate on getting them to stay and expand here.

Our new business development representative can work in the field to provide business and financial assistance to local firms. We also hired an entrepreneurial specialist to assist start-up and growth-stage ventures.

Our Economic Development Group is off and running.

But every day I hear of another person who doesn't know we exist or what we do.

If you need help with your business or just want to know about the future development potential of a certain area, give the Economic Development Group a call. Our assistance extends to all parts of the county, from helping people revamp old, outdated factories or stores to assisting them in getting a sewer line in a rural area.

We want your business.

This newspaper plays a vital role

I THINK the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers play an important role in your life, and I want to tell you why.

You wake in and week out, you can expect — and you have a right to expect — that this newspaper will tell you about things going on right around you.

Our credibility is high, mostly because the events and people we write about are events and people with which, and with whom, you are likely to have personal involvement and contact.

The places we write about you likely have visited, seen or passed by.

Our reporters, editors and photographers spend their workday week crisscrossing your community. You may be involved in one, two or several activities. Our staff must be aware of and understand all facets of your community. There is no pretense to rival the expertise anyone may develop in his special field of interest, but our staffers do a pretty good job of relaying that expertise to you.

WE DON'T shy away from controversy nor do we seek it.

This newspaper is not filled with grief. That is not because grief is nowhere to be found in your community. Rather, it's because the overwhelming percentage of happenings are good and decent in character.

It is not our business to bring you regular accounts of tragedy and mayhem from distant corners of the world. We don't disparage those who do, but that isn't our business.

Our business is to tell you what's happening where you live. Sometimes we do it well. Sometimes we're disappointed because we'd like to have done it better.

YOUR INTERESTS fall into several general categories.

You are in many respects a socio-political being. You have a need for information that feeds your needs as citizen and social being. You want to know about the government you pay to provide basic services. You care about your safety, and you want to know if danger is present. If it is, you want to know what you can do about it.

This newspaper is your most authoritative source for such information. Your in-



John Reddy

terest in this information may not be keen week in and week out. But you know it is reassuring that our staffers are present, delving into your community, keeping themselves up to date on what's going on.

You also are a consumer of goods and services. And you want lots of information in this area.

You are willing to travel some distance in a comfortable car to eat and entertain yourself. So while you are interested in reports of potential danger only if it is close and imminent, and of government if it is likely to affect you, you are willing for us to include news about entertainment which may be some distance from your home.

So we mix "local-local" with "extended local." By and large, you seem to like it.

THIS INFORMATION comes in two forms: One is news or editorial; the other is paid advertising.

If we do a good job serving your needs editorially, then operators of businesses and services are willing to pay for an opportunity to reach you and serve you.

This is how we earn most of our revenue. In a real sense, our advertising patrons — which includes you, when you use our powerful classified advertisements — make it possible for us to serve you as a resident.

I think that is important. I think you should, too. You get many advertising messages in your house. But only those you get in this newspaper make it possible for us to serve you in a way no other medium does, week in and week out.

We are distinctive, and I want you to appreciate that. Indeed, we are the most comprehensive and authoritative source of local information you have.

Reddy is editorial vice president of Suburban Communications Corp.

Target: foreign investors

By William Lucas
Wayne County executive

I PREDICT solid economic progress for Wayne County and the entire metro Detroit area in 1985 due to a number of aggressive steps being taken to stimulate economic development.

Wayne County has very attractive resources, with great potential for economic growth, not the least of which is a highly skilled and motivated work force.

I have been with Oakland County Executive Daniel Murphy, Detroit Mayor Coleman Young and Macomb County Board Chairman Patrick Johnson to develop, among other things, a logical and sensible economic development plan for the entire region.

One major goal is to attract investment from overseas, particularly the Far East. Such investments stimulate our economy and produce jobs. On our next foreign trade mission to Japan, we will be calling directly on Mazda suppliers, encouraging them to locate subsidiaries in our area, nearer to the new Flat Rock Mazda plant.



development initiatives include applying for a community growth alliance (CGA) designation for all of Wayne County exclusive of Detroit and the Downriver communities.

Three CGA components are: 1) area development, including financial packaging, business attraction and retention; 2) a Small Business Assistance Center, with direct management assistance; and 3) a government procurement assistance program.

Wayne County's Overall Economic Development Plan (OEDP) flourished until an executive branch was established in 1983, when the county's proposal finally qualified. Monitored by a 35-member board, 1985's OEDP will be updated to assure the procurement of federal funds.

Wayne County's Economic Development Corporation (EDC) will continue to increase its range of financial and technical assistance programs to businesses seeking to expand, relocate or remain here. Committed to working more cooperatively with local officials and county government, EDC will continue and expand its most successful initiatives.

The EDC's auto suppliers assistance program aims at assisting area auto suppliers adjust to changes in the auto industry. I am particularly interested in achieving a smooth Mazda introduction;

thus, Mazda suppliers will be specifically targeted.

Crime prevention workshops for small businesses, for which we have had many requests, are also in the planning stages.

Our Private Industry Council (PIC) continues to develop innovative training programs for unemployed workers, utilizing cable television as an information source. PIC relies heavily on business input in these targeted training programs.

FINALLY, the county is in the process of applying for the federal Economic Development Administration's revolving loan fund for small businesses.

We have already received preliminary approval for \$600,000 to \$1 million worth of assistance. The local match for this loan fund comes from Community Development Block Grant money.

We will also continue our important endeavor to advertise this region's attractiveness to foreign investors and welcome the interest they have shown. Last November the three county leaders hosted an appreciation dinner for foreign investors — 200 firms in the tri-county area.

With careful planning, an eye to diversification, realistic governmental assistance and positive relations to foreign and domestic investors, I look forward to great economic progress and prosperity in 1985.

BEYOND THAT, our major economic