

Job boom creates need for roads — Grubba

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Road needs

Here is the breakdown of the Oakland County Road Commission staff's "shopping list" of road improvements in the next 10 years:

Project	Millions
Add Lanes	\$597
Widen bridges	\$22.1
Intersections	\$18
Relocate roads	\$29
Pave gravel roads	\$81
Total	\$740

tion are: Haggerty Road (route of the long-delayed M-275 freeway), Northwestern Highway (never extended in West Bloomfield), Big Beaver Road, Woodward, Twelve Mile and I-75.

POSSIBLE TAX sources for local units, voters and state legislators to mull over, he said, are these:

- Vehicle fuel tax — This is state-collected now, and inadequate. A countywide fuel tax would require permissive state legislation and voter approval. Every penny per gallon would yield \$6 million. Florida allows counties to levy such a tax up to five cents a gallon.

In preliminary discussions, Grubba said, local officials have found this most palatable.

- Sales tax on automotive goods countywide — This also would require state legislation. A one percent rate

would yield \$12 million.

- Countywide property tax — Two mills would yield \$30 million, with half going to the county road commission, half to the cities and villages. This could be put on the ballot in either the August primary or November general election and collected next December.

- Local TIFAs, or tax increment finance authorities, with revenues dedicated to county roads. There was no estimate of how much could be generated. Southfield, Auburn Hills and Madison Heights have such districts.

When local government creates a TIFA district, all property tax revenues on new development are "captured" by the district for development purposes. None of the new revenue can go to schools, county or community college units.

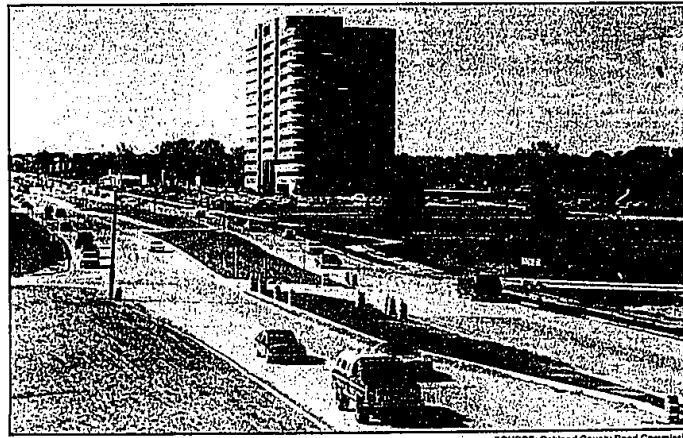
- Special assessments, matching programs or some other cooperative arrangement.

FRED HOUGHTEN, Road Commission member, said that body looks to county and local officials for help in going to voters and the Legislature.

"Our hands are pretty well tied as far as revenue is concerned," said Houghten. The OCRC is a semi-autonomous group appointed by the elected County Board of Commissioners for six-year terms.

Its biggest sources of funds are a formula share of state gasoline and weight taxes, followed by federal grants. It lacks any taxing authority of its own.

OCRC has jurisdiction over 2,300 miles of roads — including 814 primary ("mile") roads, 927 miles of township subdivision roads and 814 miles of local non-subdivision roads.



Big Beaver Road in Troy, with Volkswagen of America's headquarters in the background, is in the middle of the county's economic boom.

GRUBBA SAID he and the OCRC staff were surprised when local officials told them the office and industrial growth they were anticipating. Examples:

Southfield has 17 million square feet of office development, has six million square feet more under review and projects 30,000 new jobs by 1995.

Troy has two million square feet of office development now or under con-

struction, has another 7.5 million square feet proposed or approved and anticipates 55,000 new jobs by 1995. The 12 Mile Road corridor — stretching across Farmington Hills and Novi — anticipates 30,000 new jobs in the next decade.

Auburn Hills sees 60,000 new jobs coming as the Oakland Technology Park is developed.

The cities of Wixom, Rochester and

Bloomfield Hills anticipate 50 percent population increases in the next decade. So do the townships of Brandon, Orion and Springfield, Grubba said.

The county itself, with a population of just over one million, is expecting 250,000 more residents in the next decade, he said. That would give Oakland County more residents and jobs than Detroit.

Global outlook's working well for Borg-Warner

Just over a year ago, Borg-Warner decided to bring its automotive-related companies together into one unified group — Borg-Warner Automotive Inc., headquartered in Troy.

This week Borg-Warner Automotive recorded sales of \$1.1 billion, according to Richard C. Curran, chairman and CEO, and Richard J. Doyle, president.

Frederick E. Lueck, vice president for marketing and advanced engineering, explained that the unification move was designed to mesh with the changes taking place in the structure of the automotive products marketplace.

"End-product manufacturers in almost every industrial and industrial-

izing country are becoming global in their outlook. It was necessary for us to more fully adopt a global strategy, too," said Curran.

"Actually," Doyle added, "Borg-Warner has been active overseas for more than 25 years. And through our subsidiaries and joint venture partners, we are well established in three major automotive industry centers of the world — North America, Europe and Japan."

Lueck said Borg-Warner Automotive is a full-service supplier with special emphasis on product engineering, development, prototyping and manufacturing.

THESE RESULTS come close to matching the 1984 total sales record achieved by the then-combined automotive-related companies in the Borg-Warner family, according to Doyle.

"This follows the very significant trend of recent years, i.e., the merging of the two key functions of product engineering and manufacturing engineering," Doyle said.

Borg-Warner Automotive plants are making major improvements — converting to just-in-time inventory pro-

dures, installing electronic communications, making extensive use of computer-aided engineering and computer-aided manufacturing technologies, and employing statistical process control and employee involvement groups to ensure high-efficiency operations.

Lueck said that many Borg-Warner domestic units have become certified suppliers. "Customers have determined that we meet their specifications, so consistently that they can accept our own quality certification and do not

have to inspect Borg-Warner Automotive parts when they arrive at the assembly plants."

Troy is headquarters for six Borg-Warner Automotive operating units — Transmission and Engine Components, Transmission Systems, Control Systems, Clutch Systems, Climate Control Systems and Off-Highway Systems — with a new product line, turbochargers, coming on strong via Warner-Ishii, a joint venture corporation.

LUECK SAID Borg-Warner Auto-

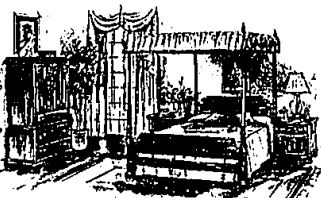
mobile has a strong commitment to research and development as well as capital improvements.

"Over the past five years, the company has pumped more than \$120 million into research and development and in excess of \$500 million into capital improvements. Our ongoing programs call for continuing increases in capital and research and development expenditures over the next five years," he said.

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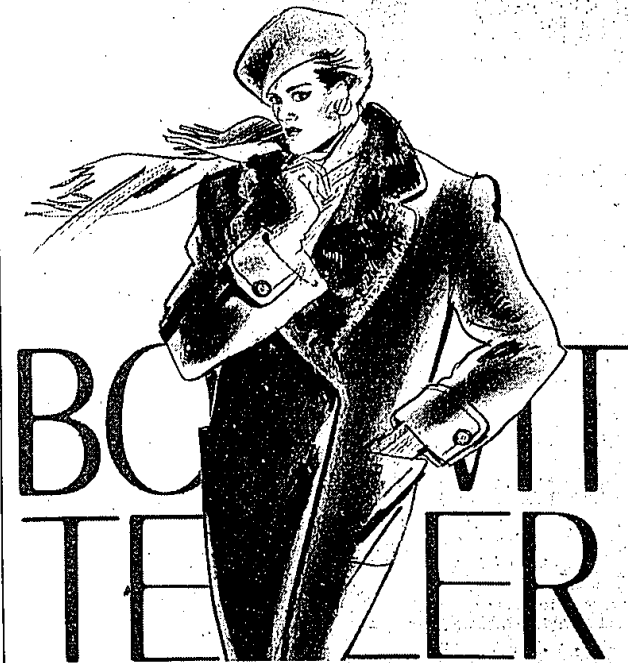
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