

'Urban sprawl' talk angers Grubba

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engineering for road development into the park.

Grubba said that the county's financial dilemma regarding roads can be traced to several sources. They include:

- Despite increased gas taxes the last 10 years (from 11 cents to 15 cents), commission revenues from taxes have fallen by half because of drastically improved gas mileage in recent-model cars.
- Developers have created bur-

dens on the road system in Oakland County and vastly greater traffic flows, but the road commission has no power to levy fees from them.

• Local and state government officials have been caught unawares by the latest migration and expansion of business to the suburbs.

Grubba said there are several options for increasing road money, some of them unpopular with taxpayers. They include:

- Increases in state gasoline tax.
- State approval to allow local

governments the option of taxing gas (Florida and Indiana have such local tax options).

- Increased property taxes.
- Higher vehicle sales taxes (California has chosen this option).

Impact fees charged to developers (Sen. Richard Fessler has introduced bills allowing for such fees, according to Grubba).

"Our state, county and cities are making an aggressive effort to bring companies here. And it's worked. Drive around. There are new build-

'I think the city of Detroit is pursuing policies that while aiming at the success and betterment of the city, are at the expense of other areas of the region.'

— John Grubba,
road director

ing all over," said Grubba. "But the development has been on a mature road system that was adequate 15

years ago. It's inadequate today and it's going to be catastrophic in 15 years if nothing is done."

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No road funds for park

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neering on the Tech Park project, though he said state engineers have been doing advanced work on state trunk lines in the area.

Agon and Adams roads are county roads.

A ROCHESTER HILLS resident at the meeting expressed a commonly held opinion in the city that plans were well under way to widen many of the city's roads to five lanes from two. Opposition to road widening manifested itself at a meeting Aug. 6 of the Rochester Hills City Council, when a petition containing the names of 4,100 opposing road widening was presented.

Rochester Hills Mayor Billie Ireland met with Grubba Monday morning to state her opposition to

county and state officials steamrolling city officials and residents.

The confusion over the road widening grew out of a report issued by the county detailing road needs over the next 10 years. Grubba said the report was written following a meeting between road commission representatives and representatives of all Oakland County municipalities last fall.

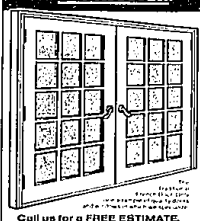
"That report is not a plan, but a compilation of what local officials want," said Grubba.

That report showed many of the

roads in the county being widened to five lanes, including main roads in Rochester Hills. But Grubba said Monday that the five-lane figure was used merely for the purpose of rough construction estimates.

Grubba said that according to rumors, the state Department of Commerce has agreed to begin funding road improvement in the Tech Park area with \$21 million. But he said those are so far just rumors and that the commission will not begin even preliminary work until they have things in writing from the state.

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