

# Murphy: Help for 'weak links,' roads

By Tim Richard  
staff writer

An "optimistic and excited" Daniel T. Murphy is calling for greater economic attention to Oakland County's weak links and better roads for all.

In his 13th state of the county address, the county executive told the Board of Commissioners Oakland's mission should be to "lead southeast Michigan into the 21st century."

"Recognizing that a strong chain is only as good as its weakest link, I have directed our Economic Development Group to focus more strongly on business and job development in the Pontiac area and in many of our cities in the southeast corner along I-696, where job growth is below the county average," the Republican executive said in his prepared text.

MURPHY WAS making good on a December promise to take care of left-behind older cities. At that time, the board came close to cutting much of the executive's economic development group staff.

"We will increase our efforts to promote, facilitate, and support small business development as well as do more counseling to companies



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— Daniel T. Murphy  
Oakland County executive

regarding exporting products and services, both nationally and internationally," Murphy added.

He pledged to join the multifaceted effort to improve roads in the county, particularly those carrying traffic to economic hot spots, but offered no specific revenue-raising suggestions.

"In 1987 we must develop new road programs to relieve traffic congestion. Companies will not move

to, or stay in, areas where the roads are congested," he said. "I intend to work closely with the new transportation committee of the Board of Commissioners to determine how these needed road improvements can be financed."

HE SAID he would continue ef-

forts to reorganize the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority to get more Oakland input and services.

"I still wholeheartedly believe that SEMTA is an agency which needs to be restructured in order to provide adequate service to Oakland County residents. SEMTA spends millions of dollars a year for a handful of routes in one portion of the county."

"We have to come to grips with the transportation problem soon. We are still working with the legislature to have a bill reintroduced which will restructure SEMTA."

Murphy indirectly twitted Democratic Gov. James J. Blanchard by noting that Oakland's economic growth rate has exceeded the state's. "The number of private sector jobs grew about 5.4 percent for a net gain of 24,500 in 1986" compared to the state's growth rate of 2.3 percent. "That's pretty good for a county with 11 percent of the state's population."

MURPHY SAID the Oakland

Technology Park, in Auburn Hills and Rochester Hills, would continue to be a major source of economic growth.

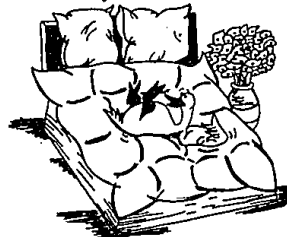
"Since 1983, we have carried out an economic development program based on building on our strengths. We have succeeded."

"Today, 2 1/2 years since the inception of the Oakland Tech Park, it has

emerged as one of the most important technology parks in the United States. It means about 52,000 jobs in Oakland County by 1995.

"Our 1983 goal was ambitious: 89,000 new jobs by 1990. There are 130,000 more private sector jobs today than at the beginning of 1983. This is a 37 percent increase."

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