

Road panel drawing up \$5 million list

The Oakland County Road Commission is drawing up a \$5 million list of traffic improvements with its partners — 61 local governments and the County Board of Commissioners.

Source of the money is part of the county's general fund surplus, which commissioners earmarked for road work, overriding the veto of County Executive Daniel T. Murphy.

"We will begin conferring with officials of the various cities, villages and townships immediately to put together a list of projects for consideration by the transportation committee of the county board," said John L. Grubba, managing director of the road agency.

THE COUNTY board allocated \$3.5 million to municipalities (cities

- and villages) and \$1.5 million to townships.
- Top allocation will be \$508,000 to the city of Troy, followed by \$502,000 to the city of Southfield.
- Other allocations, by size, in the Observer & Eccentric area:
- Farmington Hills — \$364,000.
 - Bloomfield Township — \$355,000.
 - West Bloomfield Township — \$292,000.
 - Rochester Hills — \$234,000.
 - Birmingham — \$159,000.
 - Farmington — \$153,000.
 - Bloomfield Hills — \$80,000.
 - Beverly Hills — \$66,000.
 - Rochester — \$39,000.
 - Bingham Farms — \$25,000.
 - Franklin — \$24,000.
 - Lathrup Village — \$24,000.
 - Orchard Lake — \$24,000.

What can road money buy? A right-turn lane runs \$17,000 and a passing lane at an intersection \$28,000. Paving a gravel road costs more than \$600,000 a mile.

- Southfield Township — \$1,134.
- FUNDING IS pro-rated on the basis of each community's valuation for property taxes. Municipalities may choose to take the money and use it on their own street systems rather than on county roads within their borders. Townships lack jurisdiction over streets.

"They'll be mostly small projects," said Dennis Pajot, information officer for the Road Commission.

Typical costs: adding a right-turn lane runs \$17,000, building passing lane at an intersection runs \$28,000, and paving a gravel road costs more than \$600,000 a mile.

COUNTY ROAD agencies normally get their funds from a 39 percent share of state gasoline and weight taxes, distributed from Lansing by a complicated formula. County boards of commissioners normally have nothing to say about how that money is spent.

In Oakland's case, however, county commissioners are pumping general fund money into roads. The money will be administered in a co-

operative arrangement virtually unprecedented in Michigan.

There had been controversy.

Murphy vetoed the measure on the ground it violated state law prohibiting use of property tax revenue for roads. The board reasoned that the measure was legal, however, because property taxes weren't earmarked for roads and are mixed with other revenues in the general fund.

Some commissioners called the \$5 million merely a one-time drop in the bucket in a county where local units have identified \$740 million worth of road needs in the 1986-96 decade. But a two-thirds majority agreed that any drop was better than no drop.

Electrical muscle stimulators don't work

ROBERT M. Hutchins, the former chancellor of the University of Chicago once said: "Whenever I feel like exercise, I lie down until the feeling goes away."

Promoters of some electrical muscle stimulators would have us believe that such behavior can actually result in a workout.

Recent advertisements in several supermarket tabloids have touted variations of electrical muscle stimulators as revolutionary new effortless exercise devices for weight loss, body shaping and toning, spot reducing, and the removal of cellulite (depicted fat that often appears on the hips and buttocks).

Such units appeal to many

"armchair exercisers" and are widely available for home use through mail-order catalogs.

LIKE MANY quick gimmicks, electrical muscle stimulators (EMS) have a legitimate legacy because they are often used by physical therapists in the treatment of certain medical conditions. Indeed, EMS de-

vices may be used to decrease pain and swelling, to enhance strength among people with abnormally weak muscles, to increase healing, and to relax spasms.

These purposes are a far cry from the sensational promises found in some advertisements for EMS units.

For example, claims that "microelectroimpulses" from these devices provide the same figure-toning results as "3,000 sit-ups without moving an inch" or "10 miles of jogging while lying flat on your back" are without any scientific basis.

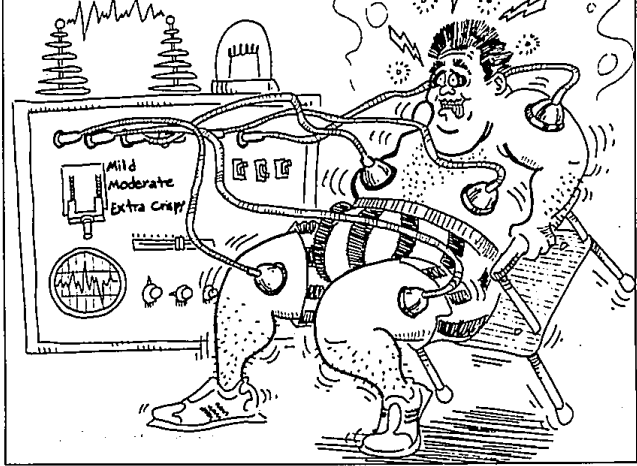
The only reduction emanating from EMS devices occurs in the subscribers' billfold.

Grubba calls it Operation COBRA — for "Cooperative Boards Road Action."

Projects will include road widening, paving, repaving, reconstruction, restoration, safety improvements, drainage improvements, bridge and culvert replacements, traffic control devices and guard rails.

Robert Hutchins' remedy for the urge to exercise has not been substantiated by the use of electrical muscle stimulators. Although the advertisements may offer you a new shape almost overnight, such devices inevitably fail to deliver what they promise, or deliver results that you would rather do without.

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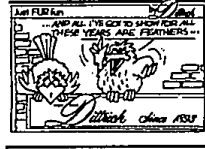


Electrical muscle stimulators not only don't work, but there have been numerous reports of electrical shocks and burns.

THE FOOD and Drug Administration, the federal agency which oversees the safety and effectiveness of such devices, considers muscle stimulators promoted or used for "body shaping and contouring" to be misbranded and fraudulent.

Accordingly, FDA has banned the sale and distribution of these devices among numerous manufacturers who fail to substantiate their advertisements.

In addition to the deceptive claims that are often made by the manufacturers, the devices can also be dangerous if improperly used. There



fitness
Barry Franklin

have been numerous reports of electrical shocks and burns.

Moreover, electrical muscle stimulators can be especially hazardous to pregnant women, cardiac patients, particularly those with pacemakers, and people who have epilepsy.

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