

\$204 million road plan proposed for county

By Pat Murphy
Staff Writer

No tax increase will be necessary to pay for \$204 million in improved roads in the county, claimed the managing director of the county road commission.

The plan calls for the county to increase its annual contribution to the Oakland County Road Commission from \$1 million to \$10 million.

The county's contribution would be used to get \$104 million from the road commission and other sources, said John L. Grubba, the county's managing director.

The \$204 million would be used for road improvements from 1991 to 2000, said Grubba.

"It's a well conceived plan that addresses road problems throughout the county," said Roy Stewald, R-Rochester, chairman of the county board. "But right now we (county commissioners) are busy with the budget."

"I think we can begin taking a close look at the proposal after the first of the year," other commissioners were less optimistic.

"GETTING THAT much money out of our current operating funds would be pretty difficult," said commissioner Nancy McConnell, R-Bloomfield Hills, vice chairwoman of the board.

The road commission did a fine job outlining the problem, said com-

missioner Lawrence R. Pernick, D-Southfield. "But it didn't come up with any new sources of funding. The money is not in the county budget."

"If the road commission is convinced the public wants better roads, they're going to have to come with new money."

The core of Oakland's traffic problem, said Grubba, is rapid economic and residential growth. Oakland leads the state in job growth and construction activities.

The solution, Grubba said, has these financial components:

- Continuing the existing partnership between local government, county commissioners and the road commission. Each of the three parties contributes \$1 million annually.
- Getting a \$4 million appropriation from the county to be distributed to municipalities.
- Beginning a county-wide road improvement program financed by a \$2.8 million annual appropriation from the county.

The county's appropriation would help attract matching contributions from federal, state and local sources and would parlay into \$84 million, Grubba said.

While the road commission plan calls for new construction and improving intersections, it also calls for more high tech traffic management, Grubba said.

"THE ROAD COMMISSION will never be able to do all the road widening needed in Oakland County, particularly in the more mature and populous communities in the south-east."

Long-range plans include a \$2 million computerized traffic signal network to better manage traffic flow, he said.

The road commission plan includes resurfacing all of the 71 miles of road classified as "poor or very poor," Grubba said.

The plan is the first road improvement proposal offered by the road commission in almost two years. In 1988 it offered an ambitious long-range program that involved the county getting a higher percentage of current gasoline taxes.

The key component of the plan was a \$25 per vehicle registration fee that was rejected in last November's elections.

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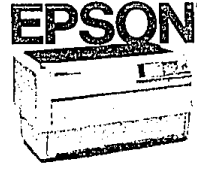
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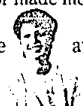



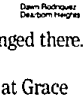




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