

# Haggerty Connector construction a year away

The new target date for taking bids on the first construction contract for the proposed Haggerty Road Connector is October 1990. The construction timetable follows:

- 1st phase, interchange area short of 12 Mile (1990).
- 2nd phase, connection to 12 Mile (1991).
- 3rd phase, 12 Mile north to Pontiac Trail (1992).

• completion, (1994-95).

The Michigan Department of Transportation announced Monday its recommendation for the alignment of the proposed Haggerty Road Connector to link I-96 in Novi with Haggerty Road.

Alternate 4A will be the location of a six- to eight-lane, controlled access boulevard running west of Haggerty.

The five-mile-long connector will provide new access to the I-96/I-696/I-275/M-102 freeway system and relieve congestion on the local road network. It will redirect local traffic patterns to provide a shorter, more direct connection to the freeway system, said Henry Lototszinski, MDOT planner.

Selection of the alignment follows three years of studies, consultations

and meetings with community and business leaders, residents and others.

The next step is preparation of the final environmental impact statement, to be submitted to the Federal Highway Administration for approval by next summer.

THE CONNECTOR will begin at

I-96, midway between Haggerty and Meadowbrook, and go north to Pontiac Trail. Access to the new highway will be at 12 Mile, 13 Mile, 14 Mile, 15 Mile and Pontiac Trail.

All intersections, except 12 Mile, will be "at-grade" with traffic control signals. The 12 Mile intersection, due to its proximity to the freeway system, will be a freeway-type interchange to provide safe, efficient

movement along the congested 12 Mile corridor, Lototszinski said.

MDOT had planned to begin construction on the interchange area later this year, assuming necessary federal approvals were granted. But due to concerns of the reviewing resource agencies, the time needed to complete the final environmental impact statement has been extended.

# MDOT endorses boulevard to link up with Haggerty

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ted for approval to the Federal Highway Administration.

MDOT spokesman Hank Lototszinski said MDOT hopes to receive federal approval by next October, at which time initial bids could be taken. Lototszinski said the five-mile boulevard could be completed in late 1994 or early 1995.

Lototszinski said the so-called Haggerty Road connector would provide new access to the freeway system that includes the interchanges of I-96, I-696, I-275 and Eight Mile Road. He also said it would ease traffic congestion on roads, such as Haggerty, that have become swamped by motorists due to new residential and commercial development in Oakland County.

The boulevard would be built about a half-mile west of Haggerty.

Some officials, such as Walled Lake school board members, have formally endorsed a proposal to extend the new boulevard north from Pontiac Trail to M-59. But MDOT officials have stressed that decisions about extending the boulevard will be made independently and only after additional studies are completed in coming years.

MCEWEN SAID some citizens and

government officials appear to believe that "it is a foregone conclusion" that the boulevard eventually would be extended.

"We're against that, too," McEwen said.

Meanwhile, McEwen accused some governments, such as West Bloomfield township, of looking at their own needs without considering what is best for the entire Metro Detroit area.

"Every time you add a few miles

to it (the freeway system), you diminish the possibility of ever getting any kind of mass transportation system," she said. "And that's what we need."

McEwen said she is "really disappointed" that the West Bloomfield township board supported a new boulevard.

However, project manager Mike Flajole has said that 90 percent of all comments made by area citizens at public hearings pointed to a new

boulevard as the most feasible way to address traffic problems.

OFFICIALS HAD considered other options, such as widening the existing Haggerty Road. But Flajole said it could cost as much as \$121 million to widen Haggerty, compared to an estimated \$75 million for the new boulevard.

Flajole has said the federal government is expected to pay for 76 percent of the project, with state officials picking up the remaining tab.

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