

# Oakland to battle gridlock with high tech

By Pat Murphy  
staff writer

Oakland County officials want to reduce traffic problems by making signal lights smart enough to divert motorists away from congestion.

County commissioners have tentatively agreed to provide \$2 million so Oakland can qualify for \$70 million in federal money for a high-tech

traffic pilot program.

The project is designed to computerize and coordinate more than 100 traffic signals in the City of Troy within two years and subsequently within a 68-square-mile area in five years.

The expanded area, which includes 27 communities, is bounded by Orchard Lake Road on the west, Dequindre on the east, South Boulevard on the north and Eight Mile

Road on the south.

Troy was selected as the test area because it contains a significant portion of I-75 as well as other state and county highways, said John L. Grubba, managing director of the Road Commission for Oakland County.

Grubba outlined the high-tech program Thursday during a meeting of the Finance Committee of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.

GRUBBA also asked for the \$2 million as "seed money." The committee authorized the \$2 million, but the full board must vote on it, probably next month.

"We have identified a very exciting, workable traffic flow control system that already has a high degree of demonstrated success in Europe" and other places, said Grubba.

Grubba said the proposed system involves putting traffic sensors and automated television cameras at various intersections to monitor the flow of traffic.

By detecting which highways are clogged and diverting motorists to alternative routes, the so-called Advanced Traffic Management System reduces time spent idling in traffic by about 40 percent and speeds traffic flow by 20 percent, Grubba said.

Cars equipped with the so-called

Advanced Driver Information Systems will derive additional benefit from the system, Grubba said, because their on-board computers can pick up signals more quickly and advise the driver accordingly.

Equipping cars with ADIS is up to individual motorists, Grubba said. Automakers expect to make the technology available in the mid 1990s.

THIS IS the ideal time to install ATMS, Grubba said, because the technology is evolving and federal officials are willing to invest tax dollars on testing projects.

"We're probably going to have to install this system anyway," Grubba said, because ATMS is believed to be the most efficient way of managing traffic congestion.

"But if we (Oakland County)

moves now, federal dollars are available," said Grubba, who has been conducting private discussions with state and federal officials for more than a year.

But Oakland must expedite its plans and its grant applications, Grubba said, and compete with other communities also moving in that direction.

Although Oakland has been assured its grant application will be received favorably, the Federal Highway Administration is cutting back on the money it allocates to communities, while competition for that money is getting tougher.

"But Oakland County can be among the first (to qualify for federal funds) because we're the furthest ahead" in planning, said County Executive Daniel T. Murphy who has been involved in the planning.

## Traffic plan raises questions

By Pat Murphy  
staff writer

COMMISSIONERS were happy to receive a proposal that Oakland County invest \$2 million to qualify for \$70 million in federal funds to manage traffic congestion. But questions outnumbered answers Thursday when the proposal was outlined for the first time.

Here's a sampling of comments from commissioners along with the answer provided by John L. Grubba, managing director of the Road Commission for Oakland County:

• Commissioner John E. Olsen, R-Huntington Woods, asked, "If the county did not provide \$2 million to qualify for federal dollars, would the road commission supply the money from its budget?"

The road commission would try to find the money, Grubba said. But given the loss of revenue because of reduced gasoline sales, "We'd probably miss this opportunity," he said.

• Commissioner Marilyn E. Gosling, R-Bloomfield Hills, asked if the grant would have any impact on

road maintenance. "I can see having this wonderful system while the roads crumble," she said.

MAINTAINING roads is not related, Grubba said.

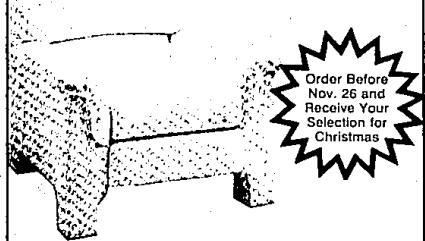
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Lt. Governor - \$80,300;	expenses - \$9,000
Justice - \$106,610;	expenses 0
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\*Six leaders in each House receive supplements of \$5,000 to \$23,000 each year.

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A public hearing will be held in Lansing, at the Capitol Commons Center, 400 S. Pine Street, starting at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, November 27, 1990. Any interested party may speak. Register in advance by calling (517) 373-8066. Or, you may register at the meeting.

State of Michigan

State Officers Compensation Commission

By: Burton H. Schwartz, Chairman

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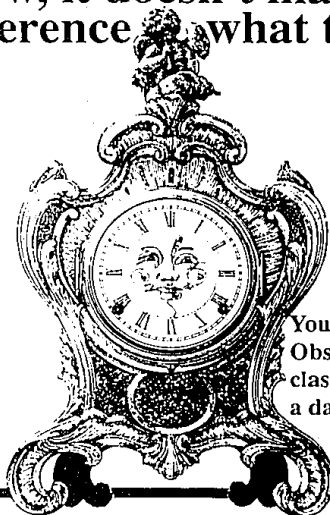
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