



## North-south road wins west county referendum

Western Oakland County voters want a major north-south road. That much is clear in the wake of last week's advisory referendum in Orchard Lake, Commerce Township, Highland Township, Novi, Milford Township, Walled Lake, Spring Lake Township and White Lake Township.

Voters—73 per cent of them—approved the idea of building an I-96-to-M275 connector "along the approximate route of M-275."

An unofficial tally had the total vote at 7,082 to 2,573.

Though the vote carries no legal weight, backers of the cancelled freeway hope it will place some election-year pressure on Gov. William Milliken to resurrect the project.

The victory was never in doubt as ballot proposals passed overwhelmingly in each community. The result in one community was a turnaround. Commerce Township voters in 1976 had specifically turned down the freeway plan.

While the balloting may put some pressure on the governor, Peter B. Fletcher, chairman of the State Highway Commission, said it did not mean M-275 would be revived.

He said money for the highway had been transferred to other projects, and highway planners would have to overcome a number of environmental problems to get the 70 per cent federal funding.

There were a number of alternative plans offered after the original M-275 plan was scrapped, but the field has been narrowed to two.

Both plans would substitute a boulevard for the freeway, but one would follow much of the original route for M-275 and the other would be built along existing roads to the east.

**THE TWO PLANS ARE:**  
•The McConnell Compromise, the offering of Oakland County Commissioner Robert McConnell (R-Farmington Hills), will follow the original M-275 route. The road will be developed as a six-lane boulevard with an 84-foot landscaped median, shoulders, a continuous bicycle path and wide, landscaped berms along both sides.

•Alternative "C," which was proposed by the "Citizens in Opposition to M-275" originally extended from Eight Mile Road to M-59, generally following Haggerty Road, Union Lake Road and Williams Lake Road. It was changed by the citizens group and the section between Eight Mile and 12 Mile Roads was eliminated.

Alternative "C" would be developed as a four-lane boulevard from 12 Mile Road to 14 Mile Road along Haggerty Road. A six-lane boulevard will connect to Northwestern Highway in the vicinity of Orchard Lake Road, follow 14 Mile Road to Haggerty Road and then swing northerly along Haggerty Road.

Depicted here are the two most popular proposed routes for a major north-south road through western Oakland County.



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