

Road panel goes to public

What do locals want? What will they pay?

By Tim Richard
staff writer

The road show will take to the road May 12 at a civic building near you.

"We'll find out what the locals want and what they're willing to pay," said Oakland County Commissioner John McDonald, who will chair the show.

McDonald, R-Farmington, heads the county board's new Transportation Committee. He will have company — a representative of the semi-autonomous Oakland County Road Commission and a member of County Executive Daniel T. Murphy's staff.

FOR 1 1/2 HOURS starting at 7:30 p.m. each Tuesday and Thursday, they will outline the extent of Oakland's economic boom, the estimated \$740 million 10-year strain it's placing on the road system, and bills and pieces of revenue available to handle the strain.

Said James Brennan, who handles county board resolutions: "We'll tell the extent of the problem and get their reaction."

Only a few seats are available under existing laws and without voter approval.

The county government, for example, can levy an additional 82 cents per \$1,000 in taxes. That could yield \$10 million, give or take a bit.

THE STATE Legislature.

McDonald said, is working on bills that would allow local units to levy "economic impact fees" on business developers.

The Legislature also is working on local voted tax options, such as a countywide gasoline tax of up to five cents a gallon and sales tax on some items.

Every penny of gasoline tax approved by voters would be worth \$6 million in revenue inside Oakland County.

One option is out: a statewide gasoline tax increase. Gov. James J. Blanchard is against it, and because of the way money is split, Oakland would get just \$1.9 million, said Commissioner Ralph Nelson, R-Rochester.

"We don't want a statewide increase," McDonald said. "We (Oakland) will get the short end."

Local reaction will help commissioners determine which plan, if any, goes on the ballot and when. Anything done in 1987 would require a special election. In 1988 there are countywide elections in August and November.

ELEVEN HEARINGS have been scheduled, Brennan said. The schedule:

• Tuesday, May 12 — Farmington Hills City Council chamber, 31555 Eleven Mile.

• Thursday, May 14 — Orion Township Hall, 2525 Joslyn.

• Tuesday, May 19 — Southfield City Council chambers, 26000 Ever-

green.

Thursday, May 21 — West Bloomfield Township fire station No. 1, 4601 Orchard Lake Road.

• Tuesday, May 26 — Royal Oak Council chambers, 211 Williams.

• Tuesday, June 2 — Pontiac Council chambers, 450 Wide Track Drive East.

• Thursday, June 4 — Rochester Hills City Council chambers, 1000 Rochester Hills Drive.

• Tuesday, June 9 — Troy Community Center, 520 W. Big Beaver.

• Thursday, June 11 — Oak Park City Council chambers, 13600 Oak Park Blvd.

• Tuesday, June 16 — Novi High School commons area, 24062 Taft.

• Thursday, June 18 — White Lake Township Hall, 7525 Highland Road.

ONE WHO IS uncertain what the meetings will produce is Commissioner Marilyn Gosling, R-Bloomfield Hills.

"I went to a Troy homeowners association meeting and told them 'I want to hear from you.'"

"I asked them about millage and gas tax. I talked about your committee," she said, nodding to McDonald.

"I said we want an expression from the people."

"I haven't had one phone call or one letter. Not a call."

Oakland jury plan: 2 days or one trial

Jurors in Oakland Circuit Court this week found themselves working under a new "two-day/one-trial" system.

Under it, said Chief Judge Richard D. Kuhn, "Jurors must be available for jury selection for two days. If a juror is not impaneled on a case after two days, his or her service will be completed."

Previously, a one-week/one-trial system had been used.

The new system will spread jury service among more people but for a

shorter time.

In 1986 more than 24,000 Oakland residents were contacted for jury service, and 10,000 actually served.

To reduce traveling, prospective jurors are given a telephone number to call each evening, and a recording advises them whether they will be needed next day.

Jurors are paid \$15 a day for attending court and 10 cents a mile for travel. A bill before the state Senate would double the pay but leave mileage the same, Kuhn said.

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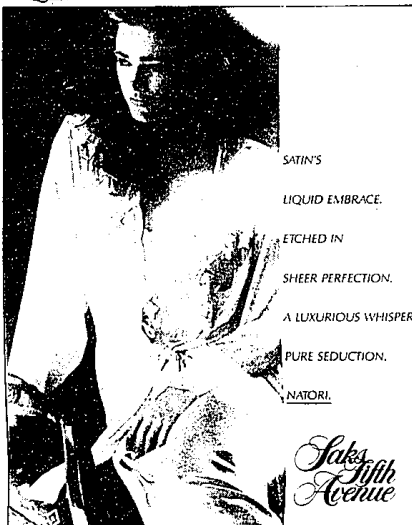
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