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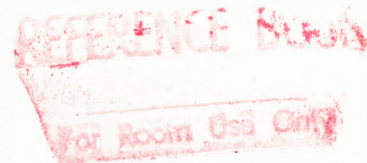
STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS

Delivered by Daniel T. Murphy

before the

Oakland County Board of Commissioners

February 19, 1987



OAKLAND COUNTY

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Good morning Mr. Chairman, distinguished Board Members, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It gives me great pleasure to be delivering the annual State of the County address, at the time of year when we honor two great American presidents -- George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.

These great presidents worked hard to achieve their goals, often times without the initial support of all of their colleagues.

But one lesson they learned and shared with us through history, is the lesson of cooperation. While everyone may not agree on a certain point at a certain time, people can and will still work together for a common goal, when that goal is clearly defined.

Cooperation is essential for plans to work and governments to succeed. And we, in Oakland County, are proof that anything can be done with the will of all.

Having laid the foundation of the house of the future, I'd like to begin by saying together we've accomplished much for our county and together we look to 1987 and beyond. The administration, staff, and the Board of Commissioners, have positioned ourselves to lead Southeast Michigan into the 21st Century.

To lead successfully we must first recognize our mission -- our mission should be clear -- it is simply to create and enhance opportunities for the citizens of this County.

Opportunities for better employment.

Opportunities for better education.

Opportunities for a better quality of life.

In 1983 I asked, and this board supported a new direction, for a pro-active effort to create new opportunities for our citizens through an enhanced Economic Development effort. This effort was and is actively and vigorously supported by business, education and labor leaders of our County.

If we have another downturn, or perhaps I should say when we have another downturn, our foresight will help keep our residents at work and our economic base intact -- But before we get too far into the future let's look at the recent past.

1986 was a good year for many of Oakland County's businesses and workers. The positive growth trend in business investment and job creation which began in 1983 continued through 1986.

Last year, the number of private sector jobs in Oakland County grew about 5.4 percent for a net gain of 24,500 new jobs from 1985 to 1986. And while the 5.4 percent growth rate is healthy compared to a Michigan job growth rate of 2.3 percent, it is less than the 12 percent growth rate in 1984 and 1985. So there is no time to rest on our laurels, even though our results have been pretty good for a county with 11 percent of the State's population.

Since 1983, we have carried out an economic development program based on building upon our strengths. We have met success.

Today, two and one-half years since the inception of the Oakland County Technology Park in Rochester Hills, it has emerged as one of the most important technology parks in the United States. The bottom line -- about 52,000 new jobs in Oakland County by 1995.

Our goal in 1983 was an ambitious 89,000 new jobs by 1990. There are 130,000 more private sector jobs in Oakland County today than at the beginning of 1983. This is a 37 percent increase over our very ambitious goal.

The success of the program and the momentum of growth certainly allows us time to pay greater attention to those communities who have not achieved our average county-wide growth.

Even though the economic picture in Oakland County is bright when compared with the State, the light dims in some of our communities which have not benefitted proportionately in job growth.

Clearly communities like Pontiac, which has not recovered its manufacturing base and grimly looks forward to more plant closings -- and more and more employee layoffs -- will need extra help from the county and state economic development organizations.

Recognizing that a strong chain is only as good as its weakest link, I have directed our Economic Development Group to focus more strongly on business and job development in the Pontiac area and in many of our cities in the southeast corner along I-696 where job growth is below the County average.

We will increase our efforts to promote, facilitate and support small business development, as well as do more counseling with companies regarding exporting products and services both nationally and internationally.

While this effort must and will be undertaken, make no mistake it will not be an easy task! The problems will not succumb to quick fixes or disjointed efforts. However, I believe together we can succeed.

I spoke earlier of our mission, the mission of creating opportunities for people -- one of government's basic missions and one of life's basic freedoms is the freedom of movement -- the freedom to move about on decent roads and on an adequate public transportation system.

In Oakland County our road system is being strained by our growth and our public transportation system is being constrained by unnecessary and counter productive resistance.

In 1987 we must develop new approaches to road programs to relieve traffic congestion. Not only is it making our daily family and business travel difficult, it already has the potential to negatively impact economic growth in a few areas of the County.

Companies will not move to, or stay in areas where the roads are congested. I intend to work closely with the new Transportation Committee of the Board of Commissioners to determine how these needed road improvements can be financed.

In addition to managing roads, we must continue to address the public transportation issue. I still wholeheartedly believe that SEMTA is an agency that needs to be restructured in order to provide adequate service to Oakland County residents. The current service is unacceptable. SEMTA spends millions of dollars a year for a handful of

routes in one portion of the county. We have to come to grips with this transportation problem soon. There are better alternatives available and there are means to implement these alternatives. I am pleased to report that the two new chief elected officials in our neighboring counties agree on the need to move forward on public transportation. I expect to see movement on this issue in the near future.

Now I'd like to take these next few moments and reflect back to 1986 -- when we told you what our goals were for today, I'd like to report on their success.

If you recall we talked then about our county-wide 911 Emergency System, Solid Waste, Community Block Grants and our health care services.

We promised to work closely with our municipalities to achieve these goals and we did.

First the county wide 911 Emergency System -- I'm happy to report that we have 100 percent participation in the system.

At the request of some local community leaders, the County agreed to provide a cooperative purchasing venture for those communities who may elect to purchase 911 equipment through this arrangement. The present schedule calls for 911 to be operational in late 1988.

Another county-wide effort which began in 1986 was the implementation of the Oakland County Resource Recovery System. The Municipal Solid Waste Board, established in 1986, with 28 communities as its members, has agreed to participate in the resource recovery system. The Solid Waste Board proposes to complete the preparation of a financing plan to be submitted to the Board of Commissioners by late summer.

I also support the Municipal Solid Waste Board's invitation to those communities which have not signed an agreement to join now since they will then be able to participate in the decisions that are being made today. Solid Waste has been one of my highest priorities and I am very proud of the work we have done together.

Another successful joint project coordinated between the County and our cities and townships is the Rouge River Cleanup. For the past few years we have been coordinating communities in the Rouge River Watershed Basin for Rouge Rescue '87 Clean Up Day in June. It's a great opportunity for the residents and the businesses to participate together in a project which helps beautify their community.

When we talk about cleaning up the Rouge River, we're not only discussing water and the beauty, we're also talking about the health of our residents.

And speaking of health, during the latter half of 1986 and 1987 a significant effort will continue to bring about better coordination and cooperation among human service agencies -- both profit and non-profit and in the public sector.

In the past many publicly operated facilities didn't cooperate with each other to the fullest extent when it concerned health care. Each unit operated independently and served the residents of its immediate area. But today's financial trends and dwindling resources make it imperative that governmental health services become more efficient and still maintain a high quality of care. We in Oakland County always have subscribed to that theory, but now with the cooperation of other agencies we look to being even more efficient.

I'm also pleased to report that another public service project which benefitted thousands of residents was once again a success. It's our Community Block Grant Program which helped enhance people's lives by providing them money to upgrade their homes and their neighborhoods.

During 1986, we received more than 4.3 million federal dollars to initiate and oversee more than 150 housing and community improvement projects in 48 municipalities.

As a result we upgraded streets and walkways, installed water, drainage and sewer systems; renovated community centers, improved housing, revitalized downtowns, built modern fire stations and developed parks.

Helping Oakland County's homeowners who cannot afford necessary repairs to their homes is a long-standing commitment of the County's Community Development Division and will continue to be a priority of ours. Our Planning Division always has reached its arm to our cities and townships, offering assistance to update their appearances. During 1986 we offered this hands on approach to help Royal Oak and Hazel Park revitalize their downtown areas.

These programs, as well as our concentrated Economic Development efforts most surely will give residents and businesses an opportunity to revamp their neighborhoods and become recognized as they once were.

As you can tell, I'm optimistic and excited about 1987 and beyond. We're a strong county in a positive position and we're looked upon as a leader in Michigan.

In 1983 when the economy was especially bleak and the outlook grim, we took the bull by the horns and acted, using our Economic Development Group as our sword.

Today, as the picture brightens we can use that same artillery which helped us develop our new areas -- in our older communities. And while we are in a position of strength it's time to take advantage of our abilities to streamline government to the fullest and make us more efficient than most can imagine.

Together we can offer opportunities for our long time residents and our new friends as well.

Together we can take advantage of the bountiful opportunities Southeast Michigan has to offer.

Together we, in Oakland County, can set the pace for a strong future for all of our residents.

Together -- we can make it work.

And we will!