

SUPPORT GROWING FOR NEW PROPOSAL:

Fuller Road options considered

By LEE KATTERMAN

Citizen groups opposed to a two-year old plan to reroute Fuller Road are renewing efforts to stop the project they think would be destructive to the Fuller Recreation Area.

A plan recommended by the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti Urban Area Transportation Study Committee (UATS) in 1978 calls for Fuller Road to cross the railroad tracks at a point that would split the parkland.

FULLER ROAD is the main link between Central and North Campus and a main access route to the University Medical Center.

The Ecology Center of Ann Arbor is throwing its support behind a second option that would widen but not reroute the road.

In its February newsletter, which came out yesterday, the center described this option as a better way to protect parkland around Fuller Road. It said it "would not intrude upon the aesthetics of the river valley as would the elevated Fuller Road."

THE OPTION the center now supports calls for Fuller Road to be increased to four lanes with a boulevard along its present route. In the past, the center has opposed even widening Fuller.

Ecology Center Director Steve McCarger said the change is the "only

realistic proposal that can be retrieved from a bad situation."

THE OPTION disliked by the center—the UATS plan was endorsed in 1978 by a host of governmental bodies, including the city councils of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority, and the Washtenaw County Metropolitan Planning Commission.

With work scheduled to begin this summer on the \$210 million University Hospital project, access to the new complex from the north is a serious concern to the University.

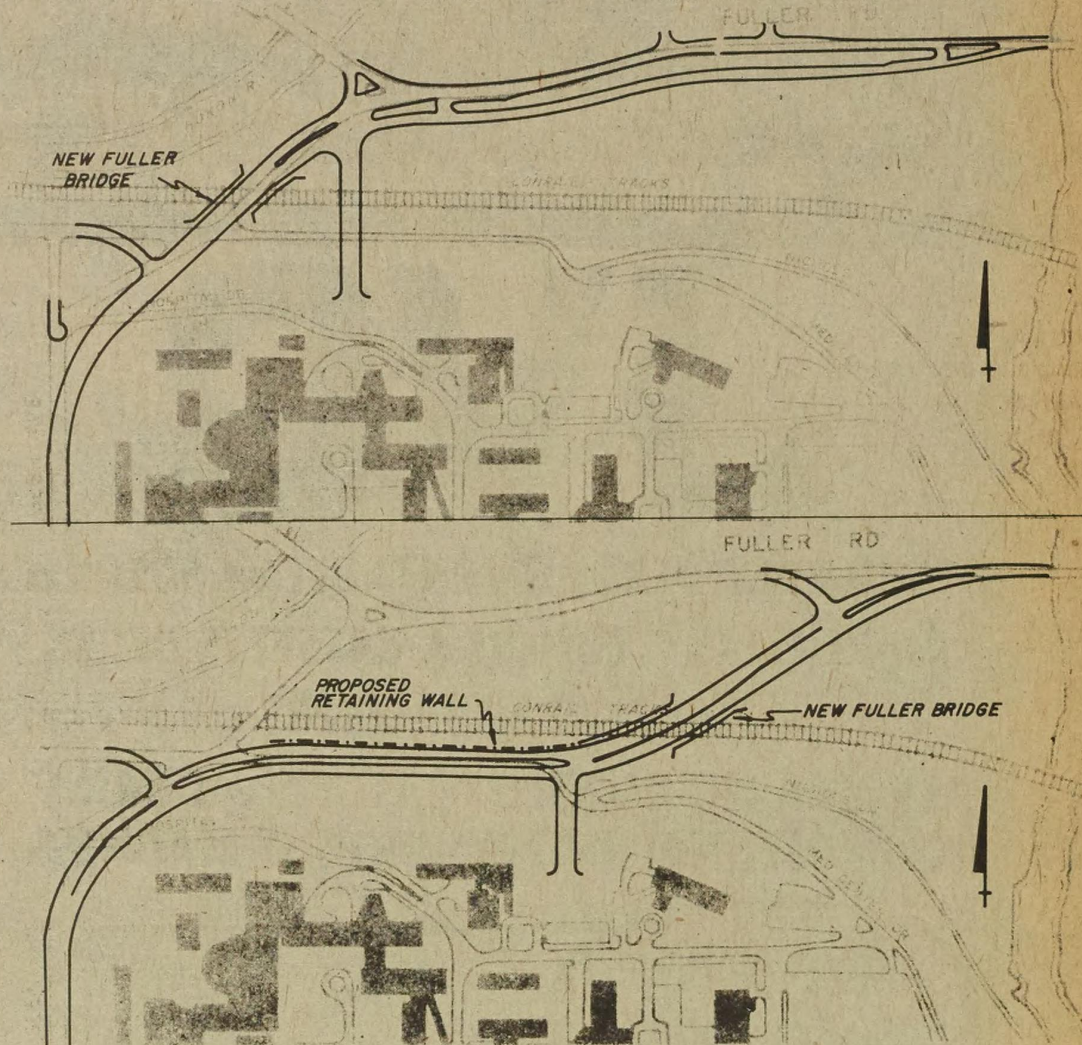
"I'm a little disturbed," said Richard Kennedy, University vice president for state relations. "It's unfortunate to have a new alternative after UATS went through an enormous study of the area."

KENNEDY ALSO recognizes the funding difficulties of the currently-approved plan.

"The foreclosure of one funding option is not helpful," he said, "but we were going on the premise initially that it was not such an extensive project that it couldn't be financed by the state (of Michigan)."

It is estimated that the rerouting plan would cost \$4.35 million while the plan that would have Fuller Road follow its present route is estimated to cost \$3.8 million.

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THE BOTTOM MAP illustrates a plan for realigning Fuller Road and the bridge over the railroad tracks near University Hospital which was endorsed by local government officials in 1978. The top map is an alternative plan for widening the road supported by the Ann Arbor Ecology Center.

Support grows for new Fuller Rd. option

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UNDER THE UATS plan it is unlikely that any federal money could be used for the rerouting project. The federal agency responsible for reviewing impact statements of transportation projects has informed UATS that its original proposal would adversely effect the Fuller Recreation Area.

Bob Pierce of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service (HCRS) said the plan recommended by UATS would effectively cut off the southeast corner of the recreation area from the rest of the park. The retaining wall required for the elevated section of

Fuller also would have "negative" impact on the valley, both visually and from increased traffic noise.

PIERCE SAID he was pleased to see the second option considered and added that it "looked like a viable alternative to stay with the existing right-of-way"

for Fuller.

If such an alternative were built, he said federal money probably would be available.

It's not clear yet whether the Fuller Road project will be reconsidered. But Ann Arbor City Engineer Leigh Chizek

said that replacement of the present Fuller bridge over the railroad tracks can't wait much longer. Also, the need for access to the University Hospital construction site dictates that work on Fuller begin by next January.

U.S. ambassador taken hostage

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Guatemala, Haiti, Switzerland and the Vatican, the ministry said. Also taken hostage were the acting ambassadors of Paraguay and Bolivia who hold the

title of attache, the office said.

A U.S. Embassy spokesman said Ambassador Asencio was still inside the besieged embassy and unhurt, as far as could be determined.

by military courts and threatened to blow up their hostages, including the U.S. envoy.

Papal Nuncio Angelo Ayerbi shouted out a window that the occupiers had