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"Mayor Trying to Put A Stop to Hearing"

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| Item Type | Article |
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| Publisher | Commercial Appeal |
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| Download date | 2025-05-13 09:12:48 |
| Link to Item | http://hdl.handle.net/10267/30080 |

O-P. CA, NOV. 10, 1976

Mayor Trying To Put A Stop To Hearing

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Mayor Wyeth Chandler said yesterday he is doing "everything I can" to stop a public hearing on the Overton Park segment of uncompleted Interstate 40.

The hearing is scheduled for Nov. 23 at the Holiday Inn-Rivermont.

Chandler said the "best interests" of the city would be served if the hearing were stopped, because U.S. Transportation Secretary William T. Coleman won't participate in the decision on the expressway route.

Coleman disqualified himself from deciding the case after his daughter took a job with the Washington law firm that originally filed suit to stop construction of the highway through the park. He appointed Deputy Transportation Secretary John Barnum to decide the case.

Chandler said had been told Barnum "has not been favorably inclined toward the park route."

The mayor said he had asked Gov. Ray Blanton to stop the hearing. He said he had not received a response from the governor's office.

Blanton was in West Virginia yesterday and could not be reached.

"We would not feel this way if Mr. Coleman were hearing it," Chandler said.

Chandler also said, "We probably could get a good deal of help" from the Democratic administration of President-elect Jimmy Carter.

OPE-26-37