

# Road repair program calls for city tax hike

By LYNN ORR

City of Farmington taxpayers will face an increase in city taxes for the first time in more than three years if council members decide to pursue a modest road repair program.

The tentative 1978-79 city budget submitted to council this week calls for an 11.5 mill tax rate (\$2.25 million), one-half mill up from tax rates of 11 mills since 1975. The major bulk of the proposed increase would be used for road improvements and repairs.

The overall budget indicates a 7.2 per cent increase over last year's budget. Spiraling winter road maintenance and the proposed improvement plan account for about 21 per cent of the increase, according to city officials.

"We believe that our local road system is in such a state that we must give consideration to such a program," City Mgr. Robert Deadman told the council. One-half mill is expected to generate about \$50,000 next year, about \$30,000 of which would be used for roads. The \$20,000 balance would be used to balance expenditures, Deadman said.

DEADMAN'S recommendations include a three-year phased road repair plan of about \$30,000 each year. Concrete removal and repair or asphalt overlays are needed for many streets, he said.

Road repairs and improvements have been delayed for many years awaiting the legislative action on the transportation bill now under consideration. However, the proposed 25 per cent increase in highway revenues will fall to offset increased road maintenance costs of more than 50 per cent, he explained.

It also is anticipated that the legislature may delay action on the multi-bill package until 1979.

"If this is the case, the projected increased revenues from the transportation legislation will have little effect on the city's 1978-79 fiscal budget," Deadman added.

If the legislature adopts the transportation package, the budget recommends use of the increased revenues for major roads and intersection safety improvements.

The city also will spend about \$60,000 for improvement of the Farmington Road-Shiawassee intersection, while a federal grant covers about \$140,000 of the project. A second federal grant for improvement of the city's signs requires a \$7,200 appropriation from the city for the \$24,000 project.

COUNCIL MEMBERS received the proposed budget at Monday night's council meeting. Five budget review sessions were set for 7:30-9:30 p.m., April 12, 19 and 26, and May 3 and 10 in council chambers. The meetings are open to the public.

Final budget approval is required by the third Monday in May under state law.

Local taxes constitute nearly \$1.2 million of anticipated revenues. Shared state revenues are expected to total nearly \$400,000.

Public safety tops the list of expenditures at \$718,525, while public services are budgeted at \$472,556. Insurance and fixed expenditures are anticipated at \$364,545, while general government expenses will be \$372,460.

The budget calls for one new face at City Hall, a part-time clerk for the city clerk's office.

"The adoption of the open meetings bill requiring board and commission minutes to be completed seven days after a meeting, and the voter registrations being accepted by mail through the secretary of state's office, have added to the work load of the department," Deadman explained.

An additional public safety officer recently hired will be paid through Federal Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) funds.

Other increases in expenditures include a substantial sewer rate increase expected this July; a 19 per cent increase in the purchase of recreational services from Farmington Hills; a seven per cent increase in salaries for public safety officers; an

average 6.5 per cent increase for the city's general employees; a 10 per cent increase in the Farmington Community Library budget; and \$1 million in improvements to the city's water system, to be paid through the sale of water and sewer bonds.

WINTER maintenance of Grand River through the city is one area

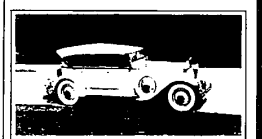
council members may eye for possible cuts. The State Department of Highways and Transportation is expected to turn back the jurisdiction of Grand River from the I-96 expressway to Highland to the Oakland County Road Commission. While the city currently maintains the road, it is possible to turn maintenance over to the county.

Deadman, however, recommends that the city continue winter maintenance, anticipating the county will follow the state's pattern of funding some of the maintenance costs.

Operating costs for the new Ten Mile court facility for the 47th District Court are yet to be established, Deadman notes. The facility is under the

auspices of the Farmington Building Authority, funded through bond sales. Upon completion, it will be leased to the City of Farmington and Farmington Hills for use by the court. Supplemental budget appropriations for the city's share of the court costs will be made late this year or next year, he said.

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## Senior workshop offers options

Seniors can attend a day-long workshop and conference on alternatives for the aging beginning at 1:30 p.m., April 7, in Mercy Center. Eleven Mile near Middlebelt.

An evening session will be at 7:30 p.m. in Farmington City Hall, 23600 Liberty.

The afternoon session will begin with a discussion by State Rep. Sandy Brotherton on tax information for seniors. He will mention real property or

homestead tax and filing assistance.

Brotherton will give information about the utility assistance and winterization programs offered to seniors.

An explanation of the zoning code and senior citizen housing needs assessments will be presented by Farmington Housing Commissioner Thomas Czubaik.

Farmington Hills Mayor Jan Delan will present an update on senior housing plans.

Oakland County Commissioner Robert McConnell will talk about transportation in the evening session.

BROTHERTON will discuss transportation and Gov. William Milliken's plan for it.

Ben Marks will discuss the building authority role in construction and municipal bond funding and land acquisition.

Farmington City Mgr. Robert Deadman will present an update on the senior housing situation.

The Commission on Aging will present information on new legislation and its fall conference.

Oakland County Commissioner John McDonnell also will speak at the conference.



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