

Mercy classes start

A large variety of swimming and fitness class, some specials and some new offerings are listed on Mercy Center's schedule for the term that runs from Feb. 28 to April 25.

Saturday Surprise runs from 9:30 a.m. to noon for 3-12-year-olds. Helping Hands is a one-on-one tutoring program for elementary school children. "Paint and Play" is for mothers and preschoolers, aimed to help the tot's coordination.

New on the agenda is a baby-sitting clinic for boys and girls ages 12-13.

Winter Break Camp is for 3-12-year-olds Feb. 14-25. A winter overnight is set from 7 p.m. Friday to 9:30 a.m. Saturday Feb. 21-22.

For information, call the center, 476-8010.

Schools threaten legal action

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ney Dennis Pollard of Clark, Hardy, Lewis, Pollard and Page, who said a commitment was made to bondholders to levy on all taxable property in the district. If a TIFA is formed, "you would be breaching your contract with your bond-holders," he told trustees.

BOARD MEMBERS suggested the city go back to taxpayers and work for a millage increase to pay for the development project.

"You still have the option of withdrawing TIFA and continuing negotiations with the board in working on a millage," board President Susan Rennels said. "It's very unfortunate the whole issue has been framed, and narrowed, and limited" around TIFA as the only financing choice.

"We have a moral obligation for those people who put us on the school board," she added.

With recent promises of federal budget cuts, the district is concerned about local district cuts, and Rennels believes the city's plans for partial use of federal money on the 12 Mile development will never materialize.

"Virtually no federal money will be available by the time this gets going. All of it would come from TIFA," she added.

council unanimously adopted a resolution of intent to create the 12 Mile TIFA district.

At a public hearing following that meeting, school officials voiced overwhelming disapproval, causing the city council to defer setting up the special taxing authority for five-six months.

A short time later, school board members and administrators requested state Rep. Wilbur (Sandy) Brotherton, R-Farmington, ask for an opinion from the Michigan Attorney General's office about a TIFA use along the 12 Mile area.

That decision was received in January and said that Farmington Hills could not use the TIFA to finance 12 Mile improvements if property values along the corridor are not declining.

"Our support (of TIFA) would be illegal," Trustee Jack Cotton said, voicing support for an alternative regional road millage plan. "I believe this (TIFA) will have a negative impact on future finances of this district."

Although the school board is basing its view on the attorney general's ruling, city officials have said they do not see it as legally binding. The council appointed the city's five-member Economic Development Corporation (EDC) in December as the TIFA governing board, and designated boundaries along the 3.5-mile stretch.

by the proposed TIFA include the city of Farmington Hills, Farmington Public Schools, Oakland Community College, Oakland Intermediate Schools and Oakland County.

Farmington schools receives the majority of local tax revenues, as this is what funds the out-of-formula district. Farmington Public Schools does not receive general state aid based on the state school aid per-pupil formula.

A TIFA can be established due to Public Act 450, state legislation passed in 1930, allowing cities to take up to 100 percent of future revenues in the designated area, as improvements are made and property values rise.

Farmington Hills proposes a 10-year TIFA plan, according to Alkateeb, in which 46.2 percent of the increased revenues would be captured in the quarterly, with the remaining 52 percent going to the school district.

Of an estimated \$93.3 million to be raised by a TIFA through 1991, the school district would receive an 8.8 percent increase in the tax base, estimated to be \$161 per student, according to the plan.

The TIFA district boundaries include 12 Mile to the north I-696 to the south, Haggerty to the west and land owned by the U.S. Postal Service to the east.

How a TIFA would be used

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Farmington Hills officials want to use a financing mechanism — Tax Increment Financing Authority (TIFA) — to pay for road improvements along the 12 Mile Road office corridor and I-696.

In December, council members created a tax increment authority by appointing the nine-member Farmington Hills Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Board of Directors as the TIFA governing board. Council also designated the boundaries of a TIFA district in which the financing mechanism would be used.

The TIFA district boundaries include the 12 Mile office corridor — bounded on the north by 12 Mile, on the south by I-696, on the west by Haggerty and on the east by property owned by the U.S. Postal Service, approximately one-quarter mile east of Farmington.

The city's 12 Mile Road master traffic plan — also adopted by council in December — documents the need for major traffic improvements along the thoroughfare and I-696 and serves as a foundation for the city's creation of a TIFA along the commercial corridor.

Although the costs are still estimates, the city would be faced with an approximately \$9.6-million bill for construction of a four-lane boulevard along 12 Mile, from Farmington to Haggerty roads, as well as I-696 improvements, including widening and construction of additional interchanges.

TO HELP pay estimated total costs, city officials plan to use approximately \$49,500 in the city's share of gas and weight taxes. The remaining \$9.5 million would, if all goes according to

plan, be paid for with the help of TIFA revenues.

The 12 Mile plan also calls for the widening of the thoroughfare from Inkster to Orchard Lake roads. But the more than \$600,000 price tag would not be included under the TIFA plan.

Under TIFA, property values in the designated district along 12 Mile would be frozen. Tax increment money is derived from the increase in assessed valuations in the district over the initial value at the time the TIFA plan is implemented. Farmington Hills proposes taking such money for up to 12 years.

It is the money derived from the increase in assessed valuation that the city would use to pay for the improvements. A city has the option of taking all or part of any property tax money based on the assessment increase. The Farmington Hills plan calls for taking 47.8 percent of the revenue based on increased valuations.

The taxing jurisdictions — city of Farmington Hills, Farmington Public Schools, Oakland Community College, Oakland Intermediate Schools and Oakland County — would continue to receive full revenue based on taxes levied against the initial assessed value.

AS THE development district's value increases during the TIFA plan's 12-year period, the taxing jurisdictions would annually receive only 52 percent of that increase. That split is not 50/50 because the city does not want to infringe on each jurisdiction's debt, retirement levies.

Tax increment money that would be turned over to the authority is determined by multiplying the total tax millage of the taxing units — 51.8 mills based on the 1985 rate — by the amount of captured assessed value.



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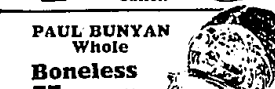
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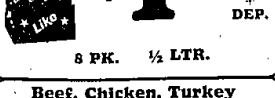
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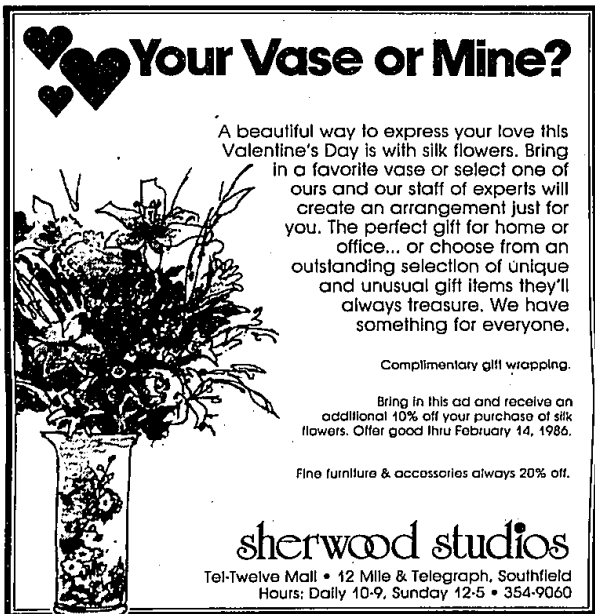
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