

# Cash for housing rehab: 'not enough'

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ADDITION to his anger is the federal government's continued cuts in CDBG money. Originally, Farmington Hills officials expected to receive \$300,000 — only a 10-percent reduction over the previous year. But in February, officials were told to expect further cuts.

The city is expected to receive an estimated \$254,000 in CDBG money for 1986-87. But that could change by the time the money is expected to arrive June 1. Reductions over last year's CDBG totals could be reduced 20-40 percent, officials said.

Approximately \$30,000 in expected repayment of low-interest loans made through the housing program has been added to the estimated CDBG total, bringing it to \$284,000.

City officials have proposed to allocate \$116,000 for housing rehabilitation, \$130,000 for capital improvements and \$38,000 for administration.

Roberts maintains that the \$30,000 in expected loan repayments should not be added to the CDBG totals. Loan repayments, or at least a portion, should be set aside as a reserve on which the program can continue, in case the federal government decides to eliminate CDBG programs, Roberts said. A reserve should also be maintained in case residents' fail to repay the loans, he added.

USING THE \$30,000 also knocks the percentage allocations to each program out of whiff. If the \$30,000 is included as part of the housing program's estimated \$116,000 allocation, that means only \$80,000 is actually new money going into the program.

What irks Roberts are the percentages used by city officials when describing how CDBG money will be allocated. Last year, the housing program received a total \$131,000 of the city's CDBG money. Although the housing program is expected to receive a lesser amount this year, city officials have maintained that the percentage of this year's total expected CDBG money allocated to the program nonetheless has been increased by 3 percent.

"The remark (by city officials) that we are getting a bigger percentage of funds is misleading," Roberts said. "These figures, as far as per-



*'If the city council maintains its present conservative stance, this program (housing rehabilitation) will suffer even more. There is not enough money available to service the people who could be serviced.'*

— George Roberts  
housing loan board

centages, are cooked."

The truth, as far as Roberts is concerned, is that \$30,000 in loan repayments city officials have added to CDBG totals may not be fully repaid. "The \$30,000 — we got it coming. That's about \$2,000 a month. But this is on an if-come basis," Roberts said. "If we have delinquencies, we won't have that money, will we?"

This is the first time city officials have added loan repayments to the city's total CDBG money. Community Development Manager Richard Lampi said, "If (loan repayment) is finally getting to be a number we can count."

ESPECIALLY WITH an increasing dwindling amount of federal dollars available for social programs, Roberts wants the housing rehabilitation program to receive a bigger share of the city's total CDBG money than is proposed.

But, as in the past, city officials this year are proposing to devote the greatest share of CDBG money to capital improvements in low-to-moderate income areas. Officials argue that such capital improvements help a greater share of residents than the housing program does.

Yet Roberts is still holding out hope that the city council will change its mind and allocate more CDBG money to the housing program. Roberts will have another opportunity to make his case for the housing program at a public hearing Monday, April 28.

The hearing is a continuation of

one in February that was adjourned pending informational meetings for residents in areas that would be affected by the city's suggested capital improvements under the CDBG program.

"The city council can always change their minds. But the city council is limited by what their subordinates in city hall tell them," Roberts said.

By Joanne Maliszowski  
staff writer

With the rescheduling of a Farmington Hills public hearing for federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money to April 23, residents in Farmington Acres subdivision will have an extra two weeks to gather more support from neighbors for paving and drainage improvements.

Proposed improvements in the neighborhood west of Farmington Road and north of Eight Mile were among those suggested by city staff that could be completed with CDBG money.

At a public hearing in February — adjourned until April 21 and again rescheduled for 7:30 p.m. Monday, April 28 — city officials proposed to allocate Farmington Hills' expected

ROBERTS DOESN'T dispute the need for capital improvements in the low-to-moderate income areas. But he believes improvements should be completed with money in the city's general fund while leaving as much of the CDBG money as possible for the housing program.

Though city officials have suggested six priority projects — drainage and paving — on which to spend the proposed \$130,000 allocated for capital improvements, the money would finance only a portion of the listed projects.

"These projects will all eventually have to be done," Roberts said. "It makes sense to finish a project for complete relief, though, I don't like short-term results. Why not take some of the money and put it into some of the houses at the south end of the city?"

Roberts maintains that city revenue has been used to complete improvements in other areas of the city. The same policy should be followed in providing the low-to-moderate income areas with improvements, he said.

"The capital improvements (suggested for completion with CDBG

*The truth, as far as George Roberts is concerned, is that \$30,000 in loan repayments city officials have added to CDBG totals may not be fully repaid. 'The \$30,000 — we got it coming. That's about \$2,000 a month. But this is on an if-come basis. If we have delinquencies, we won't have that money, will we?'*

money) are taking a load off the funds of the city," Roberts said. "They (city council) are improving the capital base of the city at the expense of some of the residents."

WHEN ASKED why the suggested capital improvements were not completed years ago with city revenue, Lampi said he would not respond. But he said that by using CDBG money in the low-to-moderate in-

come areas helps the city cut down residents' expenses in a special assessment district for improvements.

"It makes the projects more attractive and viable to residents who are in the low-to-moderate income," Lampi said.

While city officials maintain capital improvements benefit a larger group of residents, Roberts maintains that improving the housing stock in the south end of the city — where a majority of the program is used — improves the value of the city.

## Discussion theme: federal grant

\$284,000 for capital improvements, housing rehabilitation and administration.

The estimated \$284,000 includes \$30,000 expected in repayments of loans made through the housing rehabilitation program. For capital improvements, \$130,000 has been allocated, \$116,000 for housing rehabilitation and \$38,000 for administration.

The February CDBG public hearing was adjourned to provide city staff time to host informational meetings with residents in six suggested projects areas.

CDBG MONEY, according to guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), must be used to benefit residents with low and moderate incomes. The six suggested

projects are in low-to-moderate-income areas.

Although city officials suggested six projects, the \$130,000 allocated for capital improvements can finance only one of the projects, city engineer David Call said.

Following informational meetings with residents in the six suggested areas, only those residents in the Farmington Acres subdivision showed a significant response to paving and drainage improvements, Call said.

With the postponed public hearing, residents along Edmonston, Cass and Kirby will have more time to gather the required signatures in a petitioning effort for improvements.

If, within the next two weeks, residents along the three streets gather a majority of support for improvements, the \$130,000 in CDBG money

would be used to complete drainage improvements. For paving improvements on the three streets, residents would be specially assessed. If drainage improvements cost more than the \$130,000, the remaining expense would be included in residents' special assessment district, Call said.

IF RESIDENTS along the three streets are unable to gather a majority support for paving and drainage improvements, then the Farmington Hills City Council will have to determine how the \$130,000 will be spent, Call said.

City council members must make a final decision on how CDBG money will be spent because the city's final statement of the intended uses of the federal money is required on May 1, said Thomas Blaisell, public services director.

## police/fire calls

Listed are some of the Farmington-area police and fire calls received during the past week:

### ● ARSON FIRE

A fire in the attached garage of a vacant house on Nottingham Saturday afternoon was maliciously set, said Lt. Peter Baldwin of the Farmington Hills Fire Department.

"We're asking the public for help — to let us know if they saw anyone or anything suspicious in the area just prior to the fire," Baldwin said.

"Two people were seen at the house just before the fire and we'd really like to talk to them, if we could find out who they are."

Call tips to the fire department at 553-0744.

The fire was reported at 4:20 p.m. Saturday at 31705 Nottingham. The owner has moved to another country and the house is now for sale, Baldwin said.

Flame damage was confined to the garage. There was smoke damage throughout the two-story house. Damage was estimated at \$10,000, Baldwin said.

### ● RUNAWAY DOZER

Fleet Ambulance medic Greg Mullinix had to do a double-take when he saw a bulldozer headed north on Halsted from 13 Mile Road shortly past 1 a.m. Monday.

"When a closer look turned up no lights at the controls, the 21-year-old Westland resident stopped his ambulance, climbed aboard the runaway dozer and figured out how to stop it."

The dozer apparently had come from the Legends construction site on the southwest corner of Halsted and 14 Mile — three-quarters of a mile away, according to Farmington Hills Officer John Markey.

It appears the dozer had been parked on the edge of the Legends' Halsted entrance, then backed out onto Halsted and moved south on Halsted. Boot impressions were seen in the soil next to where the dozer had been parked, Markey said.

### ● ALLEGED ASSAULT

Police will file an Oakland County Probate Court Juvenile Division petition charging a 12-year-old boy with the sexual assault of an 8-year-old girl April 1 in the woods west of Power Middle School, 34740 Rinehood, Farmington Hills Officer Dennis Brills said.

### ● SCHOOL FIRE

Farmington Hills firefighters ex-

tinguished a fire in the girls locker-room at Harrison High School, 29995 12 Mile, about 4:30 p.m. Friday.

The fire was confined to a trash container and a tissue holder. Matches were the apparent source of ignition, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

### ● LARKSHIRE VANDALIZED

Vandals left nearly \$400 in damage at Larkshire Elementary School, 33900 Tuck, April 12-14, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

Vandals bent three one-way school signs, broke a window, chopped the tops off two trees and removed a third tree. They placed the removed tree tops against north-side windows and set them and other combustibles on fire. The fire melted two plastic windows. Two gas cans and two beer cans were found in the charred remains, according to the report.

### ● DAMAGE REPORTED

Blocks were used to break nine north-side windows at Alameda Elementary School, 32400 Alameda, April 12. Damage was estimated at \$150, according to a Farmington Hills police report. Responding to an alarm at 2:26 a.m., Officer Charles Rozum said he saw a man running from the school into a field.

Someone drove a vehicle into the front gate and fence three or four times at Orchard Lake Collision, 10865 10 Mile, April 11-12. The fence was knocked down, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

A car parked at SWAC Distributors, 33094 Eight Mile, received \$500 in damage April 11-14. The car was dented on the hood, doors, frame, fenders and trunk lid and a window was broken, according to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report.

Another car received \$160 in damage April 12 while parked at Farmer Jack, 22300 Farmington. A crack and impact mark were noticed on the windshield, according to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report.

### ● THEFTS REPORTED

Listed below are some of thefts reported to local police agencies during the past week:

Jewelry valued at \$1,000 was reported stolen from an apartment on Ridgeline between March 10 and April 10.

Two wire wheel covers valued at \$1,000 were reported stolen from a

car parked at St. Paul Lutheran Church, 28050 Middlebelt, April 11.

Four wire wheel covers valued at \$400 were reported stolen from a car parked at Hunters Square April 10.

A front yard light valued at \$110 was reported stolen from a house on Alameda April 11-13.

A television, a toolbox and fishing gear valued at \$1,100 were reported stolen from a van parked on Lincoln Court April 11-14.

A 1984 Chevrolet Camaro valued at \$10,000 was reported stolen from along Gateway Drive April 12-13. The car later was recovered in a field at Greencastle and Greenmeadow.

A 1985 Pontiac valued at \$14,000 was reported stolen from the Birmingham Temple lot, 28611 12 Mile, April 12-13. The car later was recovered in Detroit.

A 1986 Pontiac Sunbird valued at \$10,000 was reported stolen from along Astor April 12-13. The car later was recovered in Detroit.

A stereo system valued at \$300 was reported stolen from a motor home parked on Commerce Drive April 12-13.

Two purses and contents valued at \$267 were reported stolen from the Farmington Auto Wash, 22893 Orchard Lake Road, April 13.

A 10-speed bicycle valued at \$300 was reported stolen from a house on Pear Ridge April 12-13.

A dirt bicycle valued at \$125 was reported stolen from a house on Springbrook April 12-13.

A radar detector, a car telephone and a telephone pager valued at \$1,875 were reported stolen from a car parked on Edgerton Court April 12-13.

A stereo system valued at \$400 was reported stolen from a house on Edgerton Court April 13.

A 1985 GMC Jimmy valued at \$14,000 was reported stolen from Garden Court Apartments on 8 Mile Road April 13.

Three windows valued at \$500 were reported stolen from a house under construction April 12-13.

Two electric drill motors and other tools valued at \$550 were reported stolen from a trailer at the Dillon Inn, under construction at 30715 12 Mile, April 12-14.

A radar detector valued at \$225 was reported stolen from a semi-tractor parked on Commerce Drive April 12-14.

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