

City adopts development plan

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THE \$1.4-MILLION plan was created by Wzany and the Farmington Downtown Development Authority board of directors following more than a year of marketing studies. The plan includes the TIFA money, plus a 2-mill assessment to the DDA district for continued maintenance and administration of the project.

The plan gives the DDA district new pedestrian lighting, sidewalks and trees, and covers an area from Liberty on the west, Thomas on the north, Mayfield on the east and Slocum on the south.

Five physical renovation phases are planned, which Wzany estimates will take between three and four years to complete.

With a TIFA, property values in the DDA district would be frozen and revenue derived from the increase in assessed valuations. Farmington's TIFA will begin Jan. 1, 1987, and run through Dec. 31, 1993, and will capture 100 percent of the levied tax increases in the DDA district.

A new tax increment financing bill passed recently by the state House of Representatives and awaiting action in the Senate, would change several aspects of the act, including allowing local school boards a voice on TIFA boards.

School officials statewide have voiced concern, and in some cases taken legal action, to stop TIFA formations because school money is being captured and used for the projects.

THE FARMINGTON School Board voted Oct. 21 not to sue Farmington over its downtown TIFA plan. JoAnn Sorensen, executive director for the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce, and a member of the DDA board, said "the chamber board continues to be supportive" of the project.

"We are dependent on the economic health of the downtown," she said of the chamber of commerce. "We support all your efforts."

Farmington Mayor William Hartsock voiced his continued support for the downtown plans.

"The initiation is really internal; a lot of ideas and concepts... spearheaded through the Downtown Development Authority. I think that's

really going to be the true success of the program."

Councilman Richard Tupper called for the DDA board to get involved in marketing the city, bringing "name companies" to the community.

"I think it's important the DDA express itself... and generally keep the atmosphere," he said.

The plan quotes conservative estimates with regard to revenues generated by the TIFA and 2-mill tax. It estimates the TIFA will bring \$76,000 per year minimum and the 2-mill tax \$19,000 minimum. The downtown revitalization plan is expected to spur private growth as well.



staff photo by BOB SKLAR

Farmington Mayor William Hartsock praises the downtown development plan.

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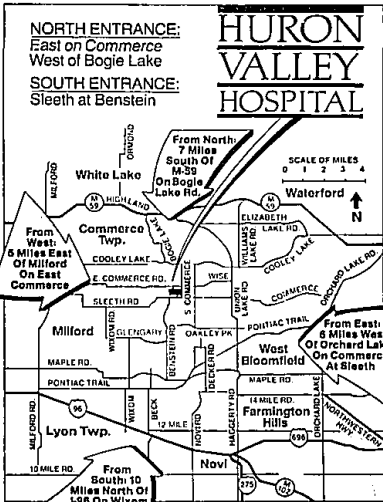
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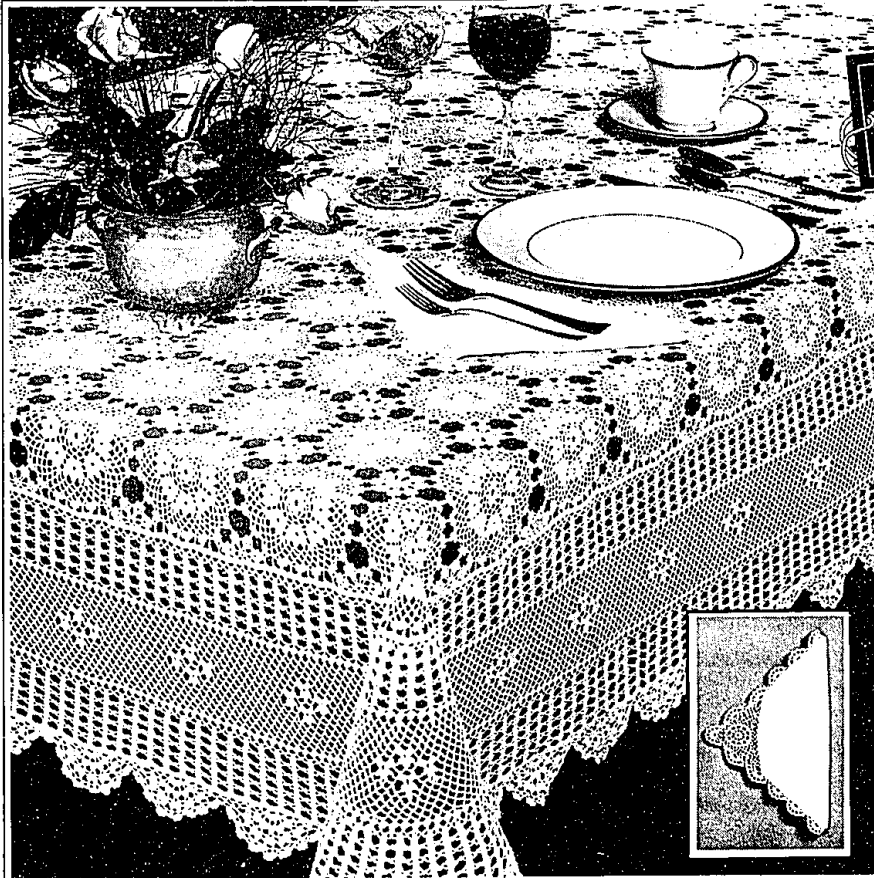
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