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PUBLIC perceptions were on the mind of Joe Alkateeb, a Farmington Hills city councilman, June 8.

Obviously concerned about the tone of a public discussion about paving the winding, tree-lined stretch of Drake, north of 11 Mile, he said: "I don't know why residents and the city council start out on an adversarial relationship."

After the meeting, Old Homestead resident Ed Krol, who supports paving but not straightening the road, said: "I think the council means well. We're optimistic. More is accomplished that way. We'll work with them in good faith."

HARRY Wingerter, Downtown Development Authority president, played up downtown's strong points at a Downtown Farmington Business Association luncheon June 3.

"Look at us as one big department store, with each business a different department," he said.

WATCH out for school-age children during the day. It's already summer break in the Clarenceville and Walled Lake school districts.

Farmington Public Schools classes end Thursday.

FOOTNOTES: One year ago this week — Johannes Spreen, former Oakland County sheriff, will challenge John McDonald, incumbent Oakland County commissioner, this fall (1986) in the 27th county commission district, which includes the Farmington area.

EDC eyes improving aesthetics

By Joanne Mallazewski
staff writer

A long-lasting partnership. That's what the Farmington Hills Economic Development Corporation wants to form with the business community.

In its new role as a catalyst for improvements in the city and business community, the 6-year-old EDC is undertaking three major plans for upgrading, particularly the aesthetics of the city's major office and commercial strips.

"The idea is to work together so we're not all going in different directions," said Robert McConnell, EDC chairman. "We're trying to establish an alliance between the business members, property owners and the EDC."



Robert McConnell

"The EDC will provide the leadership and we're looking to the property owners to bring problems (such as traffic and aesthetics) to our attention. We want to solve any problems we may have created (with development)."

The EDC has three planning pro-

jects in the works that members are helping to involve the help of the business community.

The nine-member EDC board hosted a breakfast last week to outline two of the plans and solicit comments and commitment from the 60-70 business leaders who represented the 12 Mile office corridor and Northwestern Highway.

"WE ASKED for people to respond and participate on committees so they can be part of the planning," McConnell said.

Farmington Hills-based John Grissim & Associates, Inc., is expected to provide a comprehensive landscaping plan for state-owned Northwestern Highway.

The thrust is to beautify Northwestern's median and prompt property owners along the trunkline to improve their properties. With a plan in place that details types of trees and the topography of the area, property owners will have something to follow, McConnell said.

A second plan is expected to cost approximately \$15,000. It is targeted for 12 Mile, between Farmington Road and Haggerty.

The rights-of-way study to be conducted by Orchard, Hille & Mc-

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Property tax burden shifts

Department head salaries
adjusted, 6A

By Joanne Mallazewski
staff writer

Farmington Hills isn't relying on homeowners as heavily as in past years to foot the bulk of property taxes.

Increasingly, commercial and industrial property owners are sharing more of the burden with 1987-88 representing an all-time high.

In the new budget year, residential property owners are paying only 57 percent of all property taxes generated in Farmington Hills, according to city manager William Costick.

Just last year, residents paid more than 60 percent of the property taxes generated. In the early 1980s, residential property owners were saddled with more than 70 percent of the tax burden.

Burgeoning commercial and industrial development in the last few years as well as a recent major reappraisal of these properties has prompted the shift in the tax burden, Costick said.

Despite complaints about expanding commercial and office strips, the city's growth means property own-

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Farmington Hills counselor Jim Whitledge discusses college materials with junior-to-be Stacey Shoemaker.

Farmington adviser to head counseling group

By Janice Brunson
staff writer

JIM WHITLEGE has mixed feelings about today's youth.

"The opportunities that exist for them are quite good. But I see many stumbling blocks that could get into their way," he observed.

Whitlege's opinions on youth are based on wide experience.

For 22 years, he has counseled students at Farmington High School, where he is now chair of the counseling department.

More recently, Whitlege, 46, was named president-elect to the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), a professional organization with 11,000 members nationwide.

By his own admission, most of Whitlege's life is devoted to youth, either directly or indirectly.

If he is not counseling students at Farmington High or working on professional matters with ASCA and other organizations, Whitlege is at home raising his teenagers.

He and his wife, Pat, a loan officer with Standard Federal, live in Bloomfield Hills with Julie, 19, a freshman at Michigan State University, and Karen, 16, a junior at Andover High School in Bloomfield Township.

people

THE KEY to effective school counseling, Whitlege believes, is introducing developmental guidance programs at an early age, preferably the elementary level, and integrating those programs into school curriculum.

Early guidance, he said, helps build physical, intellectual and emotional well being later, much like annual dental checkups during childhood help ensure healthy adult teeth.

"I feel a lot of problems at 16 and 17 years old could be prevented by intervention at a younger age. It is something that should be focused on through the developing years," he said.

Of the 28 school districts in Oakland County, Whitlege is aware of only two with existing elementary guidance programs, Ferndale and Southfield. Pontiac schools recently discontinued a program for lack of money.

"Farmington administrators have indicated they are interested in studying the need," said Whitlege, heartened by what he perceives as a national trend

toward such programs.

Sixteen states have passed legislation mandating elementary guidance programs, including Arkansas, West Virginia, Wisconsin and New York.

WHEN WHITLEGE assumes the presidency of ASCA next year, he will work full time at the job, taking a year's leave of absence from Farmington Schools.

A primary responsibility of the organization is issuing comprehensive position papers, which serve as guidelines for school counselors. Positions have been issued on such varied subjects as substance abuse, migrant students, sex equity and confidentiality.

Whitlege has long been active in ASCA and other professional organizations, including associations like Oakland Area Counselors and Michigan School Counselors.

Membership has "been a personal boon, enabling me to grow personally and professionally, exposing me to what is going on elsewhere."

Whitlege, who holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Western Michigan University and an educational specialist degree from Wayne State University, was named Oakland County Counselor of the Year in 1980.

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Mopeds aren't toys, parents remind

By Janice Brunson
staff writer

When Linda and David Celko of Farmington Hills considered buying a moped for their 13-year-old daughter, Kristin, they decided to first answer some questions.

"What is the traffic situation? Where are mopeds allowed? Are they dangerous?" the Celkos asked.

"It seems many parents first buy the moped and then ask the questions," Linda Celko said. "To me, that's backwards."

The Celkos' approach is refreshing to local law enforcement officers, who say the task of monitoring mopeds requires far too much time. They also say the potential for injury while riding a moped is high.

As soon as the weather breaks in the spring, until mopeds are put away in the fall, a disproportionate amount of police time, more than is normal or reasonable, is spent monitoring their use," said Sgt. Ray Cranston of the Farmington Hills Police Department Traffic Section.

Cranston referred to "moped gangs," groups of five or six riders, who are drawn together by a common interest in mopeds and who "cruise neighborhoods together, racing up and down the streets."

logged by Farmington Hills police already this season.

"When an automobile and a moped come together, the moped always loses," Cranston said. "In such accidents, I've never seen a non-injury to the moped driver."

Gary Goss, Farmington Department of Public Safety deputy director, said many complaints are received about drivers "cruising" neighborhood streets on mopeds.

"In more than 50 percent of the cases, if parents knew how serious the problem was and were aware of the consequences, they would not have bought the moped in the first place," he said.

While no moped-related injuries have been reported this year in Farmington, a number of the vehicles have been impounded.

"The most disturbing thing is illegal drivers who attempt to run when they spot a police car," Goss said. "Eventually, someone is going to get hurt."

DRIVERS YOUNGER than 18 years who are charged with a traffic violation or with operating a moped illegally face a juvenile petition and must appear in Oakland County Probate Court with a parent.

Laws governing the use of mopeds are:

years of age and hold either a valid driver license or a special moped license issued to drivers between 15-16 years of age.

• Mopeds must be operated on the far right edge of the roadway, out of the flow of traffic. They are

not allowed on freeways.

• Passengers may not be carried on a moped.

• Helmets are mandatory for all operators younger than 19.

• All mopeds must be equipped with front and rear wheel brakes,

headlights, taillights and stoplights, a muffler (except on electric motors), a horn and a seat.

Operation manuals are available at any Secretary of State Office. There's an office at 38487 10 Mile, Farmington Hills.

Tremor's power felt locally

For Farmington Hills resident Dorothy Gala, Wednesday night's earthquake was a weird experience.

The Farmington Hills Police Department Records Division clerk was watching television with her mother, Ethel Pinkham, in the living room of their Parker Street residence when she felt her chair going side to side shortly before 8 p.m.

As Gala related, "I looked at my mother and asked her if she felt anything. She said she felt something shaking on the couch where she was sitting."

The two soon heard about the quake on TV.

Gala's daughter, Michelle, 19, then walked into the room and said she had heard the china on the din-

ing room shadowbox rattling.

RECORDS DIVISION supervisor Debbie DeSilvio was watching the Detroit-Milwaukee game on PASS when everything in her Keego Harbor apartment started to shake. "It lasted about a minute, but it seemed a lot longer," she said. "The hanging plants moved with the tremor."

Farmington Hills resident Ernie Harwell was broadcasting the baseball game at Tiger Stadium when he felt the quake.

Jody Soronen, Farmington Hills councilwoman and Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce executive director, was thankful her son made it through high school commencement in

downtown Detroit.

It was North Farmington's graduation at Ford Auditorium. Soronen was seated in the balcony, which started to shake just before the ceremonies began. "It was a strange feeling, and we said, 'Please, we just wanted to get the last one graduated!'"

The quake measured 5.0 on the Richter scale, a measure of ground motion as recorded on seismographs. That's strong enough to cause moderate damage.

The quake's epicenter was at Lawrenceville in southeastern Illinois. The quake was caused by a fault in New Madrid, Mo. It was felt in 15 states and the province of Ontario. No major injuries or damage was reported.

NINE INJURIES have been

• Operators must be at least 15