

# Major improvements eyed in Hills budget

By Joanna Maliszewski  
staff writer

Major improvements and the addition of new positions will highlight the new fiscal year for Farmington Hills.

The new \$21.4 million 1987-88 budget — supported by 9.2 mills — will address long-needed improvements in roads, parks and drains as well as major equipment purchases and continued maintenance of city services.

In addition to road and park improvements, almost \$1 million will be spent for drain improvements, \$269,000 for sidewalk construction and equipment purchases of \$352,000.

Public facility projects totaling \$245,000 will include renovation of city hall, remodeling of the Wheeler Street fire station (No. 3), and property purchases for possibly a fifth fire station.

In 1987-88, at least 11½ positions will be added, plus various temporary seasonal workers in departments, such as special services for

**Based on the city's estimated 68,000 population, the new officers will increase the police-resident ratio to 1.2 officers for every 1,000 people.**

the parks and recreation division.

Seven new positions will be added for public safety. The police department will receive six new employees — four police officers and two cadets. Based on the city's estimated 68,000 population, the new officers will increase the police-resident ratio to 1.2 officers for every 1,000 people, city manager William Costick said.

THE FIRE department will receive a new administrative assistant for volunteer activities, who also is expected to serve as a firefighter, Costick said.

Six positions will be added in other departments. They include two employees in assessing, one equipment

operator in the public works department, an auto service mechanic and a senior planner for the community development department.

Financing is also requested for an additional account clerk in the finance department for six months. A request to make this position full-time will be included in the 1988-89 budget, Costick said.

Average salary increases for city employees is about 4 percent. But requests for increases of 5-8 percent for some department heads also was made, Costick said.

The following is a list of new 1987-88 salaries for certain department heads and administrators included in the new budget. In some cases, last

year's salaries are included as a comparison:

- City council: \$13,500 (\$1,800 per council member, \$2,700 for mayor). Salaries again did not increase.
- City manager: \$62,000 (\$57,000).
- Assistant city manager: \$54,500.
- Assistant to the city manager: \$38,100 (\$35,295).
- Personnel director: \$41,808.
- Finance director/treasurer: \$53,500 (\$49,500).
- Controller: \$40,000 (\$36,400).
- Deputy treasurer: \$31,500.
- Assessor: \$46,000 (\$43,600).
- Deputy assessor: \$36,000 (\$33,445).
- City clerk: \$46,000 (\$42,400).
- Deputy clerk: \$31,000 (\$27,505).
- Police chief: \$54,500 (\$50,500).
- Deputy police chief: \$47,087 (\$45,276).
- Fire chief: \$50,500 (\$46,200).
- Deputy fire chief: \$44,920.
- Public services director: \$53,500 (\$49,500).
- Assistant to public services director: \$37,100 (\$34,323).
- Zoning office supervisor: \$34,098 (\$32,787).
- Community development manager: \$41,808 (\$40,200).
- Building maintenance supervisor: \$30,752 (\$28,948).
- City engineer: \$48,500 (\$47,500).
- Department of public works superintendent: \$42,200 (\$40,200).
- Special services director: \$48,500 (\$46,200).
- Special services assistant director: \$34,200 (\$31,780).

## Growth spurs drop in taxes

Continued from Page 1

ers will pay less in city taxes.

THE NEW \$21.4 million budget — adopted without a murmur last week by the Farmington Hills City Council — will be supported by 9.2 mills. That's about 10 percent less than the 10.3 mill rate levied last year.

The new tax rate includes voter-approved millage for parks development and millage for capital improvements, especially roads.

City officials predict that those who will be paying taxes based on higher property assessments — that increased an average 6 percent this year — tax bills still will be less.

The average taxpayer who owns a \$100,000 house, assessed at \$50,000, who paid \$516 in city taxes last year will pay \$491, based on 9.2 mills.

The tax reduction comes as a result of a more than \$278 million increase in the city's state equalized value (SEV). About \$158 million in new construction was added to the tax rolls this year, Costick said.

The tax rate also is lower than the authorized charter limit — recalculated under the Headlee constitutional tax limitation amendment — of 9.4 mills. Because of the significant increase in value, the city was required to roll back its property tax rate so that it receives the same amount of money it would have received if property tax assessments

had risen at the same percentage as inflation.

THE BUDGET — the largest in the city's history — represents major strides in long-planned improvements, particularly in roads and parks. More than \$6 million in road improvements and almost \$2 million in parks and recreation facilities will be started in the coming year, Costick said.

The \$21.4 million budget represents an 8 percent increase over last year's \$19.7 million budget. Revenue from property taxes accounts for the majority of the city's increased revenue. Because of a strong state economy, state shared revenues increased almost 10 percent.

But 1987-88 will be the city's last year for federal shared revenues. Last year, the city's last \$243,000 in federal shared revenues was split so \$112,000 would be available this year, Costick said.

By June 30, 1988, city officials expect to have \$2.6 million in surplus or unappropriated funds. The surplus represents 12 percent of the city's operating budget, Costick said.

Though it's above the 10 percent surplus suggested by Wall Street experts, Costick said it's necessary that the city maintain the 12 percent level in light of the uncertainty of the state's economy and the city's plan for major capital improvements in the coming year.

## Budgets

### Millage rates lower for Farmington and schools

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

Millage rates for both the city of Farmington and Farmington Public Schools will be lower this year, thanks to higher property values, which increased the value of a mill.

But that doesn't mean property taxes for residents will necessarily be lower — some may be higher because of the mill's increased value, which is giving both taxing authorities bigger budgets in the 1987-88 fiscal year. A mill represents \$1 per \$1,000 of state equalized value.

Farmington's budget will increase from \$3.7 million to \$4.2 million, and Farmington Public Schools from \$56 million to \$66.5 million. Farmington will levy 10.65 operating mills, down from 10.76 last year, while the schools' will levy 31.75 mills compared to 32.5

levied last year. Neither is levying its authorized maximum millage.

Much of the school district's added millage value will come from commercial properties in the city of Farmington Hills, according to budget information from deputy superintendent Michael Flanagan.

Both the Farmington city council and school board approved 1987-88 budgets and tax rates at meetings early this month. Both were approvals of recommendations from their respective administrations.

AT THE school district, the new budget will:

- cover wage settlements for union contracts being negotiated this summer,
- allow \$2.5 million for equipment and building improvements, following last year's fix-up program, which calls for a total of \$10 million in improvements, and

• meet the district's goal for a 10 percent "fund equity," or surplus, to buffer the future effects of the Headlee Tax Limitation Amendment, or the probability of the state equalizing education dollars across Michigan.

THE OTHER concern voiced by Flanagan in budget sessions involves potential enrollment increases at the west end of the district, which he calls a "gigantic variable" in affecting the finances and resources of the district.

The school's budget was ultimately prepared by the financial department, who gathered information this year from building principals. Each principal estimated the number of students they expected for the coming year, and based on a cost-per-student budget, they listed their building needs.

At the city of Farmington, not

only was the millage lowered, but retail water and sewer rates will also be lowered for residents. Because of a reduction in wholesale rates from the city of Detroit, which supplies these services to Farmington, the city approved the lower rates.

Water will be lowered from 98 cents per 1,000 gallons to 93 cents. Sewerage treatment rates will go from 125 percent of the water rate to 120 percent. Effectively, Farmington customers will pay 15.9 cents per 1,000 gallons less, Farmington City Manager Robert Deadman said.

This year's SEV increase gave the city a \$134,600 surplus for the most recent fiscal year, which will be carried over into the new year and used for capital purchases, as will much of the increase in the coming year.

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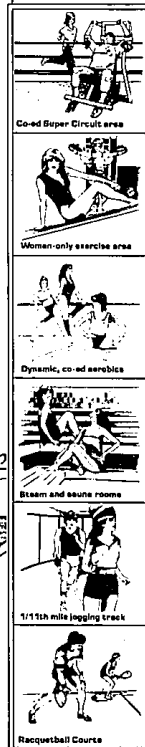
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