

Heritage tops fund wish list

There's also a possibility that a senior activities center would be grant eligible. A committee is currently examining senior activity needs, including the possibility of having a facility. "Perhaps the grant would help build a center or maybe help pay for improvements or renovation of an existing facility," Potter said.

Grant applications are expected to be available in April through a deadline has not yet been established for the annual grant programs, he said.

IN ADDITION to securing other available grants, the city has been financing its parks system with a five-year 0.5-mill levy approved three years ago. The city's master plan for parks and recreation carries an \$8 million to \$9 million price tag.

"We're funding only one-third of the master plan for parks and recreation for the community so we do need outside grant money to help us," Potter said.

The new grant programs will allow the city to "take the millage money, match the grants and extend the investment," Potter said. "We may have to secure local funding to provide the local matches." Whether the millage will have to be renewed is still undetermined.

Grants have played a significant role in the development of Farmington Hills parks. The Eleanor Spencer property, now Heritage Park, was purchased with the help of a 50 percent matching grant. With the near completion of the first phase of development, the city has received a 50 percent grant for the second phase to begin in Spring. A grant also is pending for the third phase.

Development of Pioneer Park, the athletic park at 13 Mile and Farmington Road, was aided with a 50 percent grant.

25 city-owned tires cut; \$1,000 reward offered

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lot of city hall, 11555 11 Mile. Police estimate damage at about \$1,800. A microphone from one of the cars also was stolen.

"Because of the building checks at city hall, we think it might have happened sometime after midnight," Sgt. Charles Nebus said.

ANYONE WHO might have knowledge of the incident should call Nebus at 478-9669. "All calls will be kept strictly confidential," police Chief William Dwyer said.

The malicious destruction of property is a felony because estimated damage to the vehicles is more than \$100. Conviction of a felony MDOP carries a maximum sentence of four years in jail and \$2,000 fine.

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Cities differ on tap-in for center

By Jackie Klein
staff writer

Southfield officials say they don't want to encourage urban sprawl to the detriment of the city. That's why they're refusing to include a new Commerce Township shopping center in a six-community sewer district.

At issue is a request from Retail Development Inc., owner of the Newberry Shopping Center on the northwest corner of 14 Mile and Haggerty, to modify the Evergreen-Farmington Sewage Disposal District to include the property.

Agreement to use the sewer is needed from Southfield, Farmington Hills, Farmington, Keego Harbor, Orchard Lake Village and West Bloomfield, members of the district.

Some stores are already occupied in the 114,000-square-foot shopping center. Developers received building permits from Commerce Township in anticipation that a new treatment plant would be completed, according to Don Gross, Southfield strategic planner.

BECAUSE THE plant won't be available for one or two years, Gross said, developers offered Farmington Hills \$450,000 for a permanent tap in to the sewer. That city agreed but if Southfield objects, the district can't be modified.

"Our approval wouldn't affect our available sewer capacity," Gross said. "But a philosophical question arises. To what extent does the city of Southfield want to be a party to continual expansion of the suburban fringe?"

"Although a relatively small center, it (Newberry) still provides competing facilities for Southfield businesses and is an inducement for new residential construction. Southfield should be an advocate of retaining its residential and business bases and shouldn't be encouraging urban sprawl."

One alternative, Gross said, is for the owner of

the center to transport the sewage to a treatment facility that would accommodate it.

Councilman Sidney Lantz during last week's city council study session maintained he doesn't believe in stopping progress or keeping developers in another city from building a shopping center.

COUNCILMAN STEVE Hurite disagreed.

"This shopping center is in the middle of nowhere. There are no roads to get there. Developers hope to draw people to the outlying area, creating road problems and pulling road money from Southfield."

"We must stop somewhere or go all the way to Flint. It's time all six communities took a stand. We shouldn't trade our sewer capacity, even for money."

Council president Eli Robinson and councilwoman Barbara Talley indicated their opposition to the request for a sewer tap-in.

Cities plowed under with business

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north of Northwestern.

The city of Farmington, however, has taken responsibility for Grand River, which is designated a state road — but is supposed to be the jurisdiction of the Oakland County Road Commission from Gilt to Purdue Roads.

"We weren't satisfied with the way the county was maintaining it when Purdue through Halstead," said Earl Billing, director of public services for Farmington. "We felt we could do a better job."

SO FARMINGTON contracted with the state to do the snow and ice removal for which the state reimburses them on a per-mile basis.

Farmington budgets approximately \$70,000 for manpower and materials, including 400-450 tons of salt, gas and maintenance for its 11 vehicles, for snow and ice removal. They consider 2 1/2 to three inches of snow on residential streets a hazardous enough condition to send out the plows.

Billing said that in addition to Grand River, Stoum, Power, Shawassaw, parts of Warner, all of Drake, Gill Road and any school bus routes are considered major roads and take priority for snow clearance.

Public safety is the foremost priority on county roads said John Joy, spokesman for the Oakland County Road Commission.

"What we do is what the communities don't do," Joy described the OCRC's jurisdiction. "We have the responsibility for 2,400 miles of roads, or the distance between Detroit and El Paso, Texas," Joy

laughed. Of that, 1,400 miles are paved and 900 miles are gravel.

"We have a dual concern on critical roads," those with a traffic volume of 40,000 vehicles per day, Joy said. That includes freeways and major mile roads. "We're concerned with icing as well as snow removal."

DRIVERS MAY wonder why the county's 85-95 vehicles are out when the snow is melting, he noted. But the trucks plow and salt simultaneously, to get the salt down before the melted snow can freeze again, and cause a worse hazard.

"We can't remove much more than one inch of snow with salt," he explained. Joy said the only time the OCRC has problems with snow removal is when a storm starts quickly and rush hour starts. Then, he said, it's slow going, "because we're in it too!"

Residents in Farmington and Farmington Hills can call the public works departments of those cities with complaints about snow removal — or lack of same. For the county roads, Joy suggested calling the Department of Citizens' Services in Pontiac.

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PAC formed for bond election

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was for building renovations and safety concerns. It failed by a 218-vote margin.

"This is a much cleaner, more understandable issue," O'Malley said. "I think they (voters) understand we have a lot of portables, and just a lot of kids." O'Malley said because old bond issues will be completed this year, the additional 1.2 mills will not increase the debt tax rate for the district.

The parental involvement is also a plus, she said. "I'm really excited about it. It helps us, but also helps our community. I'm pleased they took the ball and ran with it."

The public meetings to give information and answer questions about the bond issue will be:

- Monday, Jan. 23, at 7 p.m. at North Farmington High School.
- Tuesday, Jan. 24, at 7 p.m. at Harrison High School.
- Wednesday, Jan. 25, at 7:30 p.m. at Farmington High School.

Residents interested in information about the bond election can attend any of these meetings, all sponsored by the Friends of Farmington Schools. Anyone interested in getting involved with the group can contact Jensen at 478-7017.

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