



Hills fights to prevent floods

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THE CITY council also adopted and approved petitions and resolutions to initiate financing — without the support of surrounding communities — for the proposed storm drain improvements. The state Department of Transportation and Oakland County Road Commission will help pay the more than \$18 million project.

City officials defended their decision to tax all property owners for the improvements though only isolated areas suffered varying degrees of damages in last June's torrential rains.

"This sewage contaminated a good portion of our community," councilman Terry Sever said. "That has a major impact on our whole community."

Despite the city's improvements, Sever said he will remain concerned about flooding because communities north of the city, such as West Bloomfield and Commerce Township, have not come through — either financially or with other types of commitments — that would further alleviate problems with another 10-year storm.

"We felt there was an inadequate

capacity throughout the whole system," Sever said. He said he hopes other communities will force developers to increase drain capacity in their developments.

Councilman Aldo Vagnozzi suggested taking another look at the city's density and water control. "We must be diligent in our own area not to overload the system we are replacing."

Budget holds line

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"We have taken a very conservative approach," City Manager William Costick said. "We have attempted whenever possible to forestall capital expansion."

The proposed budget allows each city department to meet expanded demands though the \$27.6 million total represents a \$1.2 million cut in departments' spending requests.

The Truth-in-Taxation hearing was required Wednesday because city officials plan to levy 0.6-mill (for storm drainage) above the rolled-back rate of 8.2 mills.

A taxpayer with a home valued at \$50,000 paid \$441.51 in city taxes based on 8.3 mills in 1989-90. At the proposed 8.8 mills in 1990-91, that same taxpayer whose home increased an average 7.8 percent in value to \$53,900, would pay \$478.15.

With no operating tax increase, the proposed budget will be balanced by relying on increased state equalized valuation. The city's 1990 SEV is projected at \$2.2 billion compared to \$1.9 billion last year.

About \$108 million of the increase is in new construction and \$112 mil-

lion is in economic adjustments or increased values on property, finance director Charles Rosch said.

THE PROPOSED budget includes new positions. Originally, Costick reduced department heads' request for 19 new positions to four: a police patrol officer, a code enforcement officer, a building department office supervisor and an equipment operator.

The city council proposes to add a police/school liaison officer (the city will pay half or \$25,000); a part-time police department records bureau clerk (\$15,000); and a fire department hazardous materials specialist (\$35,000).

The council's addition will be financed by a \$50,000 reduction in the city's capital fund for land purchases and \$25,000 in planned public works department renovations.

As in past years, increased costs for refuse disposal sting the budget. Costs are expected to increase 20 percent from \$1.8 million in 1989-90 to \$2.1 million in the new budget year. Refuse disposal represents 8 percent of the city's budget.



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