

Haggerty connector gets SEMCOG's OK

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Sands, a Wayne State University administrator attending his first SEMCOG meeting.

"I don't believe a solution with a three- or four-fold increase in capacity is in the best interests of the region," Sands said, arguing the highway would lead to more dispersion of population.

"Population doesn't follow roads," replied Van Tassel. The longtime SEMCOG delegate argued that the city of Detroit's decision to extend water and sewer lines made western Oakland's population growth possible, and the expanded road system merely serves people already there. Delegates from the seven-county, 140-member assembly shouted their approval.

THE DECISION attends an often bitter, 16-year, "environmental squabble over what to do for traffic on Haggerty Road, dividing line between Novi and Farmington Hills, Commerce and West Bloomfield.

In 1976 the state Highway Commission rejected plans for an M-275 freeway, calling the massive project a danger to fragile wetlands and the headwaters of the Huron and Clinton rivers.

One plan after another was discussed in the following years until MDOT proposed, and SEMCOG accepted, an amendment to the 2005

SEMCOG also asked for a bike path along the \$79 million controlled access road, which will run from the intersection of the I-96, I-696 and I-275 freeways north to Pontiac Trail.

regional plan called "alternative 1A":

- A six- to eight-lane controlled access boulevard west of existing Haggerty Road. It would connect the freeway intersection and go north to Pontiac Trail, where it would tie into the existing Haggerty.
- A freeway-type interchange at 12 Mile Road.
- Grade-level intersections at 13 Mile, 14 Mile and Maple roads and Pontiac Trail.
- Widening of Pontiac Trail at the north end to five lanes.
- Widening of the mile roads at the intersections to four or six lanes.

As of 1987, two-lane Haggerty was handling 22,000 to 31,000 vehicles a day. Even without improvements — traffic was projected to increase to 29,000 to 37,600 vehicles per day. "Peak hour traffic at intersections would deteriorate to totally unacceptable levels of congestion throughout the entire corridor," said

a SEMCOG staff memo.

IN A RELATED report, SEMCOG delegates learned that the region's population hasn't increased in the last 10 years but actually dropped 2 percent — from 4.68 million to 4.59 million.

Dennis Rutter, Waterford Township supervisor and chair of SEMCOG's DataCenter Advisory Council, said there has been great population loss in older developed portions of the region with little vacant land and great growth in the outer "wave."

That "wave," he said, showed population growth of 20 percent or more in communities in three general areas:

- The I-96 corridor from Farmington Hills and Novi out to Brighton.
- Five communities around Ann Arbor.
- The M-59 corridor from Rochester Hills across Macomb County.

on the agenda

Below are highlights from the agendas of government meetings this week. All meetings are open to the public.

Farmington Hills City Council
Council chambers
31555 11 Mile
7:30 p.m. Monday, March 25

The council will consider: introduction of a recycling ordinance, approval of an updated and revised fire department mutual aid agreement with the city of Farmington, a grant application for property along Eight Mile Road, between Gill and Halsted, an increase of green fees at San Marino Golf Course.

The council also will receive the annual fire department report.

Farmington Hills City Council and Farmington Public Schools
Council chambers
31555 11 Mile
7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 26

At this joint meeting, the members will discuss the effect of property tax reform and other state and

local financial issues. They will receive a report on a joint effort to address pedestrian safety problems on 12 Mile Road near Harrison High School. And they will hear an update on the city's parks and recreation millage plan.

Farmington Hills Planning Commission
Council chambers
31555 11 Mile
7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 28

The following items will be discussed during the study session:

- Proposed historic district addition at 31635 Allison Dr., Lot 60, Pasadena Park, north of 11 Mile, west of Orchard Lake Road. Owner: Richard Hamman.
- Proposed historic district addition at 26135 Holly Hill Drive, Lot 267, Pasadena Park, north of 11 Mile, west of Orchard Lake Road. Owner: Frederick Saylor.

Commissioners also will discuss the definition of the elderly housing text amendment, tree ordinance replacement requirements, target area document and sign ordinance.

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