

Youth program offered in Hills

BY WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

The Farmington Hills Youth Services Program will be new and improved in its first full year of operation.

Todd Lipa, director of the program that started in March, said many of the problems, such as transportation glitches, have been solved since the program's summer hiatus.

"We're also hoping to have the YMCA on line once the expansion is completed (in October)," Lipa said. "It will be a different kind of center."

"We're also trying to find a space in the southeast corner of the city."

The program was funded in part by a federal grant of \$385,000 and \$200,000 of the city's parks and recreation millage money earmarked for youth programs.

It is designed for middle-school aged children (11-16) and was well attended in its first 3 1/2 month incarnation.

Registration for the program is scheduled to coincide with Sunday's Families Fest at the

■ 'It will be a different kind of center.'

Todd Lipa
—program director

Costick Center on 11 Mile from noon to 4 p.m. Students can also register once the school year begins.

The program begins Sept. 3 and includes basketball, swimming, computer games and many other activities.

The program was a creation of the city's Commission on Children Youth and Families.

Councilwoman Nancy Bates pushed for the commission's creation while mayor. Lipa was its first chairman.

The program, also called Horizons, is designed by the young participants themselves under the supervision of full and part-time staffers.

The program works with the schools for "zero tolerance" of drugs and alcohol abuse, while providing a safe, unstructured environment for after school activities.

Even homework can and has been done at the center, which shares space with senior programs.

In its first months, the program had 233 male and 182 female participants.

East Middle School, which is within walking distance of the Costick Center, had 204 students out of the 415 participants.

"I think you'll see more Dunkin' students involved once we get the Y up and running," Lipa said.

Sunday's Families Fest will feature tours of the Youth Center along with giveaways, immunizations, fingerprinting, games and other activities.

Back to school physicals will also be provided at a nominal cost.

Photo identification card will also be issued to program participants this year.

For further information, call 473-1841 or 489-3814.

Traffic from page A1

account present and projected use.

A selection committee composed of Councilwoman Vicki Barnett, Biasell, and Bob DeCorte from the Traffic Improvement Association of Oakland County developed a short list of five consulting firms to complete the study.

That study will have input from a larger steering committee, composed of residents, business representatives and others. That committee will meet with the consultant Aug. 28.

In addition to input from the steering committee, Market Opinion Research will survey residents.

"We'll survey residents and businesses to get their ideas on traffic and travel through Farmington Hills," said Laurie Wargelin, the company's vice president. "We want their opinions concerning traffic, safety and commuting."

Wargelin said the steering committee would help focus on specific issues and questions would be sent through the city's newsletter so that any resident can take part in the survey.

"We'll also do a telephone survey of from 400-600 people to make sure we have a representative sample," she said.

The Hills company has done similar work in southeastern Michigan, New Hampshire, Indi-

■ 'The traffic will continue to grow because of all the development in the area.'

Rolf Kilian
—Metro Transportation

ana and the Cincinnati area, Wargelin said.

Metro Transportation has worked in Southfield and Novi as well as doing some work in Farmington Hills, said Senior Vice President Rolf Kilian. "We have 33 years of experience in this field," Kilian said. "The key will be what problems the steering committee identifies."

Kilian, as well as city officials, are cautioning residents about expecting too much.

"The traffic will continue to grow because of all the development in the area," he said.

"But we can look at traffic signals, such as those on 12 Mile, and improve the flow of traffic, improve air quality and safety."

Biasell said the improvement could mean small time and aggravation savings for individual drivers that add up to major savings on an intersection crossed by 40,000 vehicles.

The use of the county's "Fast Track" system, modeled after a system in Sydney, Australia, uses cameras to monitor traffic

and adjust signaling accordingly. That system is already in place in some areas of Farmington Hills, including at 11 Mile and Orchard Lake.

"We do want to look at some specific ideas, such as what can be done at 12 Mile and Orchard Lake (by the I-696 interchange) and the possible use of roundabouts," Biasell said. "But the city council will eventually decide what parameters to use."

"We'll have improvements and less congestion," Biasell said. "But we are not talking about a dramatic change for each motorist."

McCarthy said some of the changes will involve giving motorists more of a perception of an improved traffic flow than a real change.

"The Middlebelt and Grayfield intersection is an example of that," he said. "But we've had lots of compliments on that."

Biasell said any improvement must also be perceived as an improvement in order for the public to see it as a real improvement.

Barnett agreed that dramatic solutions won't be forthcoming.

"We have to do this within the existing budget," she said. "But some problems are not that difficult. We had a situation where garbage was being collected on a major road at rush hour."

Tourney set for Hills links

Catholic Social Services of Oakland County will host its inaugural Golf Outing at Independence Green-Golf course in Farmington Hills Aug. 23.

"This event will help raise funds to support such services as family counseling, substance abuse, child welfare, adolescent counseling and older adult care," said Joseph Vindici, a board member chairing the outing.

Limited space is still available for the team scramble.

The cost is \$65 per person and includes golf, a cart, snacks, lunch and prizes for the longest drive, closest to the pin, door prizes and much more.

A cash bar and hors d'oeuvres will follow.

Janina Parrott Jacobs, founder of the Metro Detroit Chapter of the Executive Woman's Golf Association, will be on hand to offer tips and accept challenges to "beat the pro" in putting contests.

Jacobs carries a 1-handicap, is ranked among the top women amateur golfers in Michigan and is currently featured in a series of Golf segments for UPN Channel 50.

Independence Green golf course is at 24316 Washington Court in Farmington Hills, near Grand River and Halsted. Call Vindici at 1-810-442-0447 to sign up.

them. "Do you think you can put a container outside where people can put their cigarette butts?" She's not shy."

Finlayson's energy coincides with her love of exercise. She ran track and was a member of the pom-pom squad at Farmington High.

She was part of a Michigan pom-pom delegation that went to the Olympics in Atlanta, but whose performance was canceled after the bomb blast in Centennial Park.

At 8 a.m., or sometimes even

7:30 a.m., Finlayson arrives to work. Downtown is peaceful at that time of the morning, she said.

Her spruce up patrol includes the entire Central Business District, which includes the Downtown Center east to the Village Commons.

For the most part, the weather has been cooperative. Though Finlayson continued to work outside when it has rained.

Her familiar presence attracts attention.

When motorists drive by, some

gawkers will beep their horns. She ignores them. She's also come across a couple of "scary, eerie" looking people, but there's been no problems.

"Farmington is such a friendly place," she said. "There are so many seniors who live here and they'll say encouraging words like, 'Good job.'"

Her summer job has also given her a new perspective on the place where she's grown up.

"It's taught me to appreciate the hard work it takes to keep Farmington beautiful," she said.

Civic from page A1

Last year, the Civic hosted a travel log series. Attendance wasn't great, but Hohler believes there's enough interest to sustain discussing and showing travel films.

Dolby sound will also be installed in the theater's balcony theater area. The main floor has had stereophonic sound for several years.

"What else can I do?" Hohler said.

Other existing theaters like the Old Orchard and United Artist Theater on Grand River will feel the pinch, Hohler predicted.

"They're all going to see a piece of the pie disappear," he said.

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