

Farmington and Trenton officials exchange a day

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Officials in Trenton started a Downtown Development Authority a couple of years ago and wanted to see how an established district worked.

So they called Farmington. And when Mayor's Exchange Day arrived Tuesday, May 18, officials from Farmington and Trenton met - first in Farmington, and then Thursday, May 20 in Trenton.

"It was very informative," said Farmington City Manager Frank Lauhoff. "There isn't a lot of contact with Oakland County and the downriver communities."

"Trenton is a beautiful city. It has a lot of comparable neighborhoods to Farmington and they have a waterfront, which we wish we had."

The Michigan Municipal League began the Mayor's Exchange program in the 1950s as a means of encouraging officials in communities to meet and

exchange ideas and information. One hundred-ninety-seven communities participate in the program. The five Grassroots Politics exchange amongst themselves. "That's why there's an odd number of communities," Lauhoff said.

Trenton officials began their tour of Farmington with a welcoming reception at city hall, followed by a tour of the facility, the downtown Farmington library branch, pump station, retention basin, as well as a tour of a business in the DDA to show how a building was reused. Officials also visited the public safety training center and the Gov. Warner Mansion.

"We all learn new ideas. We share information," said Farmington Mayor Mary Bush, as she welcomed Farmington and Trenton officials to a luncheon at Marco's.

"We're very happy to have all the folks from Trenton with us," Bush continued, offering Trenton Mayor Wayne Sieloff moments of Farmington, including a key to the city and an almanac of notable historic spots.

Representatives from the Farmington Public Schools, as well as the 47th District Court, Oakland Community College, Farmington Community Library, chamber of commerce, Downtown Development Authority, the city's historic and beautification commissions, as well as the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission attended the luncheon.

Farmington officials learned that Trenton was a village in the 1850s dedicated to ship building. "It's an old community. There is a lot of history," said Terrence Jarvis, Trenton city administrator.

The town was named Trux after a settler. As time evolved, so did the name and eventually it became Trenton.

Farmington is about half the size of Trenton. Farmington has a population of 10,000, Trenton, 20,000. Trenton is seven square miles, Farmington half of that.

The same is true about each community's state equalized property value - Trenton's is at \$750 million, Farmington about half.

In Trenton, however, industry accounts for about 40 percent of the total SEV - McLouth Steel, remains and operates about 10 percent of the plant. Commercial accounts for 10 percent of the city's SEV, and residential about 60 percent.



STAFF PHOTO BY KILL LEMLEY

Gathering: Farmington Mayor Mary Bush and City Manager Frank Lauhoff greet Trenton Mayor Mark Sieloff at the annual Mayor's Exchange program in Farmington City Hall.

In Farmington, industry accounts for only 16 percent, while commercial comprises 35 percent and the rest is residential.

In Trenton, Farmington officials toured the DDA district and the waterfront, as well as 500-acre Elizabeth Park.

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