

Roundabouts

Commerce to hire traffic expert

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A traffic engineer from England will add at least one unusual twist to Commerce Township's Haggerty Road extension project. Commerce Downtown Development Authority officials are hiring an expert in roundabout design to help create one at the intersection of Pontiac Trail and Haggerty Road.

More roundabouts — also known as traffic circles — might also be built at intersections along the new Haggerty Road when it's widened and realigned to connect with Union Lake Road.

"He's the best in the world," said DDA director Wynn Berry about English engineer Barry Crown, who's spent his career studying and designing traffic circles throughout the world.

Used mostly in Europe and the eastern United States, roundabouts are rarely seen in Michigan or other parts of the mid-west.

A traffic circle eliminates traf-

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fic signals and keep motorists moving through an intersection. Traffic moves in a counter clockwise direction, and motorists may turn off to drive north, south, east or west.

The already crowded intersection of Pontiac Trail and Haggerty Road is expected to grow even busier in 2002 when M-5, which now ends at 14 Mile Road, is extended north to intersect with Pontiac Trail. The roads will meet just west of Haggerty.

The Michigan Road Commission is putting the M-5 job out for bid this winter, and construction is projected to begin next spring. That's why the Commerce DDA wants to put together a design soon for a roundabout at the intersection of Pontiac Trail and Haggerty Road.

The preliminary land survey is complete on the township's \$32 million Haggerty Road extension project, but the road isn't

designed yet, according to Loren Crandell of Giffels-Webster Engineers. To ease north and southbound traffic and cut traffic signals, the new road might include Michigan left turns and more roundabouts, Crandell said.

"We're really waiting for the Detroit Gun Club issue to clear up," Crandell said.

The new road will run through gun club property and force the shooting club to move to another location. DDA officials have proposed moving the club near another Commerce gun club, Multi-Lakes Recreational Area.

But neighbors there are opposed to the idea. The DDA has hired sound engineers to research whether the club can be relocated without adding more noise to the neighborhood.

Berry said he hopes to receive results on that study within the next week or two.



Pleasant: The music of Skip Rosenthal and his banjo entertain passersby in downtown Farmington. On warm Friday and Saturday nights you might find Skip pickin' a tune in front of his store, Books Abound.

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Candidates discussed the aggressive stance being taken by Farmington city officials as far as re-development of downtown is concerned, such as purchase of the Civic Theatre.

"The city needs to take a proactive approach," Mitchell said. "There are portions ... on Grand River and Orchard Lake that could use assistance from the city in redevelopment. ... Purchasing the Civic sends the right message."

Hartsock, meanwhile, asserted that "proactive government is something our council has a history of." He mentioned annual reviews of the city mission statement, lobbying with state legis-

lators on important local issues and forming partnerships with private enterprise.

The proactive city involvement in buying the Civic was defended by McShane, because many residents during the visioning sessions said they wanted the theater to stay open well into the 21st century.

"During that visioning process, some really great things came to mind," McShane said. "... People want a movie theater to go to. I know in my heart this will work."

Dibert maintained that the money used to buy the Civic could have been better used "to create a marketing plan so peo-

ple want to come here," to help Farmington forge an identity.

For the most part, the candidates agreed that state revenue sharing would be one subject they'd discuss with Gov. John Engler, if he were to pay a visit to a Farmington council meeting.


"If the cuts keep being made (in revenue sharing) we'll have to raise the taxes," McShane said. "And I really don't want to do that."

The candidates forum will air on SWOCC channel 12 as follows: 4 p.m. Monday, Oct. 18; 6 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 20; 9 p.m. Monday, Oct. 26; 3 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 27; and 6:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 1.

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