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tomers. Other city staffers visited affected stores to apologize for the inconvenience.

The portion of the lot asphalted Thursday is mostly slated for customer parking, so patrons were either scrambling for parking spaces or deciding to come back another day.

"It's unfortunate there wasn't better communication on the part of the contractor," said Kevin Gushman, director of public services. "In the future, for these kinds of projects, the city will take on the responsibility of notifying the merchants."

At least they could notify Burns, who recalled a conversation between 6:30-7 a.m. Thursday with Paul Smith of the city's public services department.

"I told Paul, the next time there's something like this, call me. I'll walk up and down Grand River and tell everyone," she said with a smile.

### Lots of bread

But Thursday's lack of business at Farmington Bakery, due to the project, wasn't a laughing matter. Both Burns and her husband, Jeff Pavlik, were disappointed about the lack of communication with merchants — particularly because city-merchant communication recently has been a major issue, in relation to the Farmington Area Family Fest.

**'In the future, for these kinds of projects, the city will take on the responsibility of notifying the merchants.'**

**Kevin Gushman**  
—Public services director

tion to the Farmington Area Family Fest.

"We told Frank (Lauhoff), and he agreed, things like this, these are the easy things to deal with between merchants and the city," Pavlik said. "Let us know the lot is closing. Tell us. It's fabulous we're getting the blackout, but it'd be a lot easier for us and other merchants to know this was going on."

"We tried to find ways the last several months to open dialogue between downtown (merchants) and the city. This is one of the instances where we see there still needs to be work on continuing that dialogue."

Burns and Pavlik said they learned of the project about 6 p.m. Wednesday night, when they saw a sign on the sidewalk near their Grand River business. The sign stated that the parking lot would be closed as of 7 a.m.

Thursday.

Of course, by that time, plans had already been made to bring in a third employee to work the counter and to make enough baked goods to meet the usual Thursday demand, which Burns and Pavlik said is heavy.

Other worries — besides customers being able to park and make their way to the shop — included whether deliveries could still be made and whether they would have to pay for an extra trash pickup. At about 2 p.m. Thursday, a garbage truck did manage to empty the Dumpster used by the bakery and other adjacent businesses.

Because business was much slower than anticipated, they were throwing out large shopping bags filled with loaves of bread.

On Friday, Lauhoff said it is standard operating procedure for contractors to notify Farmington residents and businesses about pending road or parking lot projects. He said T&M Asphalt officials were apologetic for the problem, which apparently stemmed from a last-minute change to Thursday's asphaltting schedule.

"We stress to contractors that they have to notify," Lauhoff said. "... T&M said it was just a mix-up. They apologized."

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ties during work scheduling.

"My letter will (also) indicate that, while construction is going on, roads will remain open to local traffic," Gushman said. "In the evening, people will be able to use on-street parking, if necessary, and they will have access to their driveways."

For the latter, however, that only applies for all but three days of the work period. During three-day periods, when residential driveway approaches are replaced, residents will need to make alternative parking plans, he added.

Both projects are expected to be completed by June 30. But the construction schedules are tentative. Actual work dates may change due to weather or other factors.

The work will be done by Warren-based Angelo Infrate Construction Co. Existing roads will be repaired and topped with three-inch asphalt overlays.

That's the simplistic description. Actually, Gushman explained, the method at one project will differ from that at the other.

In the Bel Aire subdivision, which is west of Orchard Lake and south of 10 Mile roads, concrete will be mildly fractured and then compressed by a heavy roller, to smooth out shifted slabs, for example.

A geo-textile mat then will be placed over the concrete prior to the asphalt overlay. That project, by the far the bigger of the two, will cost about \$500,000.

For repairs to Cass, Grace and Adams, a \$60,000 project, workers will "grind up the existing pavement and use that material for base repairs, and then they'll put the three inches of asphalt on," he continued.

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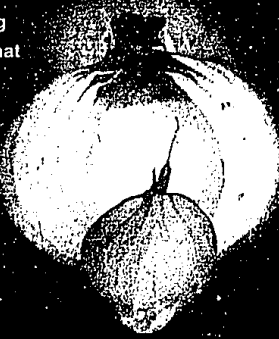
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