

BERMS

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6,237 linear feet of city-owned property along 3 miles of I-275, city officials said.

"The properties are not continuous, but there are several opportunities where they could explore living walls or earthen berms," said Carroll, who proposed her idea to members of the city's streets, roads, and plans committee.

"It is a very economical way of doing this."

Committee chairman Joe Laura referred the proposal to city administration. Laura and Mayor Jack Kirksey see potential hurdles going beyond a few mounds of dirt, though.

Issues of right-of-ways, uniform design and maintenance must be worked out. There's also the matter of cost.

"It's the route to go," Kirksey said. "I think they are going to need funding beyond what is envisioned, though."

Kirksey credited the vigilance of homeowners and their group, Families Near I-275, for getting the state to address highway noise matters.

Nearly 17 years ago, Michigan Department of Transportation diamond-ground the concrete surface, which state officials said reduced the din by 5.4 decibels. More measures need to be taken, said a Families Near I-275 spokesman.

Residents who live within 500 feet of I-275 notice some difference since the freeway pavement was diamond ground in summer 2001. Those who live 1,000 feet away say the constant roar persists, said Larry Shoup, a Farmington Hills resident and Families Near I-275 member.

Carroll agrees with Shoup's assessment. "They did help, but it wasn't enough," said Carroll, also a member of Families Near I-275. "If (MDOT) washed their hands of this and said, 'This is all we can do,' what else can we as residents do?"

Families Near I-275, which formed shortly after the freeway was reconstructed in 1999, is heartened by other developments. In July, MDOT adopted a statewide road noise abatement policy.

A few months later, MDOT hired the National Center for Asphalt Technology to conduct a study of pavement noise at several sites, including I-275 from M-14 to I-696 and I-96 east of the M-14/I-275 interchange.

Those results are expected soon.

Unlike studies that measure sound by the roadside, a trailer picks up noise directly from tire-pavement contact source. The data will help figure out what types of concrete and asphalt surfaces create less noise.

On I-96, there were three types of surfaces from I-275 to Telegraph for sound analysis. The stretch included concrete, stone mastic asphalt and superpave asphalt, Shoup said.

"Everybody is clamoring for quieter roads," Shoup said. "The noise is pervasive in many neighborhoods."

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GOVERNING

FROM PAGE A1

Samantha said she was clueless what city officials do all day until she spent some time with them on Tuesday.

"Now I know what it's like to run a city," she said.

She said visiting the police station and talking with police officers is sparking an interest in pursuing a career in the field.

Seeing public safety officers do their jobs, makes her believe the city is a safe place to live as well, she added.

The Farmington/Farmington Hills Rotary also hosted guest speaker Jim Price, former catcher for the Detroit Tigers and possible replacement for Ernie Harwell as the Tigers announcer, after the students had lunch at the Costick Center.

During the mock council meeting, those chosen to be city council members discussed questions from the student audience. The questions focused on how local government affects a resident's life day and night and why it's important to participate in local government.



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The student city council opens the meeting with the pledge.

ernment.

Brian Farmer, recreation supervisor for the city, invited some of the younger students to learn more about the Mayors' Youth Council, where kids have a say in how and where they'd like to spend their free time.

He asked the students if they thought there needed to be

more programs for youth.

More than half raised their hands. He said a skate park is something kids definitely want.

"But you guys got to come to me and tell me we need it," he said.

Teri Arbenowsky, assistant to the city manager in Farmington Hills, coordinates the Student

Government Day.

She said this is the first year in the long-running program that freshmen were invited to participate.

"We thought if we had younger students interested in government it might get them involved earlier," she said.

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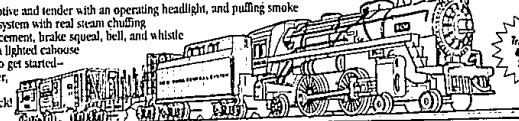
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