

ROADS

then Nine Mile to Grand River.

The project will entail the complete removal of the existing pavement and roadway including curb and gutters. It will replace a more than 60-year-old water main located under the road.

The estimated cost is \$600,000 with the water main replacement.

At the same meeting, Jon Kramer of Orchard, Hiltz & McClintock Inc., the city's engineering consultants, said it's important to make sure anything else that should be done while making these improvements is addressed.

Improvements include: crosswalks which are less likely to be destroyed by snowplows, curb bumpouts to better protect parking motorists from oncoming traffic and a more neighbor-friendly appeal, Kramer said.

"The road geometrics, beside the curb bumpouts, will be exactly the same," Kramer said. "Sidewalks will remain the same."

A lane turn will be improved at Shilawassee. Some conduits will be installed in case of any future lighting and sprinkler system improvements.

Basically the improvements will incorporate fixing the existing infrastructure, some traffic calming, making the area more pedestrian-friendly and encouraging a "downtown" atmosphere.

The road will be closed except for local traffic.

Posted detours are expected, Gushman said.

Northbound Farmington Road traffic will be detoured east on Grand River to Power Road then westbound on Shilawassee to northbound Farmington Road.

Southbound Farmington Road traffic will detour westbound on Shilawassee to Grand River and eastbound to southbound Farmington Road.

Jaycees need golfers for second annual benefit

The Farmington Area Jaycees will be hosting its second annual Fox Creek Golf Outing to help raise funds to support all the group's community programming.

The event will be held on Saturday,

July 12, at Fox Creek Golf Course in Livonia, Seven Mile between Farmington and Newburgh.

Registration starts at 10:30 a.m. The cost for a foursome is \$380,

which includes green fees, cart, lunch at the turn, dinner, two drink tickets and goody bag. There will be prizes for hole in one, longest drives and closest to the pin as well as door prizes and a silent

auction. Deadline for registration is June 27.

For registration information, onto the Jaycees' Web site, www.fajc.org or call (248) 477-5227.

PROJECT

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back sent by the state Department of Transportation, the victim of an ailing economy that's putting fewer dollars in state coffers for road improvements.

The state has shifted gears and is putting road money into fixing existing roads instead of building new ones, said Robert Morosi, a

Transportation Department spokesman.

However, this doesn't mean that the project, which Southfield officials have lobbied for for 30 years, is being scrapped. There's still hope. "It's being deferred to a future date," Morosi said, adding that the Southfield project could come up again by or before 2007. "It's considered an expansion project."

Actually there is some work still being done on the ramp project he said, adding that design work and property

acquisitions will be completed this year.

The improvements put on hold are:

- Reconstruction of a portion of Franklin Road, moving it west and adding a connection to Northwestern Highway and 12 Mile.
- An off ramp from eastbound I-696 to American Drive.
- An on ramp to westbound I-696 for Northwestern Highway.

The project is needed, Bell said, because Southfield is an office center for metro

Detroit and "there's an influx of people coming and going."

"They may work here, but they don't live here. We need an appropriate road system. It's important to the survival of the city," he said.

The project would also help Southfield residents not only get to and from work, but also help them avoid traffic congestion and reach their destinations on the city's west side and avoid Telegraph Road.

The Southfield Chamber of Commerce will probably get involved in an attempt to get the project back on track, said

Ed Powers, its president and director.

"We've taken a survey of our members and road are one of the top three issues," he said, adding that the I-696 ramp would help employers in the area by allowing workers to get to and from their jobs quicker.

"With corporate downsizing and people working more hours they want to get to work faster and home faster," he said. "I think between that and the traffic problems, we're seeing more road rage."

"We're for anything that will ease traffic congestion," he said.

PASTA STOP

FROM PAGE A1

to concentrate on his health is also a priority, he added.

"I'm going to miss this community," he said. "The people here have been great to me."

Ratkowski, a Livonia resident, is well-known in the metro Detroit area for sponsorship of the Monday night classic car shows held behind Page's Food and Spirits on Farmington Road. For three years, Ratkowski sponsored the show with Dennis Page and Darrell Marx of Darrell's Firestone store on Farmington Road.

"This is a pretty emotional time," Page said. "He probably doesn't feel much like going around and shaking hands."

On April 7, the Farmington City Council granted permission for the shows to begin May 6 and continue through September. Ratkowski, who is retired from a cabinetetry business, said he will continue the car shows for as long as there

is sponsorship. Page said he wouldn't continue doing the shows on his own.

Bill Laverty, owner of the Magic Brain on Farmington Road, presented to the City Council April 7 a petition signed by 25 merchants to move the show. Merchants felt the move would lead car aficionados to frequent retail businesses east of Farmington Road.

THE LETTER

Patrons who came to the store this week found a farewell note signed "Roger and Family."

It read:

"Dear Loyal Pasta Stop Patron: We have enjoyed serving you and the Farmington community for the last six years.

Regrettably, due to the last eight months slump in business, we are closing the business effective immediately.

Thank you for your support and patronage. Please continue to support the other businesses in downtown Farmington."

Ratkowski said it's possible the former general manager of the Pasta Stop could take over the business, but nothing was final as of Friday.

Farmington Mayor Jim Mitchell and City Manager Vince Pastue were surprised to learn about the business closing. Pastue saw the sign Thursday when he went for ice cream at the adjacent Hershey store.

Celtic Shamrock owner Barbara Goin, who is also president of the Downtown

Farmington Merchants Association, learned Tuesday the restaurant was closed after her daughter tried to purchase food there.

"It was a total shock," Goin said. "I knew he was having a hard time, that he was struggling. I had no idea he would close. This is something we all worry about."

Ratkowski was to cater chicken parmesan — a Mitchell favorite — for a council dinner prior to Monday's 6 p.m. budget study session. "We

liked his brownies, too," Mitchell said.

Farmington city officials usually order from the Pasta Stop or Dogwood's Deli because they deliver, Mitchell said. Buying meals from the Pasta Stop was the city's way of trying to support the business in hard times.

"His heart was always in the right place," Mitchell said of Ratkowski. "He was a good promoter for the community."

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