

New Housing Sags 10%; Even Apartments Slow

By BOB McLELLAN

New housing starts continued to decrease last year in the six-county area around Detroit, but residential building maintained its brisk pace in the Observer communities of Southfield and Westland.

These facts were inferred from the latest statistics supplied by the Planning Division of the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG). That agency regularly keeps tabs on building activity in the counties of Macomb, Monroe, St. Clair, Washtenaw, Wayne and Oakland.

SEMCOG figures also revealed that single-family homes took a tremendous drop last year, with the difference in total building permit figures made up by the large boom in multiples.

The downward trend in new housing, according to SEMCOG, began in 1967. Figures showed that net new dwelling units in 1969 for the six-county area totaled 44,129. This compares with a net total of 48,598 in 1968, or a drop of 4,469 new units.

(Net figures are gained by lumping together singles, two-family units and multiples and subtracting demolitions.)

SEMCOG attributed the residential building decline to money market and rising construction costs.

Southfield and Westland continued to remain among the top 10 in the six-county area in new housing starts. Livonia, ranked ninth in 1968 with 597 new housing starts, dropped out of the top 10 with 896 new housing starts last year.

Southfield, with 1,333 new starts, ranked third in the SEMCOG survey. Westland, making 935 new housing starts in 1969, ranked ninth.

Southfield was third in 1967 with 1,858 new starts and eighth in 1968 with 1,214 new starts. Westland ranked eighth in 1967 with 1,309 starts and finished third in 1968 with 1,914 starts.

Some 13% fewer permits were issued in 1969 than in 1968 for the tri-county area of Macomb, Oakland and Wayne. But the decrease for the entire six-county area surveyed was only 8.7% because of increased activity in Washtenaw and Monroe counties. Washtenaw, for example, showed an increase of 36.7% over 1968.

Another plant with bright yellow blooms is loosestrife, or *Lysimachia*. The variety known as *Lysimachia punctata* grows about two feet tall and has foot-long spikes of showy yellow flowers. It would add a bright splash to the late June garden.

ANOTHER PLANT also known as loosestrife is *Lythrum*. It has long wand-like spikes of purple or pink flowers. These plants grow to four feet in height.

Veronica are another old favorite that should be grown more often. It is hardy and dependable, forming a low mound of foliage with innumerable spikes of blue or purple flowers rising above the mass of leaves.

Royal Blue is in flower in June and July and the newer variety, *Saraband* blooms from June to September.

Try a few of these colorful June-blooming perennials to bridge the gap between the acts. They will blend well with earlier perennials still in bloom and with the later ones as they stage their show.

1969 Dwelling Units Based on Residential Building Permits Issued in Observerland

	Single Family Units	Two-Family Units	Multi-Family Units	Gross Total	Less Demolitions	Net Total
OAKLAND COUNTY						
Farmington	45	0	12	57	2	55
Farmington Twp.	333	0	400	733	10	723
Lathrup Village	30	0	0	30	0	30
Southfield	229	0	1,124	1,353	41	1,312
WAYNE COUNTY						
Canton Twp.	115	0	176	291	0	291
Garden City	28	0	0	28	3	25
Livonia	420	0	420	840	34	806
Plymouth	6	2	2	10	8	2
Plymouth Twp.	129	0	96	225	20	205
Redford Twp.	93	2	0	95	9	86
Westland	387	0	518	905	6	899

June-Blooming Perennials Bridge The Gap Between Acts

By BETTY FRANKEL

Is it intermission time in your garden? Too many gardens in the area seem to be between acts at this time.

The iris, poppies and peonies have faded, and the delphinium and daylilies have not yet come into bloom. Roses are staging a show in many yards, but the perennial beds are lacking in any color but green.

There are some perennials that are used to provide a small between - the acts display, and some that are bright enough to be a show of their own.

SWEET WILLIAMS are blooming now in shades that range from white and delicate pink to rich, intense reds. There are both single and double forms, and some have flowers that are bi-colored or striped or spotted with a more intense hue.

These are old favorites that have been in cultivation for more than 300 years. The showy head, made up of clusters of small flowers, are held above the tuft of leaves on flexible, wiry stems. There is a dwarf form with stems less than six inches tall and a taller variety growing a foot or more in height.

The Sweet Williams, or *Dianthus barbatus*, as they are known botanically, can be splashed throughout the front

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Those clumsy June bugs are back!

A perennial sign of the season, June bugs are again banging themselves against screen doors, porchtights and people. Emerging from the soil near dusk, adult beetles begin their search for food; they like oak and willow foliage.

"People often confuse the relatively harmless June bugs with the more harmful Japanese beetles," Lovitt said. "Japanese beetles have an iridescent green color compared to the brown to black larger June bugs."

Upon emerging, the female June bugs lay their eggs in soil near grass and other vegetation. During the first year, the larvae (white grubs) live underground and feed on roots; they can cause damage to lawns and pastures.

Once emerged, the adult beetles have a short life of only a few days.

In a few cases, June bugs may feed on valuable ornamental or shade trees; homeowners who feel they have a severe problem should contact their local county extension agent who can make specific control recommendations.

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