



Traffic crawls through the busy M-102/Grand River interchange in western Farmington Hills. City officials and business leaders are working to ease the problem.

# Plan in works to relieve M-102, Grand River jams

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 EDC chairman Robert McConnell. The EDC will serve as a communication link for city and business leaders with formation of a committee of EDC members and business leaders. The group will take a look at the problems businesses are having in relation to the busy interchange.

trying to redirect the focus from a complaint to a solution," Blasell said.

The conceptual plan is in the hands of local MDOT officials. With fingers crossed, city officials hope the plan will be greeted favorably by MDOT's technical people. From there, the hope is that improvements will be put into MDOT's 10-year program.

"Then it becomes an issue of accelerating within that program by getting necessary funds," Blasell said. Some right-of-way acquisition would be necessary.

The conceptual plan includes construction of another bridge over M-102, immediately north of the existing bridge. That would separate traffic going in the two directions, which will allow more traffic to get through.

The interchange would be similar to a boulevard. With four lanes east-bound on the bridge, for example, two lanes would carry through traffic down to Farmington. Two other

lanes would be for left turns onto M-102. Ramps would be widened to get onto the freeway.

THE BOULEVARD would continue both sides of the bridge. That way motorists wanting to turn left at Halsted would not be forced to back up with traffic seeking entrance onto M-102. Motorists would drive beyond and loop around to make a left at Halsted.

"This would separate M-102 and Halsted left turns," Blasell said.

The same would occur west of the bridge where traffic also stacks up waiting to make turns. Again a boulevard would be used, with loops near Bill Cook's auto dealership.

"We've got to begin to demonstrate that this program needs their attention," Costick said, referring to MDOT officials.

The EDC and city officials worked with property owners along the 12 Mile corridor to accelerate improvements and widening.

# Liquor sting shows sales to minors are decreasing

By Casey Hans  
 staff writer

The number of Farmington businesses selling alcohol to minors has declined substantially, according to information released following a three-day sting operation in the city last week.

Of the 23 businesses which hold liquor licenses in the city, only six were cited for selling alcohol to cadets under the state's legal drinking age of 21. This was less than half cited during a sting in 1989 and substantially less than the city's first sting held four years ago, where 74 percent of businesses were cited.

"Then, we had 74 percent selling and today we have 74 percent checking for identification. This is really encouraging," said Frank Lauffoff, director of public safety. "I'm really pleased."

FARMINGTON DETECTIVES Dan Potter and Bob Schulz worked with two underage Farmington Hills police cadets, who visited the licensees and attempted to buy alcohol between Sept. 28 through Oct. 3.

Those cited for selling to the cadets included: K mart, 37175 Grand River; Kroger's, 37025 Grand River; Maple Drugs (Drakeshire), 35151

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— Frank Lauffoff  
 public safety director

Grand River; A & P, 23300 Farmington Road; and Discount Pop, Beer & Wine, 32434 Grand River.

The Great Wall, a restaurant which holds a Class C license which allows liquor to be sold by the glass, was also cited.

This is how the sting works: Under the supervision of officers, the underage cadet enters the business and attempts to buy alcohol. If the person is asked for identification, he or she will not produce any. If the licensee then sells to the person, the officers return to the scene and issue a citation.

Employees at the businesses receive immediate tickets, complaints about the businesses are forwarded to the Michigan Liquor Control Commission as a violation of the Michigan Liquor Control Act.

Both Farmington and Farmington Hills do regular sting operations in an attempt to keep businesses from selling alcohol to minors in the area. Many times, businesses are warned by the department before the operations begin. The LCC is required to suspend or revoke liquor licenses for package liquor licenses which have checked up three violations in 24 months.

Prior to last week's sting, Farmington public safety officers made an extra effort to educate and warn area businesses, Lauffoff said.

Detectives completed annual visits to businesses in May, just as a new license year was beginning. At that time, owners and managers were given information about the law and methods of enforcement. Uniformed officers visited again in August, reminding them of the city's liquor enforcement program and advised them there would be a sting operation in the fall.

Different from other cities in the area, Farmington businesses are encouraged to dial 9-1-1. If they encounter a potential illegal liquor sale, which police consider to be a "crime in progress."

"It's a priority for us, and it is a crime in progress," Lauffoff said. "A person may get hostile, and we'll be there within a couple of minutes."

# Most reps, challengers oppose tax hike plan

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The package came about because Congress in general — and his opponent in particular — refused to face the budget deficit squarely and make the hard decisions needed to cut spending, said Briggs, an accountant with Ernst & Young.

Democrat Dennis Hertel, whose 14th District includes the southeast portion of Troy and all of Madison Heights and Hazel Park, was also critical of the deficit-cutting package which was defeated 254-179 early Friday.

"It's obscene," said Hertel, who has represented the district since 1989. "It's totally regressive . . . particularly on middle and low income people. The person making \$40,000 a year would pay the same as somebody making \$200,000."

Hertel's Republican challenger, Kenneth C. McNealy of Madison Heights could not be reached Friday.

A spokesperson for the Oakland County Republicans, however, said McNealy, GOP chairman of the 14th Congressional District, was opposed to the package.

REBELLION against the package

— called by President Bush "the last, best chance" to control the federal deficit — cut across party lines, with a majority of Democrats and Republicans voting against it.

The package contained tax increases on gasoline, alcohol, cigarettes and luxury items as well as cuts in defense and social programs, particularly Medicare.

Bush and Congressional leaders took more than a month to hammer out the proposal.

BUSH WAS "pandering" to the Democratically-controlled Congress by negotiating the package and lobbying for its adoption, said Blaine L. Lankford of Royal Oak.

Lankford is running against Democratic incumbent Sander Levin in the 17th District which includes parts of southern Oakland County and northwestern Wayne County.

**Farmington Observer**  
 (USPS 187-840)

Published every Monday and Thursday by Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009-0910. Second-class postage paid at, Birmingham, MI 48009-0910. Postmaster: Send address changes to Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009-0910. Telephone 644-1100.

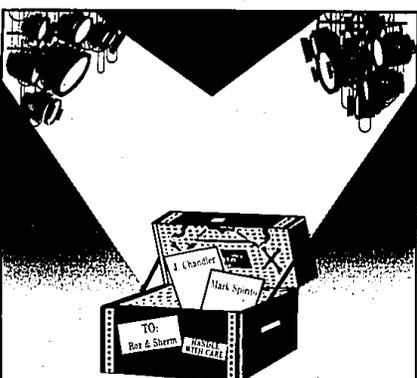
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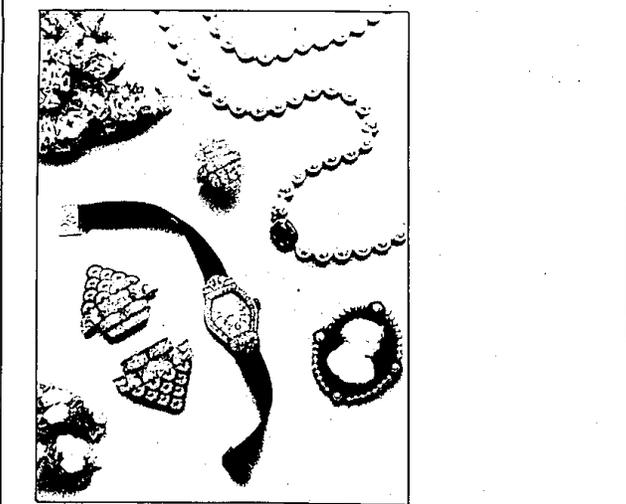
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