

The Observer Newspapers organization publishes seven newspapers serving seven suburban communities in the northwest corridor of the Detroit metropolitan area. They are the Livonia Observer, The Plymouth Mail & Observer, The Farmington Enterprise & Observer, The Southfield News & Observer, The Redford Observer, The Garden City Observer and the Westland Observer.

Each of these newspapers is carefully adapted to meet the individual needs and different natures of each of these seven communities, so often inaccurately lumped together as "the suburbs."

Livonia is Michigan's fifth largest city. Plymouth boasts a proud colonial heritage and architecture. Farmington combines the best of the past with a thriving today. Southfield is becoming the growth center of the metropolitan area. Redford Township is the state's largest incorporated township. Garden City features fine homes and tree-shaded streets. Westland looks forward to enormous industrial growth.

EACH OF THESE communities is different; yet each shares certain things in common.

One is growth. According to the 1970 census, population of the area served by the Observer Newspapers was 501,409, an increase of 83.1% over the 1960 census.

Another is high income. The 1970 census showed that the communities served by the Observer group constitute one of the highest average family income groups in the state, and retail sales figures were equally impressive.

Yet another is community involvement. For example, survey research indicates that 99% of people interviewed during the survey shopped regularly in the Observer circulation area.

Taken together, the seven communities served by The Observer Newspapers constitute the highest income, most rapidly growing, largest market area in the state.

THIS MARKET AREA is also pretty big -- 185 square miles -- and to select the best possible site for the new Observer plant was a tough job.

After six months of research and investigation, a 40-acre site at the intersection of Schoolcraft and Levan Roads in Livonia was selected.

The site met a number of important criteria:

- It lay near the center of the Observer Newspapers circulation area, making it possible for reporters to cover late-breaking stories with a minimum of delay.

- It was located right on Schoolcraft Road, which by 1972 will become the east-west I-96 freeway, with entrance and exit ramps right at Levan Road. In addition, the site was less than two miles from the I-275 expressway, which will run north and south along Haggerty Road, linking I-94 on the south with I-696 on the north. This put the new Observer plant no more than a 20 minute ride away from any house in the circulation area, insuring the latest possible news and advertising deadlines and enabling the Circulation Department to rush newspapers to homes literally hot off the press.

- It was easily accessible by truck along the expressways, by railroad along the tracks to the south of the site, and by air through Metropolitan Airport, 20 minutes to the south. This insured smooth and uninterrupted delivery of supplies such as newsprint and ink.

- It was beautiful and ecologically significant, set next to one of the few mature beech-maple forests in this area of the state.

So when in February, a sign went up announcing Observer Newspapers intention to build on the new site, folks in the organization couldn't conceal a sense of growing excitement.

A Dynamic, Wealthy Market ...

A Carefully Selected Site

