



Welcome: While Compuware is considering leaving, Mahle Technology Center was welcomed by city officials March 19.

Mahle Technology Center welcomed

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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While Farmington Hills waits word of another company's departure, the community hasn't forgot how to welcome new business.

City officials joined corporate officials - some from as far as Germany - in the grand opening of Mahle Technology Center on Haggerty Road March 19.

Mahle designs and supplies pistons, cylinders and other engine components. The company employs 70 people at its new

28,000-square-foot facility.

Farmington Hills is one of four development sites worldwide. Others are in Brazil, Japan and Germany.

"We are honored you chose to locate your prestigious company in our community," Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi said during grand opening ceremonies. "Your reputation certainly precedes you."

Some Mahle's customers include DaimlerChrysler, Detroit Diesel, Ford, General Motors, Toyota and Volkswagen.

"It was important to be close to our customers," said Mahle's

Wolfgang Rein, senior director of Engineering and a Farmington Hills resident.

Company officials factored in the accessibility of Detroit Metro Airport in making the decision to relocate in Farmington Hills.

Vagnozzi noted it was the second grand opening he attended in a week. NTN Bearing Corp. on 12 Mile near Haggerty recently opened. The automotive supplier employs 55 people.

"We're glad that other firms are locating here," Vagnozzi said. "Of course, we'd still like to

keep Compuware."

The software computer firm is considering a move to Detroit.

Mahle moved to the new facility, which is on the east side of Haggerty between Nine Mile and 10 Mile after outgrowing its Walled Lake tech center, which expanded three times in five years to handle growth. The 6.8 acres the new facility sits on will be able to handle future expansion, company officials said.

In his keynote address, Ron Leonard, Society of Automotive Engineers president, talked about Mahle's and other U.S. companies' roles in a proliferating global economy.

"I believe ongoing efforts to collaborate with the UK, Japan and Germany will be of more value to the industry than any of us know here today," Leonard said.

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SAVE 30% Toddlers' and boys' 4-7 short sets from Kids Headquarters™. Reg. 16.00-20.00, sale 11.20-14.00. IN CHILDREN.

SAVE 30% Girls' handbags and hosiery. Reg. 3.50-14.00, sale 2.45-9.80. IN CHILDREN.

Close from page A1

comment.

MedMax, which was only open 11/2 years, provided prescription services and over-the-counter medicine, as well as health aids such as walkers and canes. The chain figured to prosper amid an aging population that had better than average health insurance.

MedMax stores also offered health screenings.

In the prescription department, MedMax had stiff competition from corner drugstores - Arbor, Rite Aid and Walgreen's - which continue to grow in numbers.

Site plans are expected to be submitted to Farmington Hills city planners for a new Walgreen's at the northeast corner of Orchard Lake and 10 Mile.

"From a retail standpoint, it just didn't make the retail cut," Marx said. "The market wasn't looking for this type of company."

"A drugstore, a supermarket, a mass merchandiser needs traffic. Those are not traffic items. A blood check is not a traffic item."

In the state, economic factors are strong for retailing. Stores are re-investing in their properties.

Marx likens Crowley's closing to a "faded rose," which is not an indication of any industry trend.

"What we have is clearly a case where a company had a strategy that wasn't meaningful up against a Kohl's or the revitalization of some of these other companies," he said.

Dust from page A1

Council members grappled with Webster's version like a white octopus. Barnett vigorously debated that asphalt is used to patch asphalt streets, which is considered maintenance and comes out of the general fund.

Calcium chloride treatment should be considered the same, she reasoned.

"It's maintenance pure and simple," Barnett said.

Public Services Director Tom Blasse agreed the issue of maintenance versus improvement could be argued both ways. City Attorney John Donohue gave his opinion.

"The benefit to the community is the reduction of the dust. That's an improvement," Donohue said.

Bates, who has lived on both dirt and paved roads, said the city's rural and suburban attributes make up its charm. That's why dust control should be paid for out of the general fund, she said.

"It shouldn't be divided by who lives on a dirt road and who doesn't," Bates said.

Last year, Bates and Barnett won a small battle when they helped get the city to pay 20 percent of the total cost.

"We're 20 percent of the way there," Bates said.

"We have 80 percent to go," Barnett added.

Other communities offer the service as part of normal maintenance. Farmington Hills policy has been in place for at least 20 years when the city had 85 miles - nearly four times - of unpaved roads.

A resident attending on another issue felt compelled to speak. Mike Thomas, who lives on Fendy, brought along his children for a civics lesson.

"I'm at a disbelief that a \$37,000 item takes much time," Thomas said.

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