Grant to offset costs of storm water improvement

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Flooding has been a consistent problem in Farmington Hills, one officials are tackling one step at a time.

This year, residents in West Moreland, Springbrook, Floral and other neighborhoods on the southeast side of the city will benefit from construction of a storm water retention pond. Oakland County officials recently approved a $364,745 grant to offset the costs of construction.

According to City Manager Steve Brock, the pond will also clean and filter water before it empties into the Rouge River.

"We've also gotten some funds from the state so we can make it look nice," Brock said. "It'll be on the east side of Orchard Lake, between 10 and 11 Mile somewhere. We still have to buy the property."

County commissioners David Moffitt (R-Farmington Hills) and Terry Sever (R-Farmington) introduced the resolution to approve the grant, distributed through the county's Environmental Infrastructure Fund.

"The county initiated this innovative program to provide local communities with financial assistance for costly, but mandated, environmental infrastructure projects," Moffitt said.

Sever explained the $25 million fund was approved last year, based on a recommendation from County Executive L. Brooks Patterson. The money comes from delinquent fees on taxes, not property taxes themselves, he

FLOODING

said.

Farmington Hills received the third highest award because the formula for distribution is geared toward state equalized value and population. This is the first-year funding has been available, and officials expect to distribute the entire $25 million to cities over the next five years.

The county has also begun to discuss other problems with flooding and sewage back-ups with both Farmington and Farmington Hills, Sever said. He expects the county to also apply for federal grants to deal with mandated projects related to environmental impact.

Distributing the Environmental Infrastructure Funds is the first step down a very long road toward resolving long-standing problems, Sever said.

"It's just the beginning of a major, major improvement plan," he commented.

Winners: *Danielle Branch (at right) won first prize in the police department's annual poster contest. Sara Blau (center) took third place, and Daniel Vulaj took second. The open house gives parents and kids lots of hands-on experience and fun with safety and learning in mind.*

PHOTO BY BONNIE UNRUH

Wooddale student wins first-prize

A Wooddale Elementary student will be honored at the 13th Annual Police Department Open House Sunday, May 7, for her winning drawing in the department's poster contest.

Danielle Branch will be awarded $150 prize money for her first-place drawing publicizing the upcoming open house.

Also to be honored is Daniel Vulaj of Gill Elementary School who came in second place and Sarah Blau of Longacre who placed third.

Daniel will receive $100 and Sarah $50.

Prizes to the students will be presented at noon at the showmobile at the open house. The arts commission donated 50 percent of the prize money and 50 percent from the police department.

The open house, which will o at the police department, features free family activities, such as a visit from the Oakland County Sheriff's Department mounted/marine division, West Bloomfield; K-9 division, MSP bomb truck, Cool Cat, McGruff the Crime Dog, Parkey the Panda and Edison's Louie the Lightning Bug.

All events are free, including fingerprinting, moonwalk, balloon typhoon, dunk tank, radar pitching and fun town.

The open house begins at noon through 4 p.m.

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