

City likely to put project on ballot

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An old, simple adage states "a stitch in time saves nine."

For City of Farmington officials, that translates to spending \$2.5 million for a liner project on the deteriorating Farmington interceptor sewer line now, in an effort to save more than \$7 million later.

They will probably be asking voters to approve those funds in the November general election.

The interceptor is more than four miles in length and runs along Grand River, Eight Mile and Shawnee to Telegraph Road. A portion of this interceptor, called a siphon, crosses under the Rouge River. It was constructed in 1957 and has received no significant repairs in 44 years.

A videotape inspection by Inland Water Pollution Control showed tree root balls, mineral and grease deposits, separated joints and hydrogen sulfide gas damage.

"The current condition of this sewer interceptor can allow ground water infiltration and exfiltration, all of which could cause a sewer to lose capacity causing backups and overflows," said Farmington City Manager Frank Lauhoff.

Funding for a portion of the project

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Frank Lauhoff
—City manager

is expected to be on the Nov. 6 ballot but the exact amount cannot be determined until the amount of federal funding is known, Lauhoff said.

"This type of rehabilitation can be done at a cost of \$2.5 million versus an open dig and replacement, which is estimated at approximately \$10 million," Lauhoff said. "The open dig alternative also exposes the city to potentially unknown failures and backups that could also add significant cost."

"City engineers recommend rehabilitation of the sewer interceptor using the pipe-lined, cured-in-place method. This method reduces disruption to the residents and provides the improvement at a cost about 70 percent less than digging up and replacing the entire interceptor."

"It will be more cost-effective to complete this type of rehabilitation at one time," Lauhoff said. "This repair could be done over many years piece

by piece but it is likely the costs will escalate and failures will occur that could add significantly to the total rehabilitation estimate."

Lauhoff estimates the city will ask voters for up to \$1.8 million. The city anticipates revenues of \$500,000 through the city's water and sewer fund and \$200,000 from a County Environmental Infrastructure Fund.

Federal legislators have been contacted about potential grants; however local officials may not know what is available until between November and January, Lauhoff said.

The council thought property taxes rather than raising water rates was the way to finance this issue. Councilwoman JoAnne McShane pointed out that residents can deduct property taxes.

It makes sense to move ahead now rather than waiting another year, added Councilman James Mitchell.

"This project will have a major impact on securing reliable water infrastructure for city residents as well as commercial and industrial property owners from the community's foreseeable future," Lauhoff said. "It would provide a reliable solution assuring that Farmington continues to do its part in protecting the environment and providing for the community in a cost-effective way."

Under the Sea



Ahoy, mates! Students in the multi-age, multi-cultural classes taught by Mrs. Witte and Ms. Courry at Beechview Elementary created an Under the Sea experience for other students in their school. The teacher led tours to other classes and each student prepared a speech on a particular undersea creature. Students also created animals that were part of the display.

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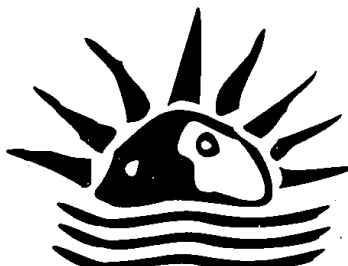
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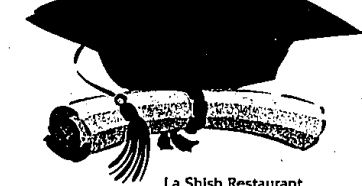
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