Commission seeks nominees for Hills beautification award

If you are a non-residential property owner who takes pride in your landscape, the Farming-ton Hills Beautification Commis-sion wants to give you the recog-

sion wants to give you the recognition you deserve.
This summer, the Commission will be judging landscapes in the following categories:
■ Commercial, industrial, and office properties
■ Places of worship
■ Shopping Centers
■ Organizations

Schools
Subdivision, condominium, and apartment entrances
The Beautification Commission will be looking at design, originality, maintenance and using new criteria this year, environmental protection (including watershed management and use of native plants or natural beauty). Property owners will be recognized at a special evening awards eeremony in November.

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Past winners are welcome to enter again. If you have already received a nomination form in the mail, return it by June 30. If you need a nomination form, contact the Farmington Hills Beautification Commission, c/o Marie Donigan, Planning Office, 31555 W. 11 Mile, Farmington Hills, MI 48336.
You can also call Marie at (248) 473-9543 or e-mail her and onigan@ci.farmington-hills.mi.es

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liable for its debt owed to the

liable for its debt owed to the hospital, which alone exceeds \$1.6 million, Reihmer said.

"We simply are being paid less than in the past," she said, adding Medicaid only repays about 50-60 cents per every dollar spent on patient care.

"We've also been experience a shortage of nursing personnel," she said. "So we had to incur overtime and premium pay and pay for outside agnecies for temporary help. Pharmaceuticals is also skyrocketing."

Losses snowballed

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The vice president said the hospital noticed shortfalls last

fall and started to make necessary adjustments then, but the financial losses "snowballed" as

sary aquasiments then, out the financial losses "anowhalled" as the year progressed.

Fringe benefits offered to patients in the past, such as free transportation to and from the hospital will be eliminated, the vice president said.

"It's just something we could not continue to do," she said.

"There has also been a limited number of staff reductions mostly by attrition," Reihmer said.

She said each department has been given the challenge to come up with cost-reduction methods.

"We have 50 different teams, from small to large, all working

on cost savings and revenue improvement and finding new revenue resources.
"It's not going to be an overnight cure," Reihmer said. "We anticipate another loss this year as well. Our plan is to improve our financial ratios by 2004."

Focus on patient care

Focus on patient care

The vice president said patient care should not be impacted while the hospital reorganizes.

"The focus is on the business process, not patient care issues, at everything we do and how to do it better."

Like other community hospitals in the state, administrators are worried about additional reductions in Medicaid and is urging legislators not to cut the government program that offers medical care to the poor even deeper.

government program that offers medical care to the poor even deeper.
"Healtheare is under siege," Reihmer said.
One thing the average citizen can do to help is sign a petition that aims to put a ballot question to the voters about where state tobneco settlement money should go. The vast majority of those while nos didliers is going to pay for college scholarships to those who score well on state tests. Reihmer said.
"That's clearly not what the tobacco settlement money was intended for," she said. 'It's supposed to go to treat tobaccorolated illnesses' and prevention.

related illnesses" and preven-tion.

According to the Michigan
Health & Hospital Association,
Michigan spent only 13 percent
of the \$301 million it received in
the tobacco settlement in fiscal
year 2001 on health care.

The state is expected to receive
more than \$3.5 billion in the settlement over 25 years, according
to the MHHA.

Taxes

from page A1

environmental specialist, said Brock. He said two positions, a clerk and an administrator who have left the city, will not be fulled this fiscal year.

He said city services will remain status que for residents.
Capital improvements for the year include more than \$1 million in drainage improvements and building sidewalks on 11 Mile from Orchard Lake to Power Raod, as well as sections of East Middlebett, Grand River, and 13 and 14 Mile Roads among others.

The city will also be spending about \$450,000 on a phone system upgrade.

The budget will be \$40,750,216, with a fund halance of \$16.6 million, representing 12.7 percent of the total budget. In the 1999/2000 budget, the fund balance was at 16.2 percent. Brock said about \$90,000 of the previous year's balance was used to balance the next fiscal year's budget.

"That was because of the loss in state shared revenues we already anticipate, not future ones," he said.

We try to keep it between 12 and 15 percent," he said.



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