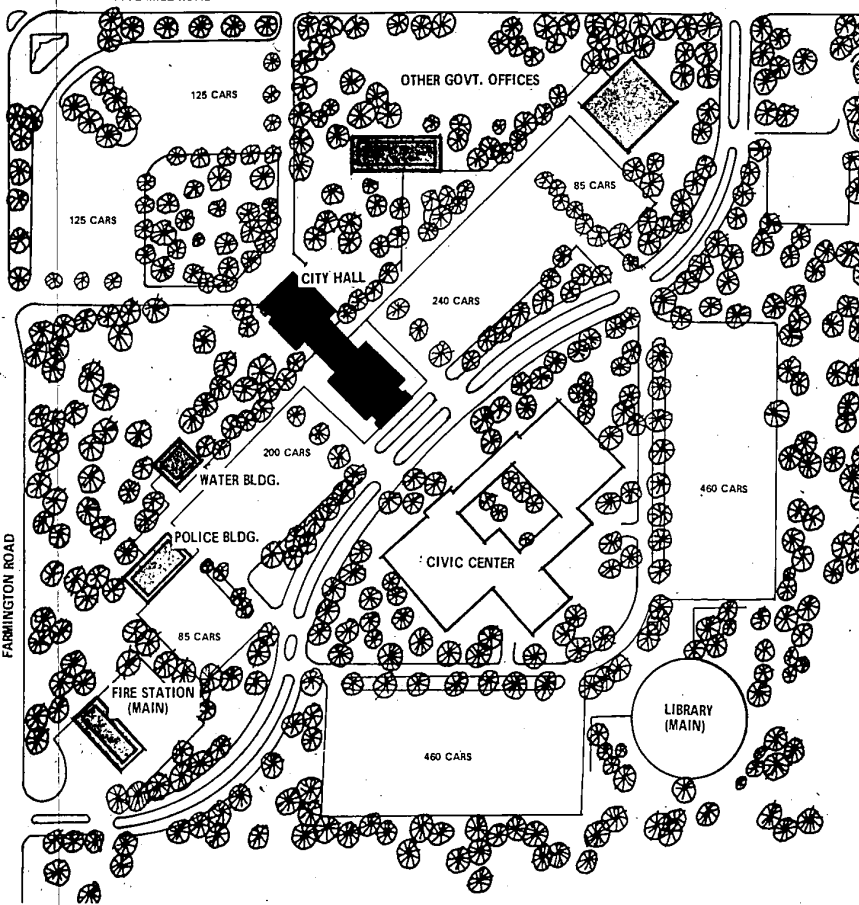




What's Up Downtown?

When you think of suburbia, you don't often think of downtowns—or even rejuvenation. But that's exactly what's going on in Plymouth, Farmington and Livonia.

Farmington, the oldest of the lot, is at the beginning of a big commercial expansion. Plymouth's specialized merchants are making a comeback and the city is working on a traffic loop plan.

Livonia's problem is the most typical of a suburb. It has no downtown as such, but its far-sighted leaders are pushing a plan to develop a government-civic complex in the center of the city at Five Mile and Farmington Roads.

Here's a capsule report on what everyone's doing.

A Center For Livonia

It has been called "Livonia's Dream" and "Dream City."

No matter what the label, it will cost Livonia a neat \$15 million, which may cause the dream to end.

The "it" is a plan to develop the heart of the city—the Farmington-Five Mile Road area—and to unify structures that will house city government.

Livonia is a city that sort of sprawled westward from Detroit rather than growing around a central cluster. Unlike the commercial downtowns of Farmington and Plymouth, Livonia's central city would be mainly government and civic buildings.

Besides facilitating the operation of government, such a plan would also have the effect of creating a kind of central city that would stir up civic pride.

It started last May when city fathers, planners and architects decided that Livonia's population was fast outgrowing present administrative facilities.

THE FINAL MASTER plan has evolved from three versions of a \$9.2 to \$15 million city

center complex of public and private buildings to serve a population estimated to reach 175,000 by 1982.

Chopped out of original proposals, contained in the three plans, were a \$3.5 million city hall, a \$2.5 million civic center building and site beautification and site development totaling \$1,200,000.

It left \$9.8 million for street and highway improvements, \$1.7 million for civic center land acquisition, \$1.6 million for new fire stations, \$750,000 for a new municipal court building, \$500,000 for completion of an industrial belt, \$250,000 for expansion of DPW facilities, \$250,000 for off street parking and \$150,000 for a new police garage.

Ultimately the city hopes to have all of the items that were in the "big" plan.

THE FINAL PROGRAM that will cost \$15 million has been called "Operation Bootstrap" and will be put to a vote for adoption on the Nov. 21 ballot.

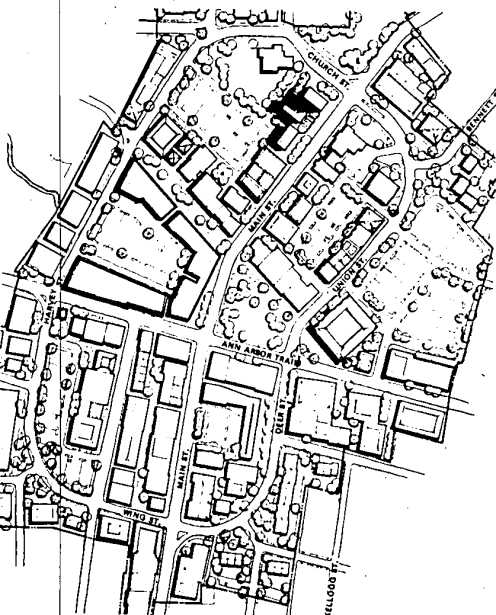
It is a large capital improvement program to get a start on projects the city needed five years ago.

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Section B Page One

OBSERVER NEWSPAPERS



A Loop For Plymouth

The City of Plymouth is looking for new business.

Recent reports about the city's central business district state that Plymouth has been stagnating the last few years and potential customer money has been lost to neighboring communities.

The most exciting remedy for the city's commercial headache is a proposed traffic loop that will surround the downtown area.

Construction of the loop will cost in the neighborhood of \$500,000.

ALSO IN THE WORKS for Plymouth is a beautification program which has already taken some shape in the town's Kellogg Park at Ann Arbor Trail and Main St.

Gas lamps have been installed in the park and decorative flower beds will be put in.

Parking lots will be scattered throughout the inside of the loop and streets will be removed and made into malls between stores.

The city also hopes to be able to convince a large department store to locate within the loop which should stimulate lagging competition between businesses.

PLANNERS ARE GOING TO unify the section of downtown Plymouth along Ann Arbor Trail.

Programs that will lead to the goal of new business were the widening of two major streets for easier traffic access and the building of the new \$600,000 city hall in 1963.



A Boom For Downtown Farmington

Farmington's downtown is due for a doubling in store and parking acreage in the next five years, city planners figure.

The downtown is due for a big shot in the arm when Federal's Department Store opens a new outlet on Grand River Ave., sometime next year. The store is currently under construction.

HEART OF the city is the southeast corner of Grand River and Farmington Rd., where the Downtown Center is located. The center is a cluster of stores ringing a municipal parking lot.

The Federal's store is expected to attract more stores—hopefully another department store nearby.

The center is expected to expand from the present 20 acres to some 35 acres in the coming half-decade.

The City is implementing a 12-phase program to make the central business district more appealing to customers.

Right now, the major portion of the program is establishing parking lots and thus ridding main streets of on street parking.

ALL PARKING on Farmington Rd. has been curtailed.

Plans show that parking on Grand River will soon be moved from the street to another municipal lot.

In general Farmington's future plans include:

1. Redevelopment of the south side of Orchard St. into one or two large commercial operations;
2. Construction of small office buildings on the west side of Liberty St. to face the new municipal building;
3. Restoration of old Township Hall, now the Masonic Lodge, so that it may be preserved as a historical site;
4. First stage parking expansion of the north side of Grand River with the raising of the old Elks Temple;
5. Improvement of street connections which is intended to offer smoother flow of downtown traffic;
6. Renovation and remodeling of rear entrances where the stores back onto public parking lots.