



ANNUAL REPORT 2008

CITY COUNCIL

- Jerry Ellis Mayor
Randy Bruce Mayor Pro Tem
Nancy Bates
Barry Brickner
Michael Bridges
Ken Massey
Cheryl Oliverio

CITY MANAGER

Steve Brock

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MESSAGE FROM YOUR MAYOR

As we enter 2009, it's easy to focus on the past year's problems, negatives, and downbeat news stories. Yes, it's true; we face challenges both here in Farmington Hills and across our nation. But let's not allow these challenges to keep us from celebrating all that's positive and all that's moving us toward a bright future here in our great City.

As we look back at the past year, we should all feel a sense of accomplishment and pride. Once again, the residents of Farmington Hills overwhelmingly supported maintaining and enhancing the high quality of life that we enjoy. The Parks and Recreation millage passed, ensuring that superb cultural and recreational programs will continue to be offered.

The City Hall Revitalization Project has met with widespread support and we are moving forward with our efforts to have the most energy efficient, LEED-certified City Hall in the Midwest. Employees at City Hall continue to deliver outstanding customer service with increased offerings online in the Assessing, Treasury, and Engineering Divisions; and thanks to our exceptional Police and Fire Departments, we are once again among the safest cities in the country.



Front row (l - r) Cheryl Oliverio, Mayor Jerry Ellis, Nancy Bates. Back row (l - r) Michael Bridges, Mayor Pro Tem Randy Bruce, Ken Massey, Barry Brickner

Our City is moving forward as we welcome new residents, expand our cultural diversity, and increase our global perspective with more than 150 companies from 20 different countries joining our business community. We are in a strong position and we look toward the New Year with hope and anticipation. Good things are happening in Farmington Hills - please join me in celebrating all that is great about our fine City!

Fire Department

In 2008, the Fire Department continued to see an increase in emergency activities. Firefighters responded to 7,100 calls to "911" for emergency and non-emergency assistance in Farmington Hills and surrounding communities. Additionally in 2008:

- The Department began searching for a new Fire Chief when Chief Richard Marinucci announced his retirement, after serving over 31 years. He was Farmington Hills Fire Chief for almost 25 of those years, making him the longest serving Fire Chief in Oakland County.
Four Career Inspectors were promoted to the rank of Shift Lieutenant and will work under the supervision of the current Battalion Chiefs.
School-aged students were treated to two different stage shows this year, where firefighters incorporated safety messages and fun into the half-hour programs. Over 10,000 students were impacted by the shows.
Firefighters participated in community activities such as fire station tours, parades, subdivision picnics, business evacuation drills, and additional school presentations, where they passed along valuable safety messages to residents.
The Department was awarded a \$1.4 million grant that will link more than 18 area Fire Departments together via teleconferencing for training and exchanging valuable information.
The Department also received a \$140,000 grant to purchase a fire apparatus driving simulator, which will assist personnel in responding to emergencies in a safe and efficient manner.

Police Department

Farmington Hills was again ranked among the safest cities in the United States, according to 2007 crime data published by Morgan-Quitno Press, CQ Press, and Sage Publications. Of 385 cities ranked nationally, in all population categories, Farmington Hills ranked as 33rd safest. Of 18 Michigan cities ranked, Farmington Hills was rated the third safest, behind only Troy and Canton Township. Farmington Hills' ranking is attributed to the police department's aggressive stance on crime and a cooperative working relationship with citizens and businesspersons.

In September, the department hosted the first annual Crime Prevention Kids Club Patrol School. Developed to compliment the long standing Crime Prevention Kids Club Detective School, now in its ninth year, the Patrol School provided students with educational presentations including bicycle and patrol tactics, road patrol objectives, radar and laser training, 9-1-1 communications education, and a K-9 demonstration.

A detective has been assigned to collect and analyze the information on criminal activity obtained from patrol officers, detectives, investigators assigned to specialized units, and other surrounding police agencies. The intelligence information officer then organizes the information so that it can be shared with the proper section of the department for follow up investigation. Monthly meetings are held to share information on criminal activity with representatives from all of the sections of the department and also with members of surrounding area police departments.

Oversight of registered sex offenders living in Farmington Hills was intensified during the past year. Sex offenders that are required to register with the City are now interacting with police officers during the mandatory registration period. Home visits are conducted by detectives and patrol officers to ensure that the registered sex offender resides where he or she says they live. Those that do not comply with the registration laws are investigated and prosecuted when possible.



CITY HALL REVITALIZATION

In 2008, the City began work on a much needed revitalization of City Hall. After a six-month selection process, which included a design competition, the City selected Lindhout Associates and Contracting Resources Inc. as the Architect and Construction Manager.

The current building faces many challenges. City Hall has an Energy Star score of 38/100, with 100 representing the nation's most efficient buildings. One major reason for the low score is an extremely inefficient HVAC system, consisting of 14 functionally separate heating and cooling units. Additionally, many work areas and hallways have no natural daylight, which contributes to an unnecessary reliance on inefficient artificial lighting.

Project goals include:

- Showcase and promote green building practices
Significantly improve building efficiency
Improve building functionality
Enhance community image

To address building challenges and achieve the goals outlined above, the City is investigating the use of:

- A ground source heat pump heating and cooling system
More efficient lighting
Greywater reclamation
Pervious pavement
Green roofs
Recycled materials
Landfill diversion
Healthier building products
Renewable energy
Other environmentally sustainable products and technologies

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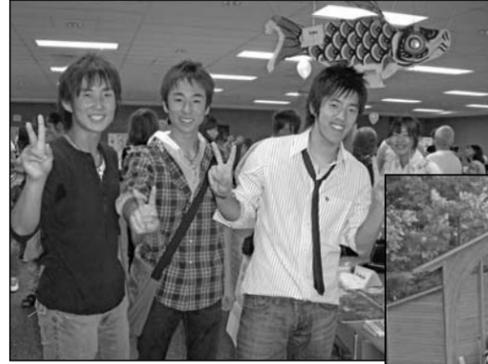
Public Services

## CULTURAL ARTS DIVISION

The “Stars in the Park” free summer concert series, which started more than 20 years ago, attracted record crowds of up to 1,500 per night in the new amphitheatre in Heritage Park. This year’s concerts featured Grammy-Award winning musicians as well as local talent.

Over 15,000 audience members, via performances or outreach programs, have enjoyed the productions of the Farmington Hills Youth Theatre, with over 200 children auditioning for parts in each show. The new “Script to Stage” program also gives young children in grades K-2 performance opportunities. In the past year, a graduate of the “Next Stage” performance program went on to win “Farmington Idol,” and another competed in “American Idol,” making it through several levels of the competition. Other talented young singers had performance opportunities through the Farmington Youth Choir.

Additional highlights in 2008 included the Heritage Festival, the Festival of the Arts, Art on the Grand, art exhibits, Longacre Teas, and the consistently sold-out Fall/Winter concert series.



Teens Enjoying Heritage Festival



Farmington Community Band Performing at New Amphitheater

### Facilities

A recent survey indicated that 99% of customers who rented a City facility for a special event said that they would do it again. We hope to see you in 2009 at a class, program or special event at one of our facilities:

**Costick Activities Center** – The 70,000 square foot facility includes a 25-yard swimming pool, gymnasium with stage, large commercial kitchen, and meeting rooms ranging in size from 500 square feet to over 7,000 square feet. Over 250,000 guests passed through Costick’s doors in 2008.

**Longacre House** – This restored, historic home, built in 1869, offers a charming and elegant setting for weddings, parties, receptions, business meetings, programs, banquets, and social gatherings. The beautifully landscaped entryway and gazebo provide a very attractive outdoor event site. Over 20,000 guests experienced the wonderful charm and exquisite beauty of Longacre House in 2008.

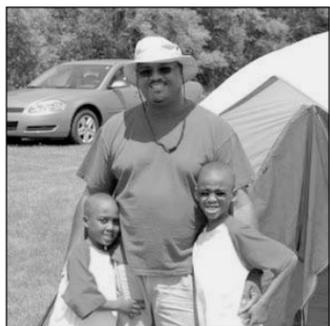
**Jon Grant Community Center** – The nearly 5,000 square foot Jon Grant Community Center delivers comfortable meeting space, the latest in high-tech equipment, and a 2,000 square foot Rec Room known as the Fire Pit. Over 10,000 guests visited the Grant Center in 2008.

### ICE ARENA

The Farmington Hills Ice Arena was a popular recreation stop for many skaters during 2008. Skaters participated in Learn-to-Skate, Open Skate, Drop-in Hockey, Mid-Day Skate, Parent/Tot Skate, Adult Skate, Figure Skating, and Youth and Adult Hockey. Learn-to-Skate helped youth and adult skaters gain more confidence on the ice while teaching the FUNDamentals of skating. Skaters showcased their skills and talent to an audience of over 600 at the Ice Arena’s 12th Annual Ice Show in May.

The Ice Arena is home to the Farmington Hills Hockey Association (FHHA), which serves 500 players at all skating levels and offers house and travel teams, plus the international Timbits development program. The association enjoyed many successful championships, as well as two top-ranked teams.

For more information or for a list of upcoming events, visit [www.fhgov.com](http://www.fhgov.com) or call the ice arena at **248-478-8800**.



Local families enjoyed the outdoors at the Great Farmington Hills Campout held on Father’s Day weekend at Heritage Park.

### Recreation Division

Construction started on the Riley Skate Park at Founders Sports Park. This premier 29,000 square foot facility, scheduled to open in spring 2009, will include a 9 foot deep end, 6 foot and 8 foot stairs with handrails, rollers, banked wall rides, hubba ledge, and more. You can purchase an engraved brick for your family and be a part of this exciting development!

New activities included gymnastic classes, horseback riding lessons and camps, agility camp, Lamaze classes, magic camp, science camps, Indian culture classes, Princesses and Super Heroes Family Night, Thrive Festival,

Movies in the Park, pre-school and middle school soccer, football camp, golf camp, and more. In 2008, more than 310,000 program participants took part in 2,450 classes available through the Recreation Division.

As always, your suggestions are welcomed. Call 248-473-1800 and let us know about new classes you’d like to see.



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## SENIOR DIVISION

The Senior Division meets the needs of a broad age group ranging from evening programs for seniors still in the work force to community-based services for those requiring home-delivered meals, liquid nutrition, chore services, outreach or transportation services.

Significant accomplishments for 2008 included:

- The Meals on Wheels Program provided 70,681 meals and the Congregate Meal Program provided 18,683 on-site meals.
- Specialized Transportation and Dial-a-Ride cab provided over 35,000 rides, including an unprecedented number of wheelchair rides.
- A Total Wellness Fair provided an array of healthy lifestyle choices with information on fitness, law, finances, and nutrition along with health screenings, speakers, demos, and prizes.
- Saturday Evening Ballroom added lessons and a ballroom practice party to an already successful array of ballroom dance opportunities.
- The Senior Division’s enthusiastic and talented Women’s Softball Team, “The Stingers,” once again took 1st place in the Oakland County Women’s League.
- Farmington Hills Spelling Bee winners placed 2nd and 3rd in the Oakland County Spelling Duel.
- Computer education continued to be a focus with new classes in Excel and Technology Troubleshooting.
- An Alzheimer’s caregiver’s support group was added to existing support groups including Grief, Stroke, and Vision Impaired.
- New offerings include Pickle Ball (a hybrid of ping pong and badminton), and Wii Sports, an interactive workout in the form of tennis, bowling, and golf leagues.

### Youth & Family Services

For the past 13 years, after-school and summer programs for middle school youth have provided educational and recreational opportunities in a safe, fun environment. Over 2,000 members routinely drop-in at the City’s five youth centers, including the new Youth Center opened this year at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church.

The 2008 Summer Youth Center Program was once again popular with over 90 members attending and over 40 families taking advantage of the Early Drop-Off Program tailored to the needs of working parents. The Summer Field Trip program offered 23 opportunities for members to visit popular spots such as a Tigers game, Greenfield Village, or Zap Zone. Fall/winter programs included Club Z! Tutoring, Girl Power/Guy Time, Scrapbooking, Career Explorers, Intramural Bowling League, and much more.

The past year’s success was made possible by generous donations from the Farmington Hills/Farmington Exchange Club’s Fourth Annual Jon Grant Signature Golf Classic, the Farmington Hills/Farmington Foundation for Youth & Families, the Alcoa Foundation, the Farmington Area GoodFellows, and the Farmington Area Optimist Club. Thanks to everyone for their dedication to our youth!

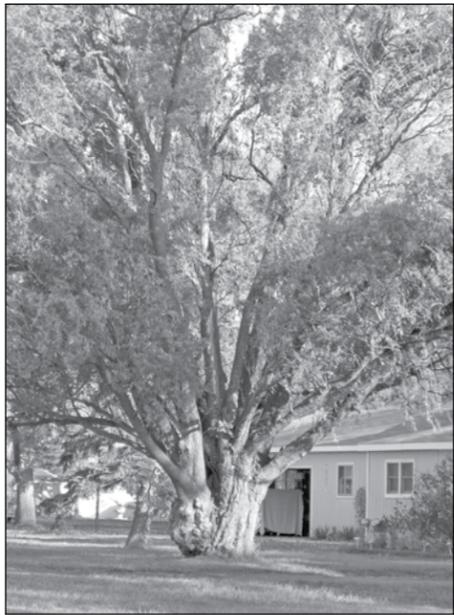
## PARKS & GOLF DIVISION

The Parks and Golf Division dealt with the snowy winter and then readied the parks, golf course (where participation surpassed 2007 totals) and other municipal sites for spring. The Longacre House received particular attention with ongoing landscaping improvements and the Parks Division erected the new amphitheatre at Heritage Park in time for the summer concert season. The staff also began intensive invasive species removal in the parks. Watch for upcoming information on how you can volunteer to help in this effort.

## Department of Planning & Community Development

### PLANNING OFFICE

- ✓ Roadside beautification projects undertaken throughout the City included new trees, perennials, and native wildflowers planted at 10 Mile and Middlebelt following construction at the intersection. Also, on Halsted north of Thirteen Mile, the adjacent homeowners' association requested the installation of a wildflower bed and then assisted with maintenance.
- ✓ The 23rd Annual Beautification Awards recognized landscape design and originality. Top awards went to Wedgwood Commons Subdivision, the Finnish Cultural Center, and Amerisure Insurance. The Historic District Commission Preservation Award went to Sherri and Jeff Stewart, who moved the Botsford Barn to the area near Drake and Thirteen Mile, where it was added to their home and restored.
- ✓ The Great Tree Hunt, organized by the Beautification Commission with Farmington Public Schools, encouraged school children in grades K-8 to nominate the largest trees in the community. Trees were evaluated by a panel of experts and winners were chosen based on how their entry compared to the State Champion tree for that particular species. The Grand Prize winner was Jillian Jones of Lanigan Elementary School with a Corkscrew Willow



This corkscrew willow with a 195" girth was The Great Tree Hunt winner.

(195" girth, measured larger than the State of Michigan Champion Tree) on Elmgrove. Other top prize winners were Sheena Khan of Longacre Elementary School with a Slippery Elm (188" girth) at Gill and Drake; Robert Turner of Power Middle School with a Silver Maple (233" girth) on Wesley; and Chloe Elser of Flanders School with a Cottonwood (290" girth) on Parker. Great Tree Hunt prize winners were announced at the Beautification Awards ceremony.

- ✓ The City received a Community Tree Planting Grant in September from the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Trees purchased through this grant will be planted in Spring 2009 at selected park and roadside locations.

- ✓ The Planning Office continued coordinating the update of the City's Master Plan for Future Use. Activities have focused on gathering public input and refining the text and maps. The new plan will focus on maintaining our residential areas and encouraging commercial redevelopment opportunities.

### BUILDING DIVISION

- ✓ 18 single family homes and nearly 80,000 square feet of new commercial development were constructed for a total value of \$10,176,315.
- ✓ Permits were issued for \$4,595,791 in home improvements and \$30,381,990 in commercial renovations.
- ✓ 27 substandard buildings were demolished as part of ongoing revitalization efforts.
- ✓ 145 properties, including both commercial and residential structures, were identified as needing major repairs with follow-up to eliminate code deficiencies. Currently, of the 145 properties, 27 permits remain open, with 118 closed out.

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- ✓ New sidewalk construction was approved with Community Development Block Grant funding in two locations - the north side of Thirteen Mile Road between Middlebelt and the Baptist Manor; and the east side of Middlebelt between San Souci and Eldon. Construction is scheduled for Spring 2009.
- ✓ The Housing Rehabilitation Program assisted 26 lower-income homeowners with improvements such as roofs, siding, and furnaces.
- ✓ Over 500 volunteers participated in Rebuilding Together to help ten homeowners with yard work, painting, and other general repairs.

### ZONING DIVISION

- ✓ Over 19,000 code violations were investigated to help enforce City ordinances and keep Farmington Hills a beautiful and desirable community. The primary focus was on blight abatement.
- ✓ Education and public outreach were provided on ordinance requirements through flyers and handouts, which went to neighborhood associations and local newspapers.
- ✓ The Zoning Board of Appeals heard 63 cases at 13 meetings appealing zoning and code requirements.

## Clerk's Corner

The Clerk's Office focused on Elections throughout 2008, including the Presidential Primary in January, school elections in May, the August Primary, and the record-breaking Presidential Election in November. With 76% of the city's voters casting a ballot in the Presidential Election, the City once again achieved higher voter turnout than the national average of 58%. The Clerk's Office issued a record 16,755 absentee ballots and employed over 400 workers on Election Day.

In 2009, the Clerk's Office will focus on the imaging of all City records, add information to the City website, make voting more accessible to all, and continue to provide great service to the citizens of Farmington Hills.

The next election will be Tuesday, November 3, 2009, where voters will cast ballots for the City's Mayor and three council members. For the first time, the November ballot will include candidates for the Farmington School Board. The school election was moved from May and combined with the City's local election to save taxpayer dollars.

**Special Recognition:** City Clerk Kathy Dornan is a member of the Michigan Municipal League Legislative Committee and the Board of Directors of the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC). She was awarded the prestigious "Special Award of Merit" by IIMC President Charles Tokar in May 2008 for her work on the education of clerks throughout the country.

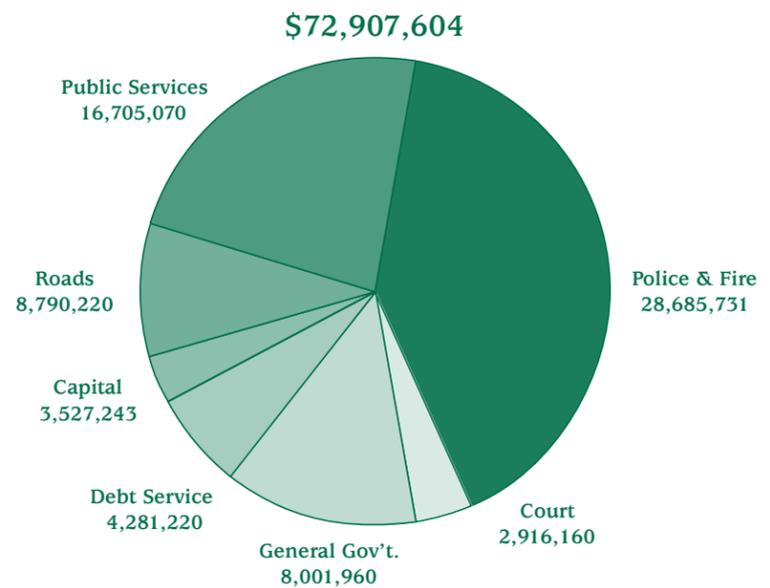
## Finance Department

- The Assessors Office received the Literary Award from the Michigan Assessors Association for its publication, "Understanding Proposal A in a Declining Market."
- The Assessing Department continued converting to electronic sketching of all properties in the City resulting in drawings that are more accurate and easier to update.

### Recent awards highlight the excellent job done by the City's Finance Department:

- Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers' Association - 23 years in a row.
- Certificate of Achievement of Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers' Association of the United States and Canada (for the City's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2007) - 10 years in a row.

### HOW YOUR TAX DOLLARS WERE SPENT IN 2007-08



### YOUR 2008 TAX DOLLAR

Based on Farmington Schools Homestead Rate

School District	County	Education *	City
Farmington	14.20%	59.14%	26.66%
Walled Lake	15.48%	55.45%	29.07%
Clarenceville	16.07%	53.74%	30.19%



\*Farmington Schools - Oakland Intermediate Schools - Oakland Community College

## CITY DIRECTORY

## Emergency Calls Only

Fire Department .....	9-1-1
Police Department .....	9-1-1

<b>Central Services/Purchasing</b> .....	248-871-2430
<b>City Clerk</b> .....	248-871-2410
<b>City Hall</b> .....	248-871-2400
<b>City Manager's Office</b> .....	248-871-2500
<b>Council Newsline</b> .....	248-871-2511
<b>District Court</b> .....	248-871-2900
<b>Farmington Community Library</b> .....	248-553-0300
<b>Finance Department</b> .....	248-871-2440
Assessing .....	248-871-2470
Treasury .....	248-871-2480
<b>Fire Department</b> .....	
Non-emergency .....	248-871-2800
<b>General Information</b> .....	248-871-2400
<b>Human Resources</b> .....	248-871-2490
<b>Planning Department</b> .....	
Building .....	248-871-2450
Community Development and	
Housing Rehabilitation .....	248-871-2549
Planning .....	248-871-2540
Zoning .....	248-871-2520
<b>Police Department</b> .....	
Non-emergency .....	248-871-2600
<b>Public Services Department</b> .....	248-871-2530
Public Works .....	248-871-2850
<b>Special Services Department</b> .....	
Costick Center .....	248-473-1800
Cultural Arts Division .....	248-473-1856
Golf Club .....	248-476-5910
Ice Arena .....	248-478-8800
Jon Grant Center .....	248-871-2849
Longacre House .....	248-477-8404
Nature Center .....	248-477-1135
Parks & Golf Maintenance .....	248-473-1890
Recreation .....	248-473-1800
Senior Adult Program .....	248-473-1830
Youth and Families Services .....	248-473-1841
<b>Volunteer Center</b> .....	248-473-1813

**Focus** is produced by the City of Farmington Hills and mailed to residents three times a year. Articles are submitted by City department directors. We welcome your comments.

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For the latest info on Farmington Hills, visit [www.fhgov.com](http://www.fhgov.com) or tune into Cable Channel 8.

## Department of Public Services

### Farmington Hills Continues "Green" Efforts

- At April's Native Plant Workshop, 85 people learned that native plants use less water and fertilizers, reduce erosion, and filter pollutants. Attend the Earth Day Celebration on April 18, 2009 at Heritage Park to learn more.
- Over 50 Rouge Rescue participants at four different sites picked up litter, planted native plants, and enjoyed a barbecue lunch. Rouge Rescue 2009 will be held on June 6, visit [www.therouge.org](http://www.therouge.org) for details.
- The Annual Frog and Toad Survey, held by Friends of the Rouge, had 500 participants from throughout the Rouge River watershed. On March 14, 2009, attend a free workshop at City Hall to learn more about this "No Child Left Inside" activity.
- Farmington Hill's participation at the 2008 Household Hazardous Materials (HazMat) Drop-off Days set a new record with 1,654 vehicles in attendance. HazMat Day 2009 is scheduled for May 2 at the Costick Center.
- To celebrate America Recycles Day, the City hosted a television and computer recycling event in November at the Costick Center, with more than 300 vehicles dropping off items.
- Curbside recycling by Farmington Hills residents once again surpassed the state average with close to 32,000 tons of garbage diverted from the landfills.
- "Best Management Practices" were implemented to improve the quality of stormwater, including underground storage systems, swirl chambers to remove sediment and oils, bioswales, rain gardens, and porous pavement.

### ENGINEERING DIVISION

**Road Construction Projects** - Several major road projects were completed this year and several are planned for next year.

#### Roads Resurfaced:

- 14 Mile Road - Drake to Orchard Lake Road, center left turn lane included
- Farmington Road - 13 Mile to 14 Mile

**Roundabout:** 14 Mile Road and Farmington Road

#### Traffic Signals:

- Farmington and Walnut Lane - Modernized
- 14 Mile and Pebble Creek - Modernized
- Haggerty and Hills Tech - Modernized and added southbound left turn phase

#### Work proposed on I-696 and I-96 connection for 2009:

- Replace existing two-lane Halsted bridge with five-lane bridge with wide sidewalks
- Replace pedestrian bridge between Harrison High School and Beechview Swim Club
- Replace bridge deck over Drake Road
- Repair bridge rails and patch deck over Inkster Road
- Repair Orchard Lake Road bridge deck
- Patch pavement between Halsted and I-75
- Patch and resurface I-696/I-275/I-96 interchange from Halsted to Meadowbrook

### Get ready for the switch to digital television (DTV)

Viewers with older antenna television sets that are not hooked up to a cable, satellite or a pay TV service will need to upgrade by February 17, 2009. For more information about the digital television (DTV) transition or to receive a coupon good for most or all of the cost of a DTV converter box, go to [www.DTVAnswers.com](http://www.DTVAnswers.com) or call **1-888-DTV-2009**.

## A Quick Review of What's New!

Farmington Hills welcomed both a new Police Chief and a new Fire Chief in 2008. In April, Assistant Chief Richard Niemisto became the new Chief of Police. He has worked for the Farmington Hills Police Department for over 40 years and has held significant leadership positions throughout his career. In December, Deputy Chief Corey Bartsch became the new Fire Chief. He has been with the department for 21 years and previously served as an Inspector, Paramedic, and Battalion Chief.

Employee communication went high tech with the launch of the City's intranet. Employees now have benefits, policies and procedures, newsletters, and more online. With the intranet, "green" employee communications will save money through reduced paper usage.

City employees went for the gold in the "Fit Olympics" wellness program. In cooperation with Botsford Center for Health Improvement, employees have been encouraged to make lifestyle improvements such as weight loss, increased activity, better nutrition, and smoking cessation. In 2008, employees lost a combined total of 258 pounds and 16,000 activity miles were logged in a three-month trial program, which will be extended through 2009.

The Heritage Park Amphitheater opened in June. Built at the base of the "bowl" used for summer concerts, the amphitheater blends with the natural surroundings.

Curbside recycling guidelines were expanded. New items accepted now include pizza boxes; all colors of glass bottles and jars; ceramics; all numbers of narrow-neck plastic bottles; bulky #2 plastic such as toys, buckets or crates; small household scrap metal; plastic bags; and drink boxes.

The Road Commission for Oakland County constructed a roundabout at the intersection of Fourteen Mile and Farmington Roads that was opened in November.



The new City logo now appears on the Police Department's marked patrol cars.

### Fertilizer Usage

Farmington Hills is a partner in the Healthy Lawn Care Program for Watershed Protection, which is endorsed by the Michigan Green Industry Association. The City's landscaping contractor is now required to follow these guidelines from the Healthy Lawns and Gardens Technical Advisory Committee for the Rouge River Watershed:

- Offer soil testing to customers.
- Use slow-release nitrogen plus low or no phosphorus fertilizer.
- Control weeds through zero pesticides, spot-treatment only, and one-time "rescue" operations to clean out major weeds.
- Sweep up fertilizers from paved surfaces to keep them out of storm drains.
- Provide advice to customers on proper maintenance.
- Establish a "no fertilizer" buffer near lakes, streams, rivers, and wetlands with at least a 25 foot setback.

Ask your landscaper to follow these guidelines for a healthier lawn. For a list of endorsed providers, visit [www.healthylandscapes.com](http://www.healthylandscapes.com).