



ANNUAL REPORT 2006

CITY COUNCIL

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

CITY MANAGER

- Steve Brock

MESSAGE FROM YOUR MAYOR



The Farmington Hills City Council. Standing (l - r): Cheryl Oliverio, Mayor Pro Tem Barry Brickner, Randy Bruce, Nancy Bates. Seated (l - r): Jerry Ellis, Mayor Vicki Barnett, Ken Massey.

Every year, the Annual Report provides a chance to look back with pride on the past year's many accomplishments. In 2006, we saw a continuation of successful programs and cherished traditions while we also saw growth and expansion, different approaches, and many new programs that answered the needs of our residents.

You might say that we have the best of both worlds. We are an established community that is open to change. We strive to answer the needs of a diverse and growing population while we honor those established residents and businesses that have made us the strong community we are today.

Many exciting changes have taken place, both large and small. From the newly-opened award-winning Fire Station No. 3/Jon Grant Community Center to the new handicapped-accessible entrance to City Hall, we strive to be a user-friendly City that always welcomes comments from our residents. In fact, it is your suggestions that have helped us to offer

innovative cultural arts programs for children and families, to expand services for seniors, and to create the planned Riley Skate Park for teens.

What hasn't changed is our commitment to maintaining our high quality of life in Farmington Hills. Our community has an award-winning school system, over 600 acres of parkland and public open space, and a thriving business community that offers exceptional job opportunities and a solid tax base. We are also one of the safest communities in the country, thanks to our outstanding Fire and Police Departments.

If you are new to Farmington Hills, we invite you to learn more about our great City and to participate in our many programs. If you have lived here all your life, or returned here to raise your family, we thank you for your continued commitment to the City we proudly call our own.

Mayor Vicki Barnett

Fire Department

The Fire Department closed its books on one of the busiest years to date. The Department continued to grow to meet the needs of the citizens and responded to over 6,700 requests for assistance. During 2006:

- The Fire Prevention Division developed a cooperative agreement with Nissan North American Headquarters and received a 2006 Nissan Titan. The Titan has become the flagship vehicle for public education efforts in the community.
- The Department received a federal homeland security grant to improve public education. The grant included the purchase of a new Sparky the Firedog outfit, a motorized Sparky, a public education trailer, and a new smoke house.



A Fire Department team extricates victims of a rollover accident.

- Fire Station Three reopened its doors in a new facility. The Fire Department partnered with the Department of Special Services and developed a comprehensive fire station/community center. The station houses two fire fighters during the weekdays and is home to nearly twenty-five paid on call fire fighters.
- In January, the Department hired over 51 paid on call fire fighters. These future fire fighters immediately began an intensive training session and 35 graduated from the fire academy in July. Emergency medical training will continue until March of 2007.
- Four new full-time fire fighters will supplement our current career staff. The new fire fighters have undergone 200 hours of intensive training and will continue on-the job training for the next 12 months.
- The Department has two new medium-duty rescue units, replacing two aging rescue units. These will respond to medical emergencies and will transport injured patients to area hospitals.
- The Department has been active with other City agencies in the development of our new emergency alert radio system. AM 1650 is designed to provide critical information to the citizens of Farmington Hills in times of emergency. During the average day the station is filled with current weather information, and other key preparedness tips.

Police Department

Throughout 2006, the Police Department continued its efforts in the fight against drug and alcohol abuse in our community. Officers responded to over 700 drug or alcohol-related incidents and as a result made more than 620 arrests. The Department continued providing substance abuse awareness education, counseling referral assistance, and drug testing resources to the community. During the school year, officers presented a drug education course known as T.H.I.N.K. (Teaching, Helping, Involving, Noticing Kids) to over 950 elementary students. The Department also distributed over 300 drug testing kits under its L.E.A.D. (Law Enforcement Against Drugs) program, which makes in-home drug and alcohol testing kits available to residents of Farmington and Farmington Hills.

The S.O.N.I.C. (South Oakland Narcotics Intelligence Consortium) Unit continues to be involved in the dismantling of major narcotics distribution organizations. One major investigation netted S.O.N.I.C. departments over \$1.1 million in forfeited narcotics proceeds, which brought over \$300,000 to the City of Farmington Hills. As a result of this ongoing investigation, authorities charged 27 individuals with drug trafficking and money laundering crimes. This narcotics organization was responsible for the distribution of more than 30,000 kilograms (66,000 pounds) of marijuana, and generated tens of millions of dollars for the distributors.

The Department continued its participation in OpenSky, a county-wide project to replace existing police radio equipment with a new completely inter-operable 800 MHz system. OpenSky, slated to become active in 2007, will allow police departments that previously operated on a variety of frequencies to communicate on a single radio system.

The Department said farewell to six retiring officers and through a combination of Public Safety Millage funds and attrition, hired or promoted 15 new police officers and made an additional 10 promotions to command ranks. Replacements to non-sworn staff included nine cadets, two part-time dispatchers, one full-time clerk, and three part-time clerks. In all, 22 new faces joined the Department and brought total staffing to 186, including 120 sworn officers.

A newly implemented Computerized Records Management System now allows officers to prepare and file incident reports from any station-based desktop computer or in-car mobile data computer and eliminates the need to produce time-consuming handwritten reports. One mouse click submits the report for supervisory approval, allows it to be assigned to a follow-up investigator, archives it in the Department's Records Section, and completes mandatory reporting of the incident to the Michigan State Police.

The Police Department remains committed to a community policing philosophy of service delivery and looks forward to continuing successful relationships with Farmington Hills businesses and residential communities.

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

Be in the know about City news and events with e-mailed updates sent via the new listserv, an automated one-way electronic mailing list. Subjects include general City news, road construction, cultural arts, and ice arena happenings. Visit www.fhgov.com, click on Quick Links, go to Mailing Lists/Listserve and follow the directions on how to subscribe. For more info, call 248-871-2430.

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CULTURAL ARTS DIVISION

Cultural Arts program participation increased by 25% this year, thanks to new classes, concerts, and events with targeted promotions. Popular offerings included Fashion Illustration, photography for adults and children, oil painting, The Next Stage, Improv and Broadway Juniors, Introduction to Music for Kids, Tahitian Dance, and private music lessons. The first Cultural Arts Showcase was held in early December where art, theater, and dance participants all took part.

The Longacre House provided a beautiful new location for events, including traditional English teas and Holiday Art Night Out, an evening of food and entertainment featuring a gift boutique with local artwork. Audiences were bigger than ever at the free summer concerts and next year's events will take place in the new band shell at Heritage Park. In addition to old favorites, Stars in the Park featured four new groups this year — Roots Vibration, Murphy's Law, Rock and Soul, and jazz artist Alfie Zappacosta.

Art on the Grand (the fine arts section of the Founders Festival) doubled in size and a new exhibit area at the Nature Center provided a venue for local artists including students from the photography class held in Heritage Park. The Stables Studio had sound-proofing and air conditioning added and a new light system enhanced the stage at the Costick Center.

ICE ARENA

In 2006, the Ice Arena had a 20% increase in enrollment in the Learn to Skate program, thanks in part to a boost in interest from the Winter Olympics. The High School Hockey program also expanded to two teams, instead of one. The Ice Arena is now home to both the Farmington High Falcons hockey team and the Harrison/North Farmington High Flyers hockey team. The Girls Age 10 and Under Youth Hockey Team took Runner Up in the state tournament and figure skating continues to be popular with both individual skaters and synchronized skating teams competing locally and regionally.

The spring thaw doesn't end the excitement at the Ice Arena. At least one of the two available ice rinks is open for skating 12 months of the year. Participants in Summer Day Camp enjoy daily skating, along with many other outdoor and indoor activities. In August, the Ice Arena and Founders Sports Park hosted the Farmington Hills Family Carnival and planning is underway for next year's event.



Farmington Hills Golf Club

PARKS AND GOLF DIVISION

This year marked the first time that the Farmington Hills Golf Club had all 18 holes open for a full season. The course continues to improve with new and maturing landscaping providing a source of natural beauty.

The 600+ acres of parks and public open space in the City of Farmington Hills again played host to thousands of visitors. Everything from soccer, cricket, and baseball to bird watching, hiking, photography, and picnicking were enjoyed by individuals and families. The Nature Center at Heritage Park again hosted over 10,000 visitors and is a great place for education and fun.

RECREATION DIVISION

Why not make room in your life for a little fun? The Recreation Division staff has been hard at work developing over 20 new programs to meet the leisure time needs of residents of all ages. Total class offerings increased from 2,329 to 2,454 and program participants increased from 21,082 to 22,780. This resulted in over 300,000 hours of leisure time!

One major accomplishment of the past year was securing a \$500,000 donation to help build the new Riley Skate Park at Founders Sports Park. During 2007, the construction of the "best skate park in the Midwest" will soon provide community youth with a place to slide down a rail, take on the nine foot drop of the menacing bowl or enjoy one of the many other features of Riley Skate Park.



The Longacre House

FACILITIES

A recent survey showed that 99% of people who rented a City facility for a special occasion said they'd do it again! Whether it's a social, educational, business, or community event, there's a site that's right for you.

Two new locations for events include the historic Longacre House and the Jon Grant Community Center. The refurbished Longacre House, built in 1869, offers a charming and elegant setting for weddings, parties, receptions, business meetings, banquets, and more. The nearly 5,000 square foot Jon Grant Community Center opened in May along with Fire Station No. 3. The Grant offers classes, rentals, and special events including a new Birthday Party package.

The Costick Center continues to provide a gathering spot for residents of all ages. It offers a 25-yard swimming pool, gym with stage, large commercial kitchen, and meeting rooms ranging from 500 square feet to over 7,000 square feet. New carpet in Shannon Hall and the lobby have given the Costick Center a fresh new look.

Over 250,000 guests pass through the Costick Center's doors each year — we hope to see you in 2007!

SENIOR DIVISION

The Senior Division addresses the changing and growing needs of a broad age group. Evening programs continue to increase for those adults still in the work force, while community-based services remain a critical link to independence and well-being for those requiring meals on wheels, liquid nutrition, chores, outreach, or transportation services. In addition to increasing the number and variety of programs available, events are also now scheduled at two new locations - the Jon Grant Community Center and the Longacre House. New programs included:

- Computer classes: "Buying and Selling on the Internet," "Basic Windows XP," and "Introduction to Microsoft Word."
- A certified Medicare Part D counseling site with trained staff to assist with this federal prescription program.
- A weekly outreach site at the Grant Community Center offering assistance with food stamps, Medicaid applications, senior housing, Medicare Part D, and other emergencies.
- "Movie Mondays" and "Movies at the Grant" with first-run movies shown monthly.
- Friday evening dance lessons and ballroom dances with a different style featured each month.

YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

There was a 12% increase in membership this year in after-school and summer programs for middle school youths. Opening the new Jon Grant Community Center enabled Farmington and Farmington Hills residents who attend Clarenceville Middle School to participate. This fifth Youth Center was made possible through the collaboration and financial support of the Farmington Area Goodfellows, the Exchange Club of Farmington/Farmington Hills, the Farmington Hills Economic Development Corporation, and several other community service organizations.

The eight-week Summer Drop-In Center was attended by 125 youth members and over 65 families took advantage of the Early Drop-Off program. The summer field trip program offered 24 opportunities for over 1,100 youth members to enjoy horseback riding, bowling, putt-putt golf, and trips to Great Escapes, the Family Fun Fest Carnival, water parks, and more. The fall program included Yoga, Club Z! Tutoring, Junior Optimist Club, scrapbooking classes, Tae Kwon Do, field trips, and other offerings.

In June, the Second Annual Jon Grant Signature Golf Outing resulted in a generous donation from the Exchange Club to Youth and Family Services. In July, the Farmington Hills/Farmington Community Foundation Second Annual Rubber Duck Race was held during the Farmington Area Founders Festival. The event involved over 45 businesses with more than 4,000 tickets sold, resulting in a large donation. Youth and Family Services also collaborated with the Exchange Club of Farmington/Farmington Hills, the Farmington-Farmington Hills Optimist Club, and the Farmington Jaycees for the successful Community Investment Fun(d) Night fundraiser, with the Riley Skate Park being the main benefactor.

The Department of Planning & Community Development

BUILDING DIVISION

- City staff regulated the construction of 30 single family homes and over 82,000 square feet of new commercial development for a total value of over \$10 million.
- Permits were issued for \$7 million in home improvements and \$13 million in commercial renovation.
- 29 buildings were demolished as part of a revitalization effort.
- Over 100 properties were identified as needing major repairs with follow-up to eliminate code deficiencies.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- New sidewalks were constructed with Community Development Block Grant Funds along Tuck (north of Eight Mile), Nine Mile (west of Tuck) and Independence (east of Middlebelt).
- The Housing Rehabilitation Program assisted 30 lower-income homeowners with improvements such as roofs, siding, and furnaces.
- Over 600 local volunteers participated in Rebuilding Together to help 11 homeowners with yard work, painting, and other general repairs.
- Clean-up programs in cooperation with the Eight Mile Boulevard Association revitalized Gateway Park at Eight Mile and Inkster.

Housing Rehabilitation Program



ZONING DIVISION

- Close to 12,000 inspections were performed to help enforce City ordinances and keep Farmington Hills a beautiful and desirable community. The primary focus was on blight abatement.
- Education was provided on ordinance requirements through public outreach to neighborhood associations with zoning issues within their subdivisions.
- The Zoning Board of Appeals heard 125 cases at 18 meetings that involved appeals of zoning ordinances.

PLANNING OFFICE

- Roadside beautification and new landscape projects were undertaken throughout the City.
- The 21st Annual Beautification Awards Ceremony recognized landscape design and originality. Top awards went to the Fairways Office Center, Sisters of Mercy Regional Community of Detroit Campus, Boyes, Wright, Pittman and Company, and the Longacre Elementary School.
- The Emerald Ash Borer Grant received from the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources will fund the planting of 126 trees along major roads and in City parks.
- The Northwestern Highway median landscape project, a joint project with the Michigan Department of Transportation and the City of Southfield, provided natural beauty and cost savings due to reduced maintenance.
- The new entrance to City Hall was landscaped with native plantings to provide a fitting background for the 9/11 Memorial and a colorful welcome to the building.
- The Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Annual Conference featured a bus tour of Natural Beauty Roads and Historic Districts in Farmington Hills plus a tour of historic buildings at Heritage Park.

Finance Department Makes Changes

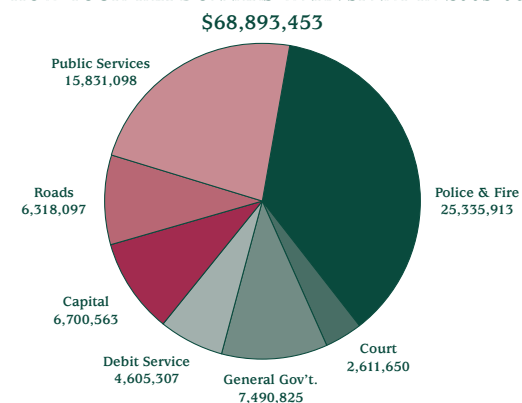
This year, the City's Finance Department:

- Implemented new software so financial statements and payroll can be produced more cost-effectively in-house.
- Rebid several services resulting in a savings to the City of \$300,000 over the next five years.
- Enabled taxpayers to pay their property taxes online or over the phone using a credit card (a 3% convenience fee is charged by the credit card company).
- Began a three-year Assessing Division project to convert to electronic sketching of all properties in the City resulting in drawings that are more accurate and easier to update.
- Added a terminal at the Assessing counter for residents to conveniently view assessing and tax information.

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

- **Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers' Association - 21 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, 2005) - 8 years in a row.**

HOW YOUR TAX DOLLARS WERE SPENT IN 2005-06



YOUR 2006 TAX DOLLAR

Based on Farmington Schools Homestead Rate

County
13.85%



Education*
61.00%



City
25.15%



*Farmington Schools - Oakland Intermediate Schools - Oakland Community College

City Clerk's Office

November 7, 2006 set a record for the highest turnout ever in a Governor's Election as 61% of the City's registered voters cast ballots. These ballots were cast on new equipment, both in the precincts and in the absentee ballot processing center. Last year, over \$300,000 in federal funds were used to purchase new ballot scanners for the precincts and over \$200,000 in federal funds were used to purchase new machines for the physically disabled. Thanks to this new equipment, voters who are vision or hearing impaired can now vote in their own precinct.

Technology has also changed the way meeting minutes are handled for the City Council and all other City boards and commissions. Meetings are audio taped and downloaded so that transcribers can listen at their own computers. This streamlining has enabled the City to outsource these services, saving thousands of dollars in employee wages and benefit costs.

Property info available online

To find property information online, visit www.fhgov.com, go to the Quick Links menu, click on Property Inquiry, and follow the instructions. Enter a property address, name, or parcel identification number to find out:

- ✓ Assessed value, taxable value, and tax payment history
- ✓ Land information, such as acreage and land value
- ✓ Building information, such as year built, square footage, and sales history
- ✓ Property photos
- ✓ Selling prices of comparable properties in the neighborhood.

For more information, call the Assessing Department at 248-871-2470.

Awards and Recognitions

The City's new combined **Fire Station No. 3/Jon Grant Community Center** was honored at the Michigan Municipal League's September convention as a winner in the 23rd Annual Michigan Municipal Achievement Awards Competition.

Mayor Vicki Barnett was elected President of the Michigan Municipal League (MML) at the 108th annual MML convention held in September in Marquette.

City Clerk Kathy Dornan was elected in May to the Board of Directors of the International Institute of Municipal Clerks.

Farmington Hills **Police Officer David Newcomb** received the Professional Excellence Award from the Michigan State Police Post in Brighton. Officer Newcomb, who was off-duty at the time, helped save the life of a Livingston County man whose pickup truck had gone off the road and rolled onto its roof in a swamp.

CITY DIRECTORY

Emergency Calls Only	
Fire Department	9-1-1
Police Department	9-1-1
Assessing	248-871-2470
Central Services/Purchasing	248-871-2430
City Clerk	248-871-2410
City Hall	248-871-2400
City Manager's Office	248-871-2500
Council Newsline	248-871-2511
District Court	248-871-2900
Farmington Community Library	248-553-0300
Finance Department	248-871-2440
Fire Department	
Non-emergency	248-871-2800
Human Resources	248-871-2490
Planning Department	
Building	248-871-2450
Community Development and	
Housing Rehabilitation	248-871-2549
Planning	248-871-2540
Zoning	248-871-2520
Police Department	
Non-emergency	248-871-2600
Public Services Department	248-871-2530
Public Works	248-871-2850
Special Services Department	
Costick Center	248-473-1800
Cultural Arts Division	248-473-1856
Golf Club	248-476-5910
Ice Arena	248-478-8800
Nature Center	248-477-1135
Parks & Golf	248-473-1880
Recreation	248-473-1800
Senior Adult Program	248-473-1830
Volunteer Center	248-473-1813
Youth and Families	248-473-1841

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, tune into cable Channel 8.

Department of Public Services

Division of Public Works

The DPW once again provided a popular stop at the annual City-wide Open House. Grown-ups learned about the department that keeps the City running while kids climbed aboard big trucks! Staff participated in the Earth Day Celebration and the annual Rouge Rescue, where participants removed invasive buckthorn plants, woody debris, and litter and also planted wildflowers at the stream in Memorial Park.

The DPW also hosted a Detention Pond Maintenance workshop, attended by over 80 representatives from subdivision and condominium associations. Participants learned how detention ponds work and how to maintain them. For more info, call **248-871-2860**.

Continuing work to improve water quality in local rivers and streams, DPW staff took part in a focus group sponsored by the Southeast Michigan Partners for Clean Water. Watch for literature from the Seven Simple Steps to Clean Water campaign, coming soon in your water bill.

Making a "Greener" City

In 2006, the City continued to fulfill obligations of the Federal Clean Water Act Stormwater Permit Program by requiring stormwater pollution controls for all new developments and redevelopments. Stormwater runoff (rain that doesn't soak into the ground) can cause flooding and pollution if it isn't handled properly. Excess fertilizer from lawns and contaminants from the street can mix with stormwater and flow into sewer grates in backyards and streets. This stormwater then leads to pipes that go directly into the Rouge River.

Developers working in the City are encouraged to reduce the volume of stormwater their sites produce by using green roofs, porous pavement, and rain gardens. Native plantings are also now required in detention ponds. Deep-rooted native plants absorb stormwater, thereby reducing water volume and removing pollution that heads to the Rouge River.

Water Distribution Master Plan

We take for granted that when we turn on a faucet, water will pour out. For that to happen, however, a lot of planning and maintenance must take place. In 2001, the City adopted a Water Distribution Master Plan that helps identify and prioritize areas that need improvements.

Last year's plan included a water main replacement on Eight Mile Road east of Middlebelt as well as improvements between the Pearl Street water main and the Grayling water main. It also included an upgrade between the Dunkirk water main and the Eight Mile Road water main.

Next spring, a proposed replacement water main is planned for a section of Middlebelt Road between Eight Mile and Grand River. This will upgrade the water system from an 8-inch diameter pipe to a 12-inch diameter pipe and will replace an old line that has had a history of breaks.

www.fhgov.com

Video Division Manager Produces PBS Series

PBS-TV stations across the country will soon broadcast a new "how-to" series called Your Brush with Nature, featuring the distinctive outdoor painting techniques of Michigan artist Heiner Hertling. Your Brush with Nature has other important Michigan connections - it's the only nationally syndicated television series currently produced in Michigan and David Tietmeyer, one of the directors and executive producers, also lives in Michigan. During the week, Dave works as the manager of the Video Division for the City of Farmington Hills, but weekends have seen him traveling to produce the series in locations including Michigan, South Carolina, and Tennessee. The 13-episode series was two years in the making and will broadcast on local PBS-affiliate WTVS in early 2007. For more information, go to www.ybwntv.com.

Road Construction Projects

Driving around Farmington Hills during the past year, you encountered many road construction projects. Some of these were on roads owned by the Road Commission for Oakland County or the Michigan Department of Transportation, but many were on City roads, which may have caused you to wonder how all of this was funded.

To maximize the City's road improvement dollars, the Department of Public Services annually submits applications to Federal and State Agencies to pursue grants to offset or completely cover construction costs. Most of these provide 80% of the project's funding, with the local community required to provide a 20% match. Recently, the Governor offered an additional funding program called the "Local Jobs Today Program," giving local governments the required 20% match funds if the project could be constructed in 2006 and 2007.

Recent projects funded by these grants include the resurfacing of Eleven Mile from Farmington to Orchard Lake; Inkster from Northwestern Hwy to

Thirteen Mile; Drake from Twelve Mile to Thirteen Mile; Orchard Lake Road Boulevard; Twelve Mile Road Boulevard; Twelve Mile, Orchard Lake to Middlebelt; the re-timing of all of the City's traffic signals; and landscaping on Northwestern Highway and Orchard Lake Road.

During 2007, grant-funded construction will be seen on Halsted, Grand River to Eleven Mile; Nine Mile, Tuck to Middlebelt; the Ten Mile/Middlebelt Intersection; and Halsted north of Eight Mile.



Road construction in Farmington Hills.