



Fremont City Beat

Issue No. 15 – Summer 2004

FREMONT, MICHIGAN:

“NOW & ALWAYS – A Fine City • A Great Community”

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS TO TOP \$2.1 MILLION

Capital spending on the replacing, enhancing and expansion of the capital infrastructure in Fremont during FY 04/05 will total over \$ 2.1 million. Nearly two miles of streets will be re-constructed this summer/fall & next spring. Funding for the projects listed below comes primarily from the City's allocation of State Gas & Weight Tax (motor fuel) receipts under the State's Act 51 distribution formula. No property taxes are used to improve the City's street network. Utility work, such as the replacement of water or sewer mains is funded by the City's utility funds. Property owners along Hillcrest and Stewart Avenues will also help finance a portion of the improvements through special assessments. Funding for the Downtown street project & the Airport runway projects comes primarily from State/Federal grants.



Projects already completed this year include:

- Construction of Phase 1a of The Town & Country Path, which includes north & south sections
- Milling and resurfacing of Hillcrest Avenue from Juniper to Lewis Lane, Juniper, Vista & Lewis Lanes & Club View
- South Stewart Avenue, from Cedar Street south to the north entrance drive of the Newaygo Co. Fairgrounds received a new sidewalk, allowing residents a safe walk t to the Fairgrounds & to Apache Drive
- Annual replacement of deteriorated -sidewalks throughout town
- Milling & resurfacing of Main Street, between Mechanic and Merchant Avenues (MDOT-funded project)
- The Public Works crew and owners of the Swirl Ice Cream Shop at Fremont Lake Park, Mr. & Mrs. Larry Brown, completed improvements to the Swirl & City Bathhouse building, which include new tile floors, refurbished restroom stalls, hand blow dryers and better insulation and ventilation of the attic and changing rooms.
- Milling and resurfacing of Southwoods & Pine Street, from Main Street south to Chippewa Drive (**seen at left looking south**



toward Arboretum Park.)

Projects scheduled for this fall include:

- Hillcrest Avenue, between Cherry and Juniper Streets will be re-constructed with new curb, gutter, sidewalks & storm sewers and the re-building of the street & driveway entrances. Work is currently underway, with the replacement of existing deteriorated curbing already complete. A new sidewalk will run on the east side of Hillcrest from the Christian Middle School to Juniper.
- West Main Street, from DeWitt Avenue to the Wal-Mart Superstore east driveway will receive a new 12" watermain to loop the City's water distribution system in that area. This was a requirement of the MDEQ in order for the City to service the new Wal-Mart.
- Final asphalt layer & new bridge for Phase 1a of the Town & Country Path (see accompanying article)
- Resurfacing of the Branstrom Drive & the ballfield parking lots at Branstrom Park.

- The completion of the runway projects @ the Fremont Municipal Airport that are already well underway. The N/S runway is being extended 674' to result in an overall length of 6,500' and will also receive a partial taxiway. Due to favorable bid prices, we were able to add the milling & resurfacing of the entire E/W runway to this year's project.
- Green Avenue, from 48th Street to Lake Drive, will be totally reconstructed. This is a cooperative project with the Newaygo Co. Road Commission, with the City splitting with the Commission the local match requirement for a State MDOT grant.

Projects planned for spring 2005 include:

- Sheridan Street, between Weaver and Gerber Avenues will receive a new watermain & a complete reconstruction of the street w/ new asphalt and curb & gutters
- Cleaning & painting of the 750,000-gallon Decker Avenue water tower
- Other street milling and resurfacing projects:
 - Darling Avenue – between 44th and Cherry Streets
 - East Avenue – between Main and Maple Streets (also includes replacing watermain)
 - Maple Avenue – from East Avenue to the Habitat building (also includes replacing watermain.) ☆



FIRST PHASE OF NEW NON-MOTORIZED PATH NOW OPEN FOR YOUR PLEASURE

Phase 1a of the Path has been completed with minor paving to be done in late August. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on Saturday, Aug. 21st in Branstrom Park with over 100 persons in attendance. Phase 1a totals 1.75 miles and has two sections: one connecting Branstrom Park with Daisybrook

and Pathfinder Elementary Schools and the other connecting the new Skate Park with Fremont Lake Park. The cost for the first phase will be approximately \$250,000. **The photo at right shows the Path as it winds through the former Davis family property north of Fremont Lake Park.**



The Path Committee has reviewed options for Phase 1b and recommended this phase start at Lake Drive (part of existing Phase 1a) and head westward to Locust Street, through the Industrial Park and across Green Avenue. If funds are sufficient, a leg will run north along the east side of the Maat Drain up to the new traffic signal @ Industrial Drive & Main Street. The City Council and the Boards for both Dayton & Sheridan Townships have endorsed the proposed route for Phase 1b. The Committee is working with the Executive Director of NCEDO (Newaygo Co. Economic Development Office) to submit state/federal grants to fund a majority of the 2nd phase.

A Feasibility Analysis for the entire path network was completed last fall, depicting general phases of the path project totaling over 22 miles with an estimated price tag of approximately \$5 million. A community phone survey was conducted this spring to determine Fremont area citizen support for the proposed path. Following are some of the Survey's comparative results from both Fremont City residents and those within the entire Fremont area (City & two townships):

Fremont		
City	Area	
87%	85%	Agree with the construction of the proposed 22-mile pathway
83%	79%	Say they would personally use the path
64%	64%	Of those asked, use walking as recreational activity, which is the #1 recreational activity of those surveyed; next was biking
53-54%	49-54%	Were certain to vote for a 9/10 ^{ths} of a mill tax levy for the construction of Path
63%	58%	Were certain to vote for a 1/4 of a mill for operation and maintenance
48%	40%	Had only heard of the project prior to phone survey





The Committee is still raising funds for future Path phases and greatly appreciates the funds already donated by local individuals, businesses and organizations. Gifts to date total over \$45,000. **Tax deductible donations can be submitted to the Town & Country Path Fund, c/o the Fremont Area Community Foundation, P.O. Box B, Fremont, MI 49412.**

On Monday, Aug. 23rd, Wal-Mart announced a \$1,000 gift to the Path project. **Pictured at right at the check presentation** are, from left to right, Holly Moon, Dayton Twp. Supervisor, Keith Ferris, Fremont Wal-Mart Manager and Dave Lue, Sheridan Twp. Supervisor.



Please feel free to attend a Fremont Area Park & Recreation Advisory Committee meeting if you have other recreation ideas, would like to propose a project or would like to show your support. If you have questions regarding the Path, contact City Clerk Todd Blake @ the Fremont City Offices @ 924-2101. Now, get out there & start walking or riding that bike...no excuses! ☆

THE CITY JUST GOT A LITTLE BIT GREENER



In honor of Arbor Day, the City recently completed its annual private tree purchase program in conjunction with Mellema Nursery, Fairview Floral & the Gentlemen Farmer. For the past ten years, the City has offered discount coupons to residents for the purchase of any shade or ornamental tree from these local nurseries. Since the coupon was increased to a \$20 value seven years ago, residents have redeemed 440 coupons.

The City has been recognized as a "Tree City, USA" by the National Arbor Day Foundation since 1990. To achieve this designation, the City must have a comprehensive tree-care program, including a tree-care ordinance, and regular trimming, removal & replacement of dead or dying public trees. The City plants an average of 30 trees along roadways and within the parks and cemetery each year.

Five years ago we began tracking the type of trees purchased under the coupon program. Residents have planted the following species over that period:

Maple	72	Magnolia	6	Redbud	2	Elm	1
Crab	43	Hawthorn Crimson	5	Red Sunset	2	Box Elder	1
Dogwood	25	Pear	5	Dawn Redwood	2	Hydrangea	1
Cherry	25	Chestnut	5	Gingko	2	Viburnum	1
Spruce	22	Service Berry	4	Holly	1	Willow	1
Plum	17	Tulip	4	Amalancher	1	Olive	1
Pine/Fir	13	Purple Smoke	3	Halesia	1	Mulberry	1
Ash	9	Rose of Sharon	2	Weeping Pee	1	Apple	1
Birch	8	Arborvitae	2				

Most people value, respect and truly love the trees in our community. At an average economic value of \$525/tree, those 440 trees add \$11,550,000 of value to this community over their average 50-year life span. Please do your part to properly care for trees on your property. It is truly an investment in our children's future and the future of our fair City. ☆

CITY ADOPTS FY 04/05 BUDGET

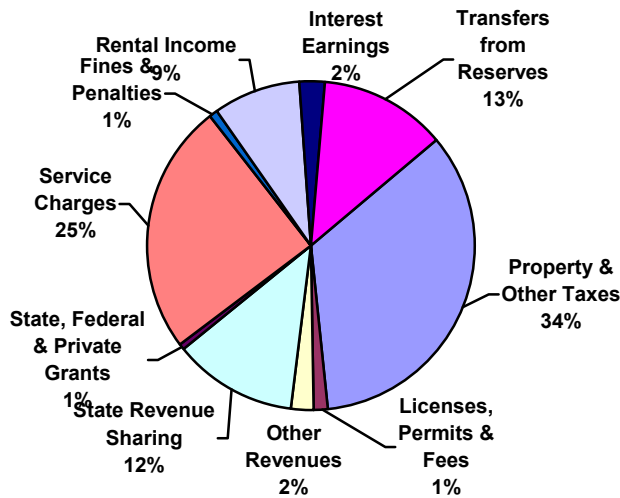
The City Council recently adopted the City's Operating & Capital Budget for FY 04/05, which began July 1st. Copies of the Budget are available for review at City Hall. Overall, the budget increased \$596,715, or 9% from last year. However, the General Fund grew by only 6.9%. It is noteworthy that the City Council was able to craft a balanced budget with so many negative impacts on City revenues resulting from the sluggish economy and substantial cuts in State Revenue Sharing. Even with these challenges, the City budget contained no tax or fee increases or any cuts in service levels, while still being able to invest in equipment replacement and investing nearly \$1.8 million in capital improvement projects.

The Budget is based on maintaining our existing 14-mill property tax levy, which is the lowest in Newaygo County and has remained unchanged for the last six years. The City Charter permits a maximum levy of 20 mills. For comparison, millages for the rest of Newaygo County's communities are:

City of Newaygo	19.1698
City of White Cloud	18.2861
City of Grant	17.5916
Village of Hesperia	17.7522
City of Fremont	14.0000

The City's millage represents only 23% of the overall non-homestead property tax levy of 60.0048 mills in this community. Education millages represent 63% of the total, while the County takes 12% and the District Library 2%.

PROJECTED FY 04/05 REVENUES BY SOURCE

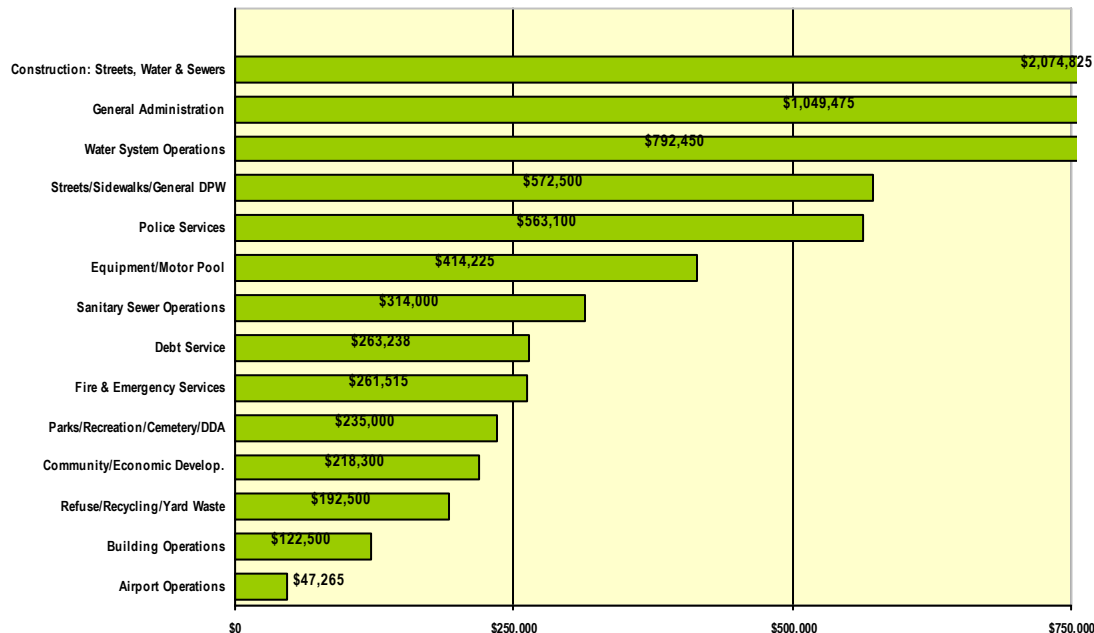


Following are two graphs that further depict proposed revenues & expenditures for this year's budget. The pie chart shows projected revenues for FY 04/05 organized by ten general categories. The chart vividly depicts that revenues from property and other taxes represent the largest percentage of total revenues at 34%. Nearly three-quarters of the revenues are derived from only three sources: taxes, service charges and rental income.

The bar chart below shows proposed expenditures by program areas. Expenditures for Construction replaced General Administration as tops on the chart this year. Nearly \$1.8 million will

be spent on replacing, enhancing and expanding our public infrastructure. (See the article in this Newsletter on "Construction Projects.") While individually, Police & Fire services are not near the top, if they were added together as a "Public Safety" category, they would come in third on the chart representing expenditures of over \$824,000. ★

PROPOSED FY 04/05 EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM AREA



NOVEMBER 2ND STATE GENERAL ELECTION

The November General Election is just around the corner and voters will decide which candidates will represent them in local, state & federal offices. Candidates will be selected for the following offices:

- Representatives in the US Congress & State Legislature
- County Commissioner, Prosecutor, Sheriff, Clerk, Treasurer, Register of Deeds, Drain Commissioner & Surveyor

City residents are reminded that election signs are not to be placed in the City rights-of-way per the City Code. We do wish to compliment our residents for the proper placement of election signs during the August Primary. City crews had to move only a couple improperly placed signs. Unfortunately, the size of some signs was a bit overdone, including an old school bus that doubled as a billboard for one candidate.

The Newaygo County Clerk's Office is continuing to provide their Internet site at www.electionmagic.com that will provide current election results as they are reported to the County on election nights. Year 2004 election dates to remember:

- October 5:** Last day to register for voting eligibility for the November 2nd General Election
- November 2:** General Election, 101 E. Main Street, Fremont. The polls open at 7:00 AM and close at 8:00 PM.

As a convenience to our City voters, if you or your spouse would like to be added to the City's permanent absentee voter (AV) list, please notify the City Offices @ 924-2101. You will be mailed an AV application before each election and given the option to vote absentee or in person.

Please exercise your right to vote in November. We should all live by the adage that "If you don't vote, you don't have the right to complain!" ★ (Do you have an American flag and a clip of someone voting, if so please add)?



POLICE DEPARTMENT REMINDERS

Citizens are reminded that disabled and/or unlicensed vehicles cannot be stored on private property within the City limits. If you are sent a warning letter and cannot have the vehicle removed within the specified time, call us at 924-2100 to make arrangements. We are willing to work with those making an honest effort.

The Public Works, Police and Fire Departments encourage residents and business to place their street address numbers on the front of their home or building where it is visible from the street. Three (3") inch letters are most often visible and will help save time for both the utility department's work and most importantly in a life-threatening situation for someone at your home or business.

Stray dogs that are picked up by the Police Dept. are now being boarded at the Bellwether Harbor, 7645 W. 48th St. before being transported to the County Animal Shelter. Owners are reminded that proof of valid license must be presented at City Hall before they can retrieve their pet. Also, a boarding fee of \$25 and ordinance fine of \$6 will apply. If your pet is missing, call the Police Dept. at 924-2100. ★