



CITY OF HURON
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

July 21, 2023

Matthew Lasko, City Manager

ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ConAgra: Based on recent Planning Commission approval of the conceptual site plan, the City held another meeting with the development team to talk through next steps. OHM advisors, who have already designed a good portion of the utility work with be submitting a proposal to the City and Ridgestone to complete work needed to submit a preliminary and final plat to Planning Commission for consideration.

Main Street Parking Lot: The City has received preliminary plans from a developer interested in developing the vacant parking on Main Street that currently sits across the street from Comfort Inn. The preliminary plan calls for the construction of 14 townhouses. This project will first be presented to BZA in December as a handful of variances are needed. We will keep Council apprised as this project progresses.

Two Rivers: The public hearing at City Council related to the Phase I PUD has been completed. At the next Council meeting on Tuesday July 11th, Council will consider the PUD request as well as the Development Agreement for Phase I. If approved, developers can move forward with plans to commence construction on the twenty-seven (27) homes comprising Phase I. Additional Phases of the project will require Planning Commission and Council approval.

Norfolk Southern Holdings: The City will be hosting Solomon Jackson again this week who leads Norfolk Southern's real estate division. We hope to receive an update regarding current and future activities at the Carmuese site and their thoughts and plans with the remainder of their holdings throughout the City. All details from this meeting will be shared with the Council as soon as communicated to us.

Oster's: The City continues to work diligently with our non-profit partners to continue relocation efforts for residents at the park. We believe approximately nine (9) households have physically relocated. We will continue to work over the upcoming weeks and months with our partners to aid relocation efforts.

ECEDC: The Annual Meeting and Awards for ECEDC will be held on Tuesday August 8th at Sawmill Creek Resort – Willows Hall. I will provide all Council members with invitations at our meeting on June 27th in case they would like to attend. Arrival begins at 4:30PM and the program begins at 5:00PM. The Keynote Speaker will be Eric Wobser who was recently announced as the incoming CEO of the Greater Sandusky Partnership who will be merging organizations with ECEDC.

Residential Development: The City met with representatives of Triban Investments (who are major land acquirers for multiple national home builders as well as Bo Knez, owner of Knez Homes. The team is looking to make major residential investments in either Huron or Huron Township. As such we explored several potential that could be good candidates for either single-family detached residential or townhouses.

INFRASTRUCTURE/STREETS/UTILITIES/IT

Rt 6 Phase II: Staff and Council hosted a second work session related to the second phase of Route 6. This work session aimed to finalize the preferred conceptual design of engineers and City staff as well as reviewing the possible options that were considered and will cover rough costs for certain options. Regardless of the preferred option, and final design decision will need to be approved by ODOT District 3 based on results of traffic studies and past precedence.

There was a presentation at the regular Council meeting on July 11th, 2023, to update Council on this project. In this update, staff explained that in order to achieve the plan of removing the light at Center St, Closing Jim Campbell at the easterly end and adding a new roundabout at Liberty, the City would need to take over the Limited Access Right of Way between Center St and the pedestrian bridge from ODOT control. Staff will continue to work with ODOT on this option.

Sawmill Parkway: As of May 30th, the temporary roadway is now closed, and the western end of Sawmill Parkway is reopened to traffic. Crews have fully taken advantage of the good weather and it is approximated that 70% of the roadway is complete. Based on current progress, the roadway is anticipated to be completed in September.

The weather has cooperated on this project and construction of the main roadway is expected to be completed in early August. We expect work to continue on utilities and punch list items throughout August.

East Side Sidewalks: The City was notified by Governor DeWine's office on June 9th that the Ohio Department of Transportation awarded the City of Huron and Huron Township \$650,000 for the east side walk project. The funds were awarded through ODOT's Highway Safety Improvement Program and were highly competitive since it was a statewide program. This award is in addition to the previously awarded \$120,000~ from Erie County.

We truly believe our multi-jurisdictional partnership and collaboration with Huron Township was instrumental in this award. A big thank you as well to Stu Hamilton and really OHM Advisors – as OHM Advisors prepared the application. This project is slated for 2024 construction.

Pavement Condition and 2023+ Resurfacing: This project will be unfortunately postponed until 2024. After extensive investigation and due diligence, it was discovered that the Staff recommendation of concrete patching with asphalt overlay was not possible due to existing condition of the neighborhood roads. After the update presentation on June 27th, Staff now recommend a repair and patch of all three neighborhoods. It is planned to put these new project specs out to bid in early fall to enable us to award the project late fall, to get both the best pricing and priority on the construction schedule. Staff will be reaching out the relevant HOA's with an update.

Berlin Road Sidewalks: The City continues to receive requests to consider sidewalk installation on Berlin Road – south of Shawnee School. We unsuccessfully applied for Safe Routes to School funding in 2022. And with the school ceasing to exist moving forward, this source of funding is not an option. The City will look to research other funding opportunities and placement of this project in a future capital planning year. We will also need to engage the railroad to determine what hurdles exist to install a pedestrian crossing over the rail tracks.

Bike Lane Repainting: This project went out to bid on April 24th, 2023, and closed May 11th, 2023. We received two bidders, but unfortunately both were outside the 10% allowance of engineers estimate. Both bids were rejected. Staff will analyze why the delta between the estimate and bids were so wide.

General: Reminder, there will be a lot of utility work over the summer months, and we wanted to alert our Residents. We will have two fiber internet providers starting to install their fiber for their “Fiber To The Home” (FTTH) offering. This is a wonderful expansion of service providers for the city giving Residents not only choice, but also hopefully driving down the cost. The three companies are OmniFiber, Buckeye and Frontier.

We will also see our OHM partners throughout the city for the remainder of the year collecting our Stormwater asset inventory.

If you have any questions regarding ongoing Utility work in your neighborhood, please reach out to Stuart Hamilton at 419-433-5000 x1104 or email stuart.hamilton@huronohio.us.

Huron Public Power Third Transformer: On January 17th, 2023, and RFP was released to purchase, deliver, ramp up and test this third 69kV transformer. The RFP closed, and we received a single respondent. We have issued a request for clarification on some technical details, and if these are answered satisfactorily, we will bring back legislation to award it to the Council soon. Legislation was presented to Council at the April 25th meeting for approval to purchase from Niagara Power Transformer. The bid price was \$1,039,837.00, with 100% due at time of receipt.

Huron Public Power Expansion: The City is getting close to bidding out our first expansion project for Huron Public Power. This project will allow Huron Public Power to be extended northward down Rye Beach Road, under the railroad tracks and across the entrance to Sawmill Parkway. By doing so, the City will be able to pick up additional customers along Sawmill Parkway on a case-by-case basis should property owners be interested in switching their power provider to Huron Public Power.

Shawnee School Zone: Staff has begun working with the school district and the Ohio Department of Transportation to decommission the school zone in front of Shawnee School and ultimately remove the signage. Fortunately, we are also exploring reusing the flashing beacon crosswalk signals as part of the east side sidewalk project.

Republic Trash Collection Contract: This closed on April 28th with a single respondent, who was Republic Services. The results of this bid were presented to the Council at the regular Council meeting on May 9th, 2023. The Council directed staff to proceed with the option that kept the service level the same as it currently is. This would take quarterly bills from \$63.03 to \$70.92. Staff are also looking at assessing trash bills through the County Auditor, so residents would pay them as part of their real estate taxes. This removes an administration overhead charge of about \$2 per account as we try to keep the prices down.

The new Republic Services contract was authorized by Resolution at the regular Council meeting of June 27th, 2023, along with the corresponding ordinance to change the trash rates billable to residents. The new rate of \$71 per quarter, per owner will be effective July 1st, 2023.

ZONING/CODE/PLANNING

Coastal Management Assistance Grants: On February 22, the City was notified of the results of our grant applications to the Office of Coastal Management of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. The City's request for capital dollars to help install a public pathway to the beach behind the water plant was denied. However, we did receive notification that our grant request for Showboat/Wall Street/Lakefront Park planning has been advanced in the process. The application has been sent to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for review to ensure compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act. Awards will be given in July/August.

Main Street Corridor Plan: Staff and OHM are currently revising the final plan to incorporate some of the final feedback received from the public at our recently held open house at the Boat Basin. We hope to present a final plan to Planning Commission and Council in the upcoming weeks.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Tennis Courts: A kickoff meeting with the contractor was held today. The contractor plans on mobilizing and commencing work tomorrow – and will begin with tree removal. The City will close the tennis courts down for the duration of the project beginning this Sunday evening June 18th. Work is tentatively slated to be completed sometime in September of this year at the earliest.

The contractor continues work on this project. Last week contractors completed saw cutting and installation of under drains and commenced base repairs. This will be in advance of installing the coating that will take up to 30 days to cure. We are still anticipating a mid-September completion, weather permitting.

624 Berlin Road: Barn removal, final grading and seeding have been completed at this site. Leimeister Crane and Tree were engaged to clean up outside the park on Berlin Road and clear the scrub around the pond area. The park is really looking great. With grass seed down and fresh

grading soil spread, we ask the public visiting this park to use caution and to not drive any vehicles anywhere outside of the gravel area as you enter. The public is also reminded that any fishing in the pond is catch and release only.

On May 2nd, 2023, City Architecture presented progress on the imagining process for this park to the HJRD. Conceptual ideas were presented for conversation and some good feedback was received. This feedback will be incorporated as City Architecture and staff continue to move through this process. Next steps will include a joint City Council / Planning Commission presentation to review draft recommendations for improvements to the site. This has been scheduled for the August 22nd Regular Council meeting at 6:30PM.

FINANCE

Garbage Legislation: Council approved legislation on the City's new garbage rate in June. The City will increase the quarterly rate to match the proposed contract from Republic from \$65 to \$71. The City is also proposing legislation at the July 25th meeting to add the garbage fee to residential property tax bills, beginning in 2024. The City will continue to quarterly bill residents for garbage through December 31. Communication on this process was sent out with the June bill. If passed, we will distribute more information to all residential property owners through the end of 2023. The garbage fee for residents will match the Republic Services contract going forward. If assessed on residential properties, no administrative fee will be charged on top of the contractual rate with Republic Services.

June Monthly Financial Report: The June financial report is available for review and linked below. At the end of June, income tax revenue was up 14%, or \$275000, from June of 2022. This increase continues to mostly be due to the Ardagh expansion. However, income tax increases from Sawmill Creek Resort and Mucci Farms play a factor in this growth, as well. The unencumbered general fund balance at the end of June was \$1.9 million, or 32% of annual expenditures. Major revenue sources are showing positive growth in 2023 compared to 2022. Most notably, interest earnings are more than budgeted at the end of June, and up 277% from 2022. Although Nickel Plate Beach parking fees are still expected to be greater than pre-pandemic revenues, the total revenue for the year is trending lower than budgeted for 2023. This revenue source is directly impacted by weather conditions around holidays and weekends during the summer. Unfavorable weather conditions, such as strong winds and cooler temperatures, have negatively impacted parking fee revenue through June.

<https://stories.opengov.com/huronoh/published/ZJjQtLkca>

WATER DEPARTMENT

Recent Activity:

- Neptune AMR Transmitters. Actively installing Neptune AMR Transmitters on round 2. There are less than 500 transmitters needing to be installed. We anticipate this project being completed by the end of July. A major thank you to all staff who have been aggressively swapping out these transmitters.
- The city received a \$10,000 equipment grant from the Ohio EPA which will go towards the purchase of a hydraulic power pack and hydraulic valve turner.
- Staff are collecting quotes for damage done to the 12' main (150 ft) on Sawmill Parkway after a semi-truck hit a hydrant. The supply loop is currently valved off, but all customers still have service.

Active Project Updates:

Primary Intake: Lake Erie Diving has commenced work on this cleaning. Work is expected to last 5-6 weeks. Due to a longer lead time on the chemical piping, completion has been delayed until we are in receipt of the hardware needed.

Alternate Intake/Sludge Lagoon: A proposal was received from Kleinfelder to undertake the design for this project. Clarifications were returned to them recently and staff are waiting an updated proposal.

West Side Water Tower: On June 16th, The City was awarded \$5M from Governor DeWine's Ohio BUILDS water and wastewater infrastructure grant program. This is the largest allowable grant in the State of Ohio, and we believe it to be the largest single grant the City of Huron has ever received. We are thankful to our State and Local partners that help make projects like this possible.

South Main Street Water Line Replacement: Staff recently met with designers from OHM to review progress set drawings for this project. We anticipate this project being bid in late summer or early fall.

PERSONNEL/ADMINISTRATION

Police Department: The Huron Police Department has officially hired Dylan Rohrbaugh as a full-time patrol officer. He will begin with the Department during the week of July 24th and will be formally introduced to the community and Council during a swearing in ceremony at the July 25th, 2023 Council meeting.

AGREEMENTS

N/A

CONTRACTS

- Bricker & Eckler – HPP Legal Services (Law) – **Expires 9/30/23**
- OHM Advisors (Engineering) – **Expires 12/31/23**
- HJRD Annual Agreement (Recreation) - **Expires 12/31/23**
- Dispatch Agreement – Erie County Sheriff – **Expires 12/31/23**
- City Prosecutor Employment Agreement – expires **12/31/23**
- Personnel Officer Employment Agreement – expires **12/31/23**
- Erie Soil and Water Conservation District (Engineering) – **Expires 1/31/24**
- Seeley, Savidge, Ebert & Gourash Co., LLP (Law) – **Expires 6/3/24**
- Dynegy Electric Aggregation Agreement – expires **7/30/25**
- Dynegy Electric Standard Large Stable Service Agreement – expires **08/2025**
- School Resource Officer – **Expires 8/31/26**
- Republic Services – **Expires 12/31/26**

UPCOMING MEETINGS

August Meetings:

- Utilities Committee Meeting – Wednesday August 2nd, at 5:00 in the Main Conference Room.
- Finance Committee Meeting - Tuesday August 8th at 5:30 in the Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday August 8th at 6:30 in the Council Chambers.
- BZA Meeting – Monday August 14th at 5:30 in the Council Chambers.
- Planning Commission Meeting – Wednesday August 16th at 5:00 in the Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday August 22nd at 6:30 in the Council Chambers.