



CITY OF HURON  
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

January 20, 2023

Matthew Lasko, City Manager

## ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**Firelands Scientific:** Due to pending legislative changes in Columbus, expansion activities are currently on hold until any changes are finalized.

**USGS/Harbor Point Marina:** The next phase of the Harbor North revitalization is underway. Crews are currently hard and fast at work constructing the approximate 2,500 square foot Harbor Master Building. The entire framing of the facility is completed at this point.

**Buckeye Sports:** The Company is nearing completion on its \$10.0M investment. In anticipation of project completion, the Company is able to open up portions of the project including one of its indoor storage facilities and also the showroom. Buckeye Sports will be celebrating its grand opening event between January 20<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> and will have free refreshments through the weekend, 30-40 boats on display and its pro shop will be open. I encourage everyone to stop by if you can through the 29<sup>th</sup>. I again want to thank the company for their investment in Huron with its state-of-the-art facility and wish them much success moving forward.

**ConAgra:** The development team presented to the Planning Commission on Wednesday December 14<sup>th</sup> for consideration of their conceptual site plan. There was good conversation and the developer left with some suggestions and will return with updated conceptual soon – hopefully in February of 2023. If approved, developers will still be required to complete the thorough design review process and final site plan approval including landscaping and lighting plans in 2023.

**Warren Slag Property:** The City is fully completed with all our due diligence on the property which included title examination, survey and environmental phase I. we did not uncover any issues and have notified sellers of our being done with due diligence.

We did determine that the small .19 acre parcel included in the purchase agreement is not contiguous to the other three – after detailed conversations with the county tax map division and title company – and therefore will be moving forward on closing without this parcel included. We are hoping to close this transaction at some time in February.

Erie County was also notified by the Economic Development Administration this month that their \$26,000 grant request to aid in the completion of a multi-county Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy was selected for further consideration. We hope to have an answer on the grant request shortly in hopes of commencing planning activities shortly thereafter. As a reminder, the completion of a CEDS is not a requirement for future EDA funding.

**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 City is in receipt of revised plats for a new PUD related to the Two Rivers subdivision. The project is moving forward with the first phase being the build out of the remaining lots on Sheltered Brook. We are anticipating the first phase being considered by the planning commission at their February meeting.

## INFRASTRUCTURE/STREETS/UTILITIES/IT

**Rye Beach Road/Cleveland Road Corridor:** In recent conversations with ODOT District 3, the agency is looking to commence design and engineering work on this project as early as January of 2023. Staff carried out a conference call with representatives from ODOT to get an update on the schedule of the project as well as talk through timing of when the City's \$1,000,000 commitment would be needed. ODOT was informed that the City would not be contributing their committed dollars until fourth quarter 2023. As a follow up to the \$25 million build grant secured by ODOT in Fall of 2022, ODOT District 3 applied for an additional \$5 million to ODOT central office through their Transportation Review Advisory Council. ODOT District 3 was notified in December of 2022 that the application in full has been awarded. Between this funding and earlier commitments, the transformation of US between Huron and Sandusky has secured approximately \$40m in funding. Surveyors continue to be mobilized along the corridor. We will keep council and residents apprised of any relevant updates moving forward.

**Rt 6 Phase II:** Staff and Council will be hosting a second work session related to the second phase of Route 6. This work session will aim 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. We are hoping to end the work session with a preferred concept to begin introducing to the public for feedback.

**Sawmill Parkway:** Work on this project has been halted for the winter. The base was installed in the cul-de-sac and a temporary surface was installed to enable use over the winter months. Potholing was carried out to verify waterline depth, and the good news is that all but one storm crossing does not require any watermain work. This enabled us to complete seven of the sixteen storm crossings prior to closing. Planning work will continue over the down months, so we are ready to start again as soon as the weather permits.

**Sidewalks:** The City has executed the design contract with OHM Advisors to commence design work on the new sidewalk installation project which will travel from Gateway Boulevard inside the City limits to Huron Green subdivision in Huron Township. Design will take several months, and both the city and the Township will continue to explore funding opportunities to construct the approximate \$500,000 project. To date, the project has secured \$25,000 from Huron Township and just over \$120,000 from Erie County Metropolitan Planning Organization.

The city is investigating an additional portion of sidewalk on the north side of Cleveland Rd East between Gateway Blvd and Anchorage Circle. During the week of October 31, City staff met with the three (3) of the four (4) impacted property owners who all shared support for the installation.

The fourth being the HOA. All survey and legal work have been completed and staff will be reaching out to the affected parties soon. Once these easements are executed, this project will move ahead outside of the current Cleveland Road East Sidewalk project for timing reason.

**Pavement Condition and 2023+ Resurfacing:** OHM are currently in the design phase of this project. Core samples have been taken in multiple problem areas to discover any possible base issues. We hope to have this project out to bid by February 2023.

**Stormwater Management:** The stormwater management plan phase 1 kickoff meeting was held with internal staff and the OHM Stormwater team. Everyone is excited to get this project rolling. The discovery phase will be very manual as staff will need to digitize old as built plans etc. This digitization needs done regardless, so this is a good means to prioritize this task. This project is expected to last eight (8) months to a year and will deliver a visual stormwater inventory to take us in to the future. During the time this project is active, you will see OHM staff around the city collecting data. If anyone has any questions or concerns, please contact Stuart Hamilton at 419-433-5000 x 1104 or email at [stuart.hamilton@huronohio.us](mailto:stuart.hamilton@huronohio.us).

**Body Worn Cameras:** Huron Police Department successfully submitted their grant request for body worn cameras on September 8. Huron Police Department is scheduled to be awarded \$92,602.02 of a requested amount of \$154,336.70. We are excited to move forward with this project for the benefit of our Residents and our Officers.

**Website:** The City has budgeted \$50,000 for a revamp of the City's website in 2022. Although this work will now be completed in 2023, the city desires to begin the process in the upcoming months. First, we are recommending issuing a Request for Proposal to IT/web development firms in September with hopes of presenting a preferred firm to Council for consideration shortly thereafter.

**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 two companies are OmniFiber 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](mailto:stuart.hamilton@huronohio.us).

**Quiet Zone:** The City requested a work session at the second Council meeting in January of 2023 to be updated and educated on the idea of establishing a quiet zone. I know some council members are familiar, but we wanted to take time to ensure all members understand what they are, the benefits of them, and what potential timelines and costs would be to consider such a zone in the City.

**Huron Public Power Third Transformer:** Currently HPP has two 69kV transformers at its Rye Beach Road substation to provide power to its customers. Due to increased load, to maintain redundancy and therefore ensure reliable power, it is required to add a third transformer. This project is expected to be approximately a \$3.5M project.

On January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, an RFP was released to purchase, deliver, ramp up and test this third 69kV transformer. We do not expect to be in possession of this unit until the Fall of 2024. This RFP will only cover the purchase, install and ramp-up of the transformer itself. Once we have a good delivery date, we will issue a second RFP for services to bring it online and provide new controls and switching equipment.

## ZONING/CODE/PLANNING

**Coastal Management Assistance Grants:** I wanted to thank Mr. Engle and the Planning Department for submission of our final grant applications for the Coastal Management Assistance Grants. The City submitted pre-applications for two (2) projects in the fall to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources – both of which were selected for final application. The projects include undertaking a planning process for north main street, the former show boat property and lakefront park connectivity and the second application seeks funding to build a trail connector to the beach behind the water plant which will aid both in pedestrian connectivity but also safety force accessibility. Results of the award should be announced in the Spring.

**Signage Code:** The City is also undertaking a comprehensive review of our signage code – related to both permanent and temporary signage. This review is aimed at simplifying our code for greater clarity while also taking into consideration some recent court rulings at the state level regarding enforcement capabilities. We hope to have a draft for consideration in fall of 2022.

**Main Street Corridor Plan:** OHM organized a joint planning commission and council meeting on November 16<sup>th</sup>, along with members of the steering committee regarding plan progress. This meeting covered work completed to date and reviewed results of the public survey that sought out the public's preferred amenities and land uses for the Main Street/downtown area. The City received over 725 unique responses to the survey in addition to feedback from the pumpkin festival and steering committee. The Planning Commission and Council were also provided an opportunity to provide their feedback on desired streetscapes, land uses, and amenities. This meeting marked the close of the feedback phase of the plan. OHM will now utilize this information to begin drafting actual recommendations for the corridor. The Third Steering Committee meeting is set for January 25<sup>th</sup>. At this meeting, OHM planners will be presenting the preferred land use recommendations for the corridor as well as the preferred streetscape plan based on feedback received during 2022.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

**Fish Cleaning Station:** At this late stage in the year, it has been decided to not install the actual fish cleaning tables until the spring. It is still anticipated that the rest of the facility will be substantially completed, less punch list items, by year end. All work on this project has been completed for this year. All that remains is to install the fish cleaning station in the spring. It was decided that we were far enough into the winter months that to protect this investment we would put it in to storage and install in the spring.

**Tennis Courts:** After additional deliberation and consideration, staff, with Council approval, is moving forward with the rehabilitation option versus complete reconstruction. Funding for the project will be from a combination of HJRD, Huron Township, and the City of Huron. We believe strongly that the combination of cost, level of extensive rehabilitation undertaken and our high level of ongoing maintenance, makes this option the preferred path over full reconstruction. Staff has subsequently met with representatives of the School District to talk through potential impacts on either the Spring 2023 or Fall 2023 seasons to ensure the school is provided significant notice of needing to locate alternative facilities for practices and matches. Based on design and bidding timelines along with the construction season, the project is most likely to impact the Fall 2023 tennis season.

A PO for Design and Bidding services in the amount of \$35,000 has been issued to OHM. We hope to have the project awarded over the winter for a 2023 install.

**Boat Basin:** The City has solicited a proposal from KS and Associates to update the capital needs assessment for the Boat Basin and related facilities/improvements. The previous report was completed in 2015 and in need of updating the project costs and to take into consideration both improvements that have been completed since then and determining if any further deterioration has occurred. The city is hoping to utilize this report as we undertake an aggressive fundraising effort to completely modernize and rehabilitate the facility in addition to making a capital request through the State's next capital budget bill. The draft report has been received and is currently being reviewed internally.

**624 Berlin Road:** On September 9, the City received two (2) proposals for asbestos abatement and demolition services from registered contractors. The City has determined Ed Burdue and Co., to be the lowest and best bidder and will be presenting a contract to Council on September 27<sup>th</sup> to undertake asbestos abatement, demolition, tree removal, trash removal, site grading and seeding work. Reminder that all costs associated with the work will be paid for by the Erie County Land Reutilization Corporation.

Ed Burdue and Co. have demolished the single-family home and removed debris from the site. Crews will return to the site in the Spring of 2023 to complete final grading and seeding.

**Huron Joint Recreation District:** Staff recently met with both Huron Township and the Huron School District regarding contributions to the district for 2023. We are happy to report, proposed

contributions by the partners are proposed to decrease ever so slightly. The Township viewed the proposed budget very favorably and will hopefully act on the HJRD Agreement at an upcoming meeting. Representatives from the School District, Township, City and HJRD are set to meet on January 30<sup>th</sup> to discuss the future roles of each entity as it relates to the HJRD. I will report out to Council the results of the upcoming meeting.

**Fieldhouse:** The City organized a kickoff brainning storming session regarding the potential development of a field house – which was held on November 17<sup>th</sup>. These conversations are very exploratory to determine the appetite for such a facility amongst stakeholder groups and to talk very high level in terms of potential locations, amenities, fundraising plan, and operations. This meeting included representatives from the City, HJRD, Huron Township, Huron Schools, and the Boosters. A second fieldhouse exploratory meeting was held on January 9<sup>th</sup> at the Boat Basin. Attendees included the City, Township, School District, Boosters, and HJRD. Enthusiasm remains high. Action steps include securing operations expense comparisons from other like facilities and developing a community survey to determine what amenities initially are most desired by the community and student athletes. Initial conversations occurred regarding potential facility locations which include Fabens Park or spaces around Woodlands and McCormick. The group hopes to meet in the next month to review progress.

## FINANCE

**2021 and 2022 Financial Audits:** The 2021 unaudited financial statements are now complete and filed with the State Auditor's Office. The auditors will finish their audit work over the next few weeks in hopes of having a completed audit by mid-February. Council will receive the audit report before it is released. There has been no indication of any reportable findings for 2021. The Finance Department expects to get back on schedule with the 2022 audit, which will result in the audit being released by July/August.

## WATER DEPARTMENT

### Recent Activity:

- Sludge Lagoon. Ordered required components for temporary sludge lagoon de-chlorination.
- Neptune AMR Transmitters. Installing remainder of AMR transmitters. Second Gateway due to be installed this week.
- Sed Building Improvements. In-house painting of 9,000 sq. ft. Sedimentation building underway. Storage room construction is complete.
- Lead Service Grant. Ordered required hardware for GIS implementation project.
- Annual Report. Report completed – awaiting year-end production totals.

- New Water Main – Construction of new 2" water main in new structure is completed and commissioned.
- Needle Ice Events - December 23<sup>rd</sup> and December 28<sup>th</sup>. Both avoided utilizing emergency water door.
- Digitizing Projects – Water quality records for records storage and archiving.
- Reporting – OEPA year end reporting completed.

#### Active Project Updates:

- Sludge Lagoon – Ohio EPA NPDES. Poggemeyer completing study of comprehensive options and alternatives, report presented to Utilities Committee with preference found to be routing decant to plant recycle. Current plan is to merge this project with the Alternate Intake (below).
- Alternate Intake. Awaiting engineering proposal from Poggemeyer Design Group and preparing to bid engineering.
- Primary Intake. The annual intake crib inspection was completed on August 10<sup>th</sup>. During inspection, the diving crew noted that just inside the intake and past the riser, the intake was ½ full of debris. A bucket of this debris was brought to shore and was found to be a mix of small rocks, seashells, and sand. Lake Erie Diving has provided a quote for three days' labor to remove 100 feet of debris and inspect further in the intake with a remotely operated vehicle. Cleaning was recently conducted, and it was found that the debris within the intake rises and falls continually during the entire ½ mile length, at times reducing the pipe from 36" to 12". A full-length cleaning is required, which was last conducted in 1991. Funds will be budgeted in 2023 and the project will be bid.
- Low Service #3 – As noted previously, the swing check valve on LS#3 has failed due to old age and rebuild kits are no longer an option for this model. A new swing check was ordered and is onsite at the plant. Given the size and weight (800lb.), we will utilize a contractor to install this valve. A quick assessment of the area revealed that there will be in adequate supports for the remainder of the pipe when the current valve is removed. As such, there are two available options: (1) install temporary supports both vertically and horizontally, and then remove them post-construction. This would have to be forever repeated for any work on the LS valves, OR (2) expand the project marginally, install one butterfly valve, one 90-degree elbow, and two small spools of pipe. This will connect to an existing length of pipe installed between the floors of high service and low service. This will forever support the section of pipe and effectively creates a second low service pumping location up to the high service floor. This is the most efficient path forward with common sense and thought of the future. We are currently awaiting an onsite visit from Simonson, who would like to quote the work, which is a small job that will take only 3-4 days.
- Plant Re-Rating – Post-construction, it is now the goal to have the filtration plant rerated at 5.87 million gallons per day. The documentation for this process falls under the original contract with Poggemeyer for the expansion. PDG has submitted one application to the State for this rerating, but it has been returned for additional information with a notation



that cited tables were missing. Jason Gibboney has emailed PDG on this and will continue to call and email until resolved.

**Sewer Shutoff's:** The City has been approached by Erie County for aid in assisting with handling customers within the city limits who are delinquent with their sewer bills. Currently, the County does not have a means to shut-off water uses or sewer usage for significantly delinquent sewer customers. The request is that City water department personnel would be utilized to shut off water service at severely delinquent addresses to ensure delinquent accounts are addressed. City personnel would be compensated for our staff time and a portion of the delinquent billing. The city is currently doing more research on this request to better understand the additional manpower that would be needed to aid the County in this request.

After discussions with County staff, a draft agreement has been presented to the County for review and feedback. Once agreement has been reached, this project will move ahead.

**South Main Street Watermain Replacement:** The proposed improvements for this project include:

- Portions of South Main (south of Valleyview) approx. 775'
- Portions of Huron Avery from the Mudbrook to city limits, approximately 1300'
- Portions of Mudbrook Road approx. 650'
- Full replacement on Forest Hills, Valleyview, and Hickory Drive – approximately 2332'
- Full replacement on Mill Street approx. 342'
- Partial replacement on Huron Street approx. 605'

The City will also be exploring whether any road resurfacing should be included in this project as well and under the same contract to secure efficiencies in work and potential cost savings. Staff and OHM personnel have submitted one funding application already and are in process of completing one additional funding application for imminent submittal. OHM are currently in the design phase of this project. A pre-design walk through has been scheduled with City staff and we hope to have this project ready to bid my March 2023.

**Secondary Water Intake Project:** A need has been identified to design and construct a secondary water intake to protect the water supply to the Water Treatment Plant. This intake would be a back up to the main intake in the event of failure, needle ice, or any other obstruction that would interrupt the continued water supply. Conceptually this second intake would be a river intake on the Huron River, where the danger of needle ice is greatly reduced due to the protected location and the moving water. This project is tentatively scheduled as a 2024 construction year project.

On January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, an RFQ was issued to choose a partner to design and bid this project. This RFQ will close on February 28<sup>th</sup>. Once a partner has been selected, and a design and bidding services proposal has been agreed upon, this will then come back to Council for final approval.

**West Side Water Tower:** The City unsuccessfully applied for \$5M to aid in the construction of a 2M gallon west side water tower in late 2021 through the state of Ohio's Water and Wastewater Infrastructure grant program. Our project was ranked second in Erie County in terms of priority. We were just informed that the state of Ohio is allocating another \$250M for this program in 2023 and is not accepting new applications. The funds will only be awarded to projects that were submitted in 2021 which is a positive. We will keep council apprised as the grants are announced later in 2023. We are reaching out to both our state representative and state senator for aid in advocating for this project.

## PERSONNEL/ADMINISTRATION

**Water Plant Superintendent:** Following up on a previous email, I am both sad and happy to report that Jason Gibboney has accepted the position of plant manager with Avon Lake Regional Water. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for Mr. Gibboney and we are so excited for him and his family. Jason has grown the physical footprint and reputation of Huron Water to be one of the most well respected systems in the state and he will be missed. Jason's last day will be February 12<sup>th</sup>; however he has graciously agreed to help as needed after his formal employment ends. The position is being posted on January 20<sup>th</sup> and will be closing on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

**Police Chief Search:** After a lengthy search process, the administration is recommending the promotion of HPD Sergeant Terry Graham as the next Police Chief. Legislation will be considered at the January 24<sup>th</sup> Council meeting to confirm his appointment to the position – which, if approved, would commence on February 1, 2023.

**Zoning Inspector/Assistant Planner:** The City has begun interviewing for this position. Interviews commenced during the week of January 2<sup>nd</sup> and will continue until a preferred candidate is hired. We will keep council apprised in the progress of filling this position.

## CONTRACTS

Agreements/contracts that will expire in 2023 include:

- OHM Advisors (Engineering) – Expires **12/31/23**
- Erie Soil and Water Conservation District (Engineering) – Expires **1/31/23**
  - A new agreement is on the Council agenda for consideration at the January 24, 2023, meeting which will also include two mutually agreeable extensions.
- Republic Services – Expires **06/30/23**
  - Staff is currently in process of drafting the Request for Proposals in hopes of exploring the market for trash haulers. The City also does have four (1), one-year renewal options in the existing agreement with Republic which are being explored as well.
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- HJRD Annual Agreement (Recreation) –**expired** 12/31/22
  - See above in Parks and Recreation section.
- Dispatch Agreement – Erie County Sheriff – **Expires 12/31/23**
- Seeley, Savidge, Ebert & Gourash Co., LLP (Law) – **Expires 6/3/23**
- School Resource Officer – **Expires 8/31/23**
- Bricker & Eckler – HPP Legal Services (Law) – **Expires 9/30/23**
- City Prosecutor Employment Agreement – expires 12/31/23
- Personnel Officer Employment Agreement – expires 12/31/23

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### January

- Council Work Session – Tuesday, January 24, 2022, at 5:30pm in the Council Chambers
- Council Meeting – Tuesday, January 24, 2023, at 6:30pm in the Council Chambers
- Public Hearing on Change of Street Name from West Street (aka West Drive) to Sail Away Drive on Tuesday, January 24, 2023, at 6:30pm in the Council Chambers

### February (first half)

- Utilities Committee – Wednesday February 1, 2023, at 5:00pm in the Council Chambers
- HJRD – Tuesday February 7, 2023, at 6:30pm in the Council Chambers
- BZA – Monday February 13, 2023, at 5:30pm in the Council Chambers
- Finance Committee – Tuesday February 14, 2023, at 5:30pm in the Council Chambers
- Council Meeting – Tuesday February 14, 2023 at 6:30pm in the Council Chambers