



CITY OF HURON
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

May 6, 2022

Matthew Lasko, City Manager

ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Firelands Scientific: The City has received final site plans from Firelands Scientific related to a substantial expansion of their facility in the Huron Corporate Park. The site plan was presented to the planning commission on 12/15/21 and received unanimous approval. The project does need to get additional approvals on lighting plans, however. This is truly an exciting project, and we are appreciative of the Company's willingness to expand operations in the City. The expansion includes, but is not limited to additional growing space, offices, warehousing, and parking along with landscaping enhancements.

USGS/Harbor Point Marina: At the planning commission meeting on 12/15, the next phase of the Harbor Point Marine project was presented. The second phase (the first being the construction of the USGS facility which is underway) includes a new storage facility and the construction of an approximate 2,500 square foot Harbormaster House. The developers have since decided to slightly reduce the size of the originally approved Harbormaster house to eliminate the second story. Based on these revisions, the project was re-presented to the Planning Commission at the April 27th meeting. We are excited to see continued development and improvement to this property and look forward to a successful second phase.

Buckeye Sports: The Company has officially broken ground on its new facility located at 309 Lake Erie Parkway. The approximate \$10.0M investment will include a marine sales and repair center as well as heated indoor storage. This is the company's second Ohio facility and when completed will employ approximately 15 individuals. The project is anticipated to be completed in the fall of 2022 in time for the fall/winter storage season. We are so appreciative of the company's choice to locate and invest in Huron and wish them well on their project build out.

South Shore Marine: All administrative approvals are now complete for the tax abatement request from the Company. The Company is seeking to construct an approximate \$1.6M indoor heated storage facility on its Sawmill Parkway Campus. The company was awarded a 15-year, 100% tax abatement, however also agreed to dual compensation agreements with Huron Schools and EHOVE to ensure they receive all tax revenues they would have been due without an abatement. With these steps completed, the City has sent final application materials down to the Ohio Development Services Agency for final approval.

Ardagh/Sawmill Pkwy: The City has completed all the necessary title and legal work related to the vacation and dedication of certain portions of Sawmill Creek Parkway. In summary, the City vacated the eastern most 300-400 feet of the Parkway and deeded it over to Ardagh for use as part of their private development footprint. In exchange, Ardagh dedicated portions of their private property as public use in order for the City to install a turnaround at the end of the Parkway to aid in vehicular maneuvering, particularly for emergency vehicles. These changes are now currently reflected on the County Auditor website.

Additionally, all title documents and construction drawings have been submitted to the Economic Development Administration. EDA must sign off on the construction documents, bid book and

title work prior to the project being placed out to bid for construction. We are not aware of EDA's timeline to complete their review and staff and OHM are anxiously awaiting their approval so as to move forward with construction on this critical project.

ConAgra: The late fall and winter months were critical months for completing several items to continue to move the ConAgra development further. Since the announcement and selection of NAI Harmon Group out of Toledo as the preferred developer, the following has occurred:

- The city completed the rezoning process for the approximate 10-acre parcel from Industrial to mixed-use zoning. This went through the three-reading process. Additionally, 4 amendments were simultaneously made to the zoning code which included: (1) restricting residential uses on the ground floor of only commercial buildings, (2) permitting transient-rental uses, (3) requiring conditional use permits for any outdoor display of goods and permitting places of worship.
- The city, in partnership with Huron Schools and EHOVE, approved a Tax-increment financing package to aid in the City's financing of the public infrastructure of the site.
- Completed an appraisal of the entirety of the site in partnership with Cushman and Wakefield – one of Ohio's premier appraisal and commercial brokerage firms.
- Completed an engineering analysis of the condition of the existing seawalls at the site with the aid of KS & Associates which reviewed the existing condition of the seawalls as well as provided cost estimates and options for improvements to the revetment treatments at the site.
- Completed construction estimates for the installation of a new public loop road throughout the site and extension of utilities through the site.

We therefore held a re-kickoff meeting with the folks from NAI Harmon in March, 2022 to talk next steps. These steps include among other items:

- Completing detailed engineering drawings for roadway, seawall, and utility improvements.
- Completing detailed site plan for planning commission review.
- Finalizing site control and agreed upon purchase price (if the site control is to be an outright sale of the property) – with of course a claw back to ensure publicly accessible green space in perpetuity.
- Completion of comprehensive development agreement laying out responsibilities and development timelines.
- Beginning the permitting process with Army Corp of Engineers for revetment activities.

On Wednesday April 6th, the City finally received the signed governor's deed from the state of Ohio related to the land swap with ODNR. Deeds are in process of being recorded. The next step will be the City needing to undertake a lot consolidation to combine the former ConAgra parcel with the recently acquired piece from ODNR.

The City, in partnership with ODNR, also needs to publicly dedicate the new roadway the will lead into the ConAgra site. Planning Commission already approved the dedication plat in 2022. We hope to bring this dedication to Council in the next few meetings to complete this process and then secure signatures from ODNR prior to recording the plat.

Sawmill Creek: On July 13th, the City voted to pursue the annexation of nine (9) parcels currently located in Huron Township – and more easily recognized as the Sawmill Creek Resort, Conference Center and Golf Course. On July 16th, Huron Township consented to the annexation and agreed to move forward. The reasoning behind the proposed annexation is to provide local subsidy to the project via a financing tool commonly referred to as a “Section 41 Tax Increment Financing.” The type of proposed financing can only be undertaken by a municipality and cannot be undertaken by a township – hence the need for the proposed annexation. The final major hurdle needing to be accomplished was consideration and approval of the TIF by the Huron School District. We are happy to report that on July 20th, the School Board voted to approve the 30-year, 75% TIF. We are so grateful for the support of the School Board and the Administration and believe we set forth a truly mutually beneficial package that will both ensure a long-term predictable revenue stream to the district while also ensuring adequate revenues to both complete the Sawmill Creek Resort project and fund a capital infrastructure fund to address the western gateway to the City and the intersection of Cleveland Road and Rye Beach Road. This is truly a tremendous public private partnership involving the City, Township, School District and Cedar Fair. There is still a great deal of legislation needing to be brought forth to effectuate the annexation and TIF, which will be occurring over the next several months including but not limited to:

- Service payment agreement
- TIF Ordinance
- Final Annexation Agreement
- Bond issuance for Sawmill Creek redevelopment

On January 11th, 2022, Council approved both school compensation agreements for the project, one with Huron Schools and one with EHOVE.

The City also has since completed the deed swap which is a requirement of the Section 41 TIF structure. Additionally, the City provided final comments to Cedar Fair this week on May 4th, 2022 on the Service Payment Agreement – which is the agreement memorializing the \$450,000 annual payment to the City/Schools/EHOVE – and the final annexation petition which ultimately must be presented to the Board of County Commissioners for approval. We are hoping to wrap up this process in the next 30-60 days.

Two Rivers: Staff recently met with the owners and developers of the Two Rivers development by Huron Lagoons Marina. Developers are looking to re-start the housing development – which has since lost its planned-unit development designation. Developers presented conceptual plans for the project which included finishing out the Sheltered Brook roadway with similar housing and then moving forward on additional phases on the undeveloped portions of the property. The site could also include a series of connected walking trails and retention ponds. Developers, to

move forward, will need to present updated plans to the planning commission in hopes of securing a new planned-unit development designation prior to moving forward. We will keep council apprised as this project moves forward.

INFRASTRUCTURE/STREETS/UTILITIES/IT

Rye Beach Road/Cleveland Road Corridor: Based on the continued redevelopment of Sawmill Creek Resort and all the existing and growing investments along Rye Beach Road and industrial parks, the city has begun conversation with the Ohio Department of Transportation about safety and traffic control upgrades along Rye Beach Road – with major emphasis on the intersection of Rye Beach and Cleveland Roads. These upgrades include roundabouts on Rye Beach Road and the intersection of Rt. 6 and Camp Street, road widening in front of Sawmill Creek Resort, intersection upgrades at Perkins Avenue and Rt. 6, and the installation of a multi-use bike path connecting Huron to Sandusky. ODOT District 3 and Central Office are so impressed with the amount of investment along the corridor, that ODOT District 3 has been encouraged to submit a TRAC application to Central Office seeking funding for engineering, right of way acquisition and eventual construction. That application will require collaboration with Sandusky, Perkins Township, Huron Township, and the Railroad. A series of weekly meetings has been established to ensure District 3 is poised to submit their TRAC application to Central office by May of this year – with funding to be announced in December.

Additionally, it has come to the City's attention that Central Office thinks so highly of the corridor project that it has been selected as one of two projects in the state to be submitted by ODOT to the U.S. Department of Transportation. This application has successfully been submitted and awards are anticipated in August of 2022.

Safe Routes to Schools: The City submitted two (2) applications to the Ohio Department of Transportation for Safe Routes to Schools funding. These applications will be for Berlin Road – from Shawnee Elementary School southward to the railroad tracks. Additionally, the city will be seeking additional funding for new sidewalks east of Shawnee Elementary from Gateway Boulevard eastward to Huron Green. Based on poor scoring, the city is not going to submit the application for Jim Campbell. A big thank you to OHM and our planning and zoning staff for all their hard work in submitting these grant applications on behalf of the City.

Sidewalks: The City, in partnership with Huron Township is exploring a sidewalk installation project that would link the current eastern sidewalk terminus (Gateway Boulevard) all the way to the entrance of Huron Green. This project is instrumental for enhancing walkability and connectivity between multiple subdivisions and Huron's multiple amenities but will more importantly create a safe connection for those traversing Cleveland Road. OHM has completed their proposal for design which is approximately \$40,000. The Huron Township Trustees have agreed to move forward with 50% of the design expense for 2022. The City has already budgeted for our half of the design expense as part of the 2022 budget. Staff anticipates presenting a design proposal to Council for their consideration in late April or early May. The City will then

invoice the Township for their half of the expense. We continue to appreciate our relationship with the Township and look forward to partnering on this project.

Additionally, staff made application for this project through Erie Regional Planning Commission – Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for supplemental funding for this project. The MPO had approximately \$285,000 in available funding. In total, five (5) applications were submitted seeking nearly \$400,000 in total grant funding. The applications were reviewed internally last week and the City of Huron's application has been awarded approximately \$120,000 in funding – which has now officially been approved by the MPO.

Street Resurfacing: The City is currently out to bid for our 2022 street resurfacing program. A reminder that the City currently has \$500,000 set aside for street resurfacing work this year. Bids are due to the City by May 19th and we hope to present a contract to Council in either late May or early June for the lowest and best bidder. Per the bid documents, streets anticipated to be resurfaced this year include:

- Gumwood
- Rose
- Vine
- Bruns
- Williams (Cleveland to Rt. 6)
- Williams (Rt. 6 to Standard)

We have also selected two alternatives which may get included based on results of bidding. These roads include:

- Stowe
- Woodside

The above roads are in addition to the normal patching and crack sealing that occurs annually. Additionally, OHM is beginning work on developing cost estimates for some of the larger neighborhoods in need of major road repairs for 2023-2025 which will be based on the results of the updated Pavement Condition Report which will be completed by OHM in late May, 2022.

Also, staff secured Council approved for the submission of a Surface Transportation Application to the Erie County Metropolitan Planning Organization for FY 25/26. The City, based on street conditions and recent updates to our Vision 2020 Action Plan, decided to submit Main Street (Cleveland Road south to Bogart) as the selected project. Not only is Main Street a large collector street, but this corridor is slated for a major streetscape in the upcoming years and these funds would help to reduce the local contribution to the project.

Stormwater Management: The City and OHM staff recently met to review a proposal to undertake a stormwater management plan for the city. The City continuously is engaged by residents related to stormwater issues they are facing across the City. The ultimate plan would be to undertake an exhaustive process to map the existing stormwater system throughout the City, undertake hydraulic modeling to determine capacities of the system, and then put

together a capital improvements plan to systematically make upgrades to the system which will denote cost and priority. We are anticipating breaking his project into two phases and hope to bring a proposal for Phase I to council in late May or early June, 2022. Given the complex nature of what the study aims to explore and achieve, we felt it prudent to schedule a work session for May 24th for OHM to present on the benefits of stormwater data and provide detail of what the proposal and work will accomplish.

Body Worn Cameras: in 2022, the IT Department and the Police Department will begin exploring funding opportunities to acquire and begin implementation use of body worn cameras. These cameras are becoming prevalent in nearby police departments and our officers and sergeants have expressed interest in them as well. In addition to exploring funding opportunities, we will also begin getting a sense of the cost of purchase and understanding any additional IT upgrades to store the content.

Website: The City has budgeted \$50,000 for a revamp of the City's website in 2022. Although this work may extend into early 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 June with hopes of presenting a preferred firm to Council for consideration shortly thereafter.

ZONING/CODE/PLANNING

Tree Assessment: Similar to the sidewalk assessment program, the City is exploring a tree assessment program for property owners who need to remove dead, dying or diseased trees from their property. The cost of removing a tree can be very expensive. Through the assessment program, property owners would have the option of, in essence, financing the removal through an assessment on their real estate taxes. Additionally, we are proposing to amend the code to ensure the services of a certified arborist are engaged to determine the health of trees being removed. Additionally, it may be worth considering a requirement be included to replant a new tree in its place to ensure long term health of the City's tree canopy.

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 summer of 2022.

Main Street Corridor Plan: Staff and representatives from OHM met on April 21 for a kick-off meeting related to the Main Street/Downtown visioning and conceptual design process. The purpose of the meeting was to begin to discuss high level visions/needs for the corridor, understand project boundaries, and begin conversations regarding steering committee representation and schedule. Over the next 1-2 months, staff will be hard at work providing information to OHM planners and we anticipate holding our first steering committee meeting.

Steering committee members will be a cross section of corridor stakeholders and institutional representatives that have a vested interest in Main Street.

Local Preference: The Local Preference Ordinance is now approved and being implemented in all future bids and purchases may by the City. We appreciate Council's leadership in this ordinance's development in hopes of driving additional business and contracts to local suppliers and contractors.

Permitting: Staff from multiple departments have begun meeting internally regarding the idea of centralizing all permitting from an intake standpoint. The goal is to create one central location for residents and contractors to go for ALL permits regardless of department. Currently, depending on the type of permit, folks may have to go to multiple facilities across the City. For efficiencies, we do envision moving all permitting to City Hall and through the planning and zoning department. We are currently working on the internal structure of this change and will provide press releases and other media messages to ensure the public is aware of this change and when it goes live.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Fish Cleaning Station: The City and contractor have fully executed the contract books for this approximate \$600,000 project. We anticipate work to commence on the facility shortly. When we have a specific date, we will share that information with Council and the community. We are still anticipating this work to be completed in August of 2022 in advance of the fall fishing season.

Lake Front Park: Mark Haynes Construction is still anticipating commencing work on the Lake Front Park revetment project this month. Tentative completion date, dependent on weather, is prior to Memorial Day. We are excited to complete this critical preservation project and to undertake additional revetment and stabilization projects at Lakefront in the near future.

Tennis Courts: The City has asked OHM to update cost estimates for new tennis courts at Fabens Park. It is our believe that the useful life of the tennis courts has expired, and full reconstruction is likely necessary. We are exploring simultaneously exploring whether there is some form of interim fix but still felt it prudent to update costs for full reconstruction so that we can develop a plan to undertake and finance this work.

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.

FINANCE

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA): The final ruling on APRA fund guidance was issued in January. The guidance provides more flexibility on allowable uses for smaller governments. Staff discussed these updates and the preliminary spending plan with the Finance Committee on February 7th. The following link will direct you to the ARPA spending plan, as well. Staff will request a work session with Council to review this plan more in detail.

<https://stories.opengov.com/huronoh/published/YTvWGM0YO>

Monthly Financial Report: The March, 2022 monthly financial report was emailed to Council and Finance Committee members on April 14th. If you have any questions with the report, please always feel free to reach out to Finance Director, Jeff Hall. The City, from an income tax standpoint and general fund balance, is in great shape. Our income tax receipts through the first quarter are \$100,000 higher than this time last year and our unencumbered general fund balance is just over \$1.5M which is 30% of expenditures (a general rule of thumb is to be between 20%-25%). A link to the March 2022 financial report is included below:

<https://stories.opengov.com/huronoh/published/LnP6Y5ci5>

WATER DEPARTMENT

Project Updates:

- **Sludge Lagoon – Ohio EPA NPDES.** Poggemeyer is completing a study of comprehensive options and alternatives, draft report expected in three weeks.
- **Alternate Intake.** Poggemeyer is completing a study of location with engineer's estimated cost for a river intake, draft report expected in one week.
- **Boilers.** Two of the three WTP boilers have failed. Wilkes quote: \$53,262.00. Contacted Hartland Heating & Cooling, awaiting second quote.
- **Tube Settler Expansion.** Awaiting documentation, but will have a change order in the tube settler project. Basins #1,2 and 3 have effluent weep ports that are a slightly smaller diameter than basins # 4 and 5; therefore, there is a need to machine new plus for those basins. Additionally, one concrete curb wall is required to match building face with existing slab. Machining is expected to be approximately \$4,500, still awaiting estimate on curb.
- **Water Tower Painting.** Contractors for Shores and Islands Ohio have completed repainting of the Rye Beach Water Tower at of May 4th.

PERSONNEL/ADMINISTRATION

Sedgwick: The City has chosen to re-enroll and execute payment to Sedgwick of Cleveland, Ohio for third party administration services relating to the 2023 Workers Compensation Group Rating Enrollment Program in the amount of \$3,820.00. It is estimated that the City's enrollment in the Ohio Rural Water Association 2023 Workers' Compensation Group Rating Program will save the City approximately \$9,747 in annual workers compensation premiums.

Economic Development Committee: The City is anticipating holding another work session regarding the future of the Economic Development Committee on May 24th, 2022. We are in receipt of a redline version of the ordinance based on feedback received from Council at a previous work session. We are hoping to determine in the near future whether to retain this committee with changes to the ordinance to make it more effective or terminate the committee which would also require legislation.

One Ohio Recovery Foundation: County, city and township representatives met on May 6th to develop and understanding of how the opioid settlement dollars will be distributed to local communities and agencies through the proposed governance structure. The first meeting of the statewide One Ohio Recovery Foundation Board will be held on May 16th – of which two representatives from Erie County will be appointed and attend. The two appointees are comprised of 1 county commissioner nominee and 1 city/township nominee. These appointments are still being determined. As further guidance is developed by the board, we will share this with the community and Council to allow individuals and organizations to understand what types of projects are eligible for funding and how to apply for funding.

CONTRACTS

Agreements/contracts that will expire in 2022 include:

- OHM Advisors (Engineering) – expires 12/31/22
- Erie Soil and Water Conservation District (Engineering) - **COMPLETED**
- Republic Services –
 - Based on feedback from the Utilities Committee and Finance Committee, the City is anticipating exercising a one-year option with Republic Services to extend the current contract for another year – for the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. As such, customers will not experience and change to their service level or cost. The City does anticipate undertaking a request for proposal process in late 2022 to consider different haulers and scopes of service which will be vetted thoroughly prior to recommending a new contract for Council consideration in 2023.
- HJRD Annual Agreement (Recreation) – expired on 12/31/21
- Dispatch Agreement – Erie County Sheriff – expires 12/31/22
- Seeley, Savidge, Ebert & Gourash Co., LLP (Law) –

- Staff is presenting a 1-year renewal to Council on May 10th for legal services with SSEG. The proposed agreement would run through early June of 2023. The 1-year renewal has identical terms to the current agreement and is proposed to cost the City \$150,000 annually with unlimited hours. Of course, excluded from the basic services renewal would be any outside litigation.
- Dynegy Energy Services – Electric Aggregation Program – expires 10/31/22
- Bricker & Eckler – HPP Legal Services (Law) – Expires 9/30/22
- Police Chief Employment Agreement – Expires 12/31/22

UPCOMING MEETINGS

May

Finance Committee Meeting: May 9, 2022 at 5:00 in the Council Chamber

City Council Meeting: May 10, 2022 at 6:30pm in the Council Chambers

City Council Meeting: May 24, 2022 at 6:30pm in the Council Chambers

Planning Commission: May 25, 2022 at 5:00pm in the Council Chambers