



CITY OF HURON
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

June 23, 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: Developers and architects presented their Phase I PUD to the Planning Commission on February 15th. The request was conditionally approved. Phase I plans call for the buildout of the remaining single-family lots on Sheltered Brook – which total 27 houses in all. Later phase plans will be submitted near the completion of Phase I.

Related, we anticipate presenting a development agreement to Council in the upcoming weeks related to the development. Moving forward, the City would like to start requiring developers to enter into development agreements which include assurances for construction and completion of roadways, utilities, sidewalks, streetlights, etc....and creates the ability for the City to intervene through bonding to complete the work if needed. It also will create safeguards to ensure any public infrastructure eventually being dedicated to the City is designed to our specification and subject to our inspections.

Lemmy's: During the week of March 20th, the City met with the new owners of Lemmy's restaurant who also purchased the residential structure just west of the restaurant. The owners are looking to make a significant re-investment in the property and the potential exists to construct a new commercial baking facility in Huron to serve all their bakeries throughout Erie County. As part of the process, the owner will be seeking a lot consolidation and rezoning of the site from residential to business. We look forward to this process and their investment in Huron.

The City is in receipt of notification from the Division of Liquor Control (DOLC) regarding Lemmy's recent request to secure an Economic Development Transfer (TRES) liquor license. Council will be asked to either request a hearing on this with the DOLC or waive their right to a hearing at our next regularly scheduled Council meeting on June 27th.

Norfolk Southern Holdings: The City hosted Solomon Jackson during the week of March 20th who leads Norfolk Southern's real estate division. We reviewed and talked through future plans with all their Huron Holdings. Long-term the company desires to decommission the N/S rail line along River Road leading into the Carmuese property to partner with the City in converting this to a recreation amenity. Additionally, Norfolk Southern will be meeting with representatives of

Carmuese in April/May to determine their long-term plans on the site. 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 seven (7) households have physically relocated already with several other households close to finding successful locations for relocation. There are two (2) additional relocations planned for the week of June 26th. 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.

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.

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 60% of the roadway is complete. Based on current progress, the roadway is anticipated to be completed in September.

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: As part of our due diligence and with an abundance of caution staff had multiple cores drilled throughout the three neighborhoods. We found multiple streets that have zero base under the road, this means that the concrete was originally

poured on top of dirt. Most streets do not have sufficient base. Over 65% of the roads do not have sufficient thickness of concrete, which in turn would make it more challenging to grind the required amount needed to resurface. To compound the challenges, we are unable to raise the level of the road due to low drive aprons and driveways.

All this data has indicated that more investigation is needed, and staff feel that pushing this project back to 2024 is the most prudent path. This will give us, and our engineers, time to really dig in to see what is possible and what is not. While this is not good news, we do feel that our extra due diligence saved the City a lot of money and the residents of these three neighborhoods a lot of inconvenience. We will continue to keep everyone up to date as we progress.

Staff and Council will be undertaking a work session on June 27th to review the data in detail and talk through potential options moving forward.

Bike Lane Repainting: The City is getting ready to issue a bid to repaint the US6 phase 1 bike lanes. These lanes are ready for refreshment, and with a change in product we believe we will gain better longevity. The intent is to change the paint across the bridge deck to be more minimal as any application here will not have a long life due to it being such a harsh environment.

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, an 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.

City Electric Aggregation: The City contracted with Dynegy for a two-year electric aggregation program. This program is an OPT OUT program. This means that you will be automatically enrolled unless you contact Dynegy directly to remove yourself from this program.

- The opt out window will be from May 15th, 2023, through June 5th, 2023.
- First billing cycle will be June 26th, Read in July and billed in August.
- New rate is \$0.0682 per kWh.
- If you have a current contract, and your account is marked correctly, you will not receive optout materials and you will not be enrolled.
- If you do receive opt-out materials and have a current contract, presume that your account is not marked correctly, and you will need to actively opt out to stay on your current contract.
- Once your current contract runs out, you will be able to opt into the City aggregation program If you so choose.

The opt out window for the aggregation program is now closed. If you have any questions reference this program, please contact Dynegy at 888-682-2170.

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.

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 June.

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

Fish Cleaning Station: The City held the official ribbon cutting for the facility on Wednesday June 21. Thank you to all those who could attend which included representatives from ODNR, Division of Wildlife, Shores and Islands Ohio, Fish Huron, Chamber of Commerce, Council, Staff and many more. A very big thank you as well to Doug Steinwart and his team for organizing the great event. The City was also presented with a recognition from Governor Mike DeWine and Lieutenant Governor John Husted for our previous receipt of the 2023 Extraordinary Destination Enhancement Award from Shores and Islands Ohio.

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 commenced work on this project. The tennis courts are now permanently closed until the completion of the project in September of this year. The contractors have already complete partial tree removal to maneuver equipment into the site and has also commenced site clearance activities.

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 HJR. 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: Legislation on the City's garbage rate is on Council's 6/27 agenda for approval on third reading. If approved, the City will increase the quarterly rate to match the proposed contract from Republic from \$65 to \$71. The City will also propose legislation to add the garbage rate 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 will be sent out with the June bill. Due to the timing on when the rate will take effect and Council approval date, garbage rates for the July quarterly bill will remain at \$65. A retroactive charge of \$6 will be applied on the October bill for each residential unit with garbage service.

May Monthly Financial Report: The May financial report is available for review and linked below. At the end of May, income tax revenue was up 4%, or \$70,000, from May of 2022. This increase continues to mostly be due to the Ardagh expansion. However, Sawmill Creek Resort income tax is beginning to be collected. The City's unencumbered General Fund balance at the end of January was over \$1.5 million, or 27% of annual expenditures. The unencumbered balance did decrease in May from April due to the City's HJD payment (\$321,000) and quarterly cash transfers (\$521,000) out of the General Fund. Although still early in the year, major revenue sources are showing positive growth in 2023 compared to 2022. Most notably, interest earnings are more than budgeted at the end of May, up 254% from 2022. This is due to managing current bank balances monthly and investing more deposits with STAR OHIO, a liquid investment account. STAR has been carrying a 4%+ interest rate since late 2022.

<https://stories.opengov.com/huronoh/published/BP9jfeFHS>

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 June. 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.

Alternate Intake/Sludge Lagoon: City anticipates receiving final design proposal from Kleinfelder during the week of June 19th. Staff will review and shortly thereafter seek Council approval of the contract to begin the design process. The City applied for grant monies through Congresswomen Kaptur's office totaling \$2M for this project via the FY 2024 Community Project Funding Appropriations Request.

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

N/A

AGREEMENTS

N/A

CONTRACTS

- Republic Services – **Expires 06/30/23**
- 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**
- School Resource Officer – **Expires 8/31/26**

UPCOMING MEETINGS

June Meetings:

- City Council Work Session – Tuesday, June 27th at 5:30pm in Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday, June 27th at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.

July Meetings:

- Utilities Meeting – Wednesday July 5th at 5:00pm in the Main Conference room.
- BZA Meeting – Monday July 10th at 5:30 in the Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday July 11th at 6:30 in the Council Chambers.
- Planning Commission Meeting – Wednesday July 19th at 5:00 in the Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday July 25th at 6:30 in the Council Chambers.

- **Reminder that City Hall Administrative offices will be closed all day on Tuesday July 4th in observance of Independence Day.**