



CITY OF HURON
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

July 26, 2021

Matthew Lasko, City Manager

ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Lake Erie Parkway: Buckeye Sports Group has submitted development plans for the last remaining 5-acre site on Lake Erie Parkway (across from Goodwill). Buckeye is a well-known recreational marine vehicle sales business – specializing in smaller boats, wave runners and kayaks. The project has received preliminary site plan approval in hopes of construction commencing in the upcoming weeks/months.

Ardagh/Sawmill Pkwy: Staff is currently reviewing what is the last phase of the redevelopment plans. Phase 1, which is the initial addition on the western portion of the building, is nearing completion. Ardagh will be submitting a petition to the city requesting a vacation of last 300-400 feet of Sawmill Parkway to make way for the major phase of construction. OHM has been working with Ardagh's engineering group to coordinate both the Sawmill Pkwy reconstruction and acquisition of right-of-way to make way for a turnaround at the end of the road. Staff also envisions approaching council in the next meeting or two for consideration of a CRA tax abatement request from the company – following recommendation from the Tax Incentive Review Council.

Rye Beach TIF: The City has submitted the required DTE-24 Forms to the Erie County Auditor's Office for review and hopeful approval. The County Auditor's Office is finalizing its review of the recently adopted TIF legislation. We anticipate this review to be completed soon and for the documents to be sent off to the State of Ohio Department of Taxation for finalization and approval. The city has also sent documents to the Ohio Development Services Agency for recognition of the revised TIF through their department as well.

ConAgra: By June 21, the City received five (5) proposals from firms looking to undertake development activities at the former ConAgra property. Since receipt, the City has reviewed in detail the development proposals to better understand each firms' qualifications and financial capacity as well as their broad visions for the site. Staff, along with a representative from Council and Planning Commission and our consultants, the Montrose Group, met during the week of July 5th to vet the proposals. In that meeting, the group compared each submittal to the stated evaluation criteria in the RFP to develop a short list of three (3) developers still under consideration. This list includes NAI Harmon Group from Toledo, Hoty Enterprises from Sandusky, and The Rose Company from Medina. Interviews with the final three (3) firms have been set for the week of August 9th and the week of August 16th.

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. 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.

INFRASTRUCTURE/STREETS/UTILITIES

Sawmill Parkway: The City continues to finalize the financing and funding plans for Sawmill Parkway prior to finalizing construction drawings and ultimate bid documents. Based on all the funding streams involved and ultimately seasonality of the roadwork construction season, the project is anticipated to occur in Spring of 2022. A summary of the funding thus far for the approximate \$3.4-\$3.5M project include:

- \$412,500 from OPWC which has already been awarded (just waiting on final agreement with OPWC)
- \$1,000,000 from Jobs Ohio – on April 19th, the Controlling Board of the State of Ohio approved a \$1,000,000 grant through Jobs Ohio and the Development Services Agency – 629 Roadwork program. The City executed grant paperwork on May 17, 2021 and submitted the same to the State of Ohio Development Services Agency for final approval.
- The city has executed a \$250,000 grant agreement with ODOT Jobs and Commerce for grant funding as of April 23, 2021.
- The City has formally responded to EDA's Letter of Further Clarification and provided all required/requested additional documentation to date. The city hopes to hear back on potential final funding determination in the upcoming weeks. As of July 26, the application was still being reviewed by their architectural and engineering teams.

Berlin Road Waterline: The new mains are installed. Crews are currently taking bacteria samples to ensure everything is operating correctly. Additionally, beginning on July 26th, crews will be installing the new service to homes/residences along the corridor.

Route 6 Phase I/II: OHM has concluded its traffic data collection and is in the process of reviewing/analyzing the data. Based on their analysis, OHM will be making recommendations for alterations to the existing road diet based on that data which would include enhanced stripping of bicycle lanes, additional shared lanes (particularly near intersections) and enhanced signage. Staff and OHM have made available publicly revised final striping plans as of July 20th and posted them on Facebook and the City's website.

Reminder that ***the public information/feedback meeting is scheduled for Tuesday July 27th at 5:00 PM. The meeting will be held at McCormick prior to the Council meeting.***

Staff is hoping to receive guidance on the final striping plan to ensure final striping, regardless of the settled on final plan, can be installed in early Fall of 2021.

ZONING/CODE/PLANNING

Masterplan Update and Visioning: The City hosted a joint works session of Council and Planning Commission on July 13th in the Council Chambers. At the work session, City Architecture and ReStart Smart, presented the initial draft of the Vision 2020 Masterplan update document. Consultants walked the group through the prioritized initiatives and high-level financing and sources of each. Based on that work session and feedback received, staff and consultants will be taking the next few weeks to finalize the documents in hopes of making a final draft available in late August or early September.

PARKS AND RECREATION

N/A

FINANCE

Monthly Financial Report: The monthly financial report for June was emailed to City Council and the Finance Committee on July 16th. You can find the report here: <https://stories.opengov.com/huronoh/published/XZPwe6dZW>.

2022 Budget Process: The Finance Department kicked off the budget season this week with City departments. Similar to the past few years, City Council and the Finance Committee will receive the 2022 budget book by the end of September, followed by Finance Committee budget meetings in October before submission to City Council in November. The updated master plan will be a good road map for the administration during this budget season.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA): On July 22, the City received the first tranche of the ARPA funds, totaling \$359,767.52. The second and final distribution will be received 12 months from now for the same amount. Here is what we know as of July 23rd:

- A recent proposed amendment to the State's allocation legislation for NEUs may result in the City receiving more ARPA funds in 2023 and 2024. That is, if the State has any ARPA funds left over after 2022, the proposed legislation will require the State to reallocate those funds to NEUs. If you recall, the City's initial allocation of \$1.3 million was nearly

cut in half. The State approved to reduce allocations to municipalities and disburse ARPA funds to all townships in Ohio.

- The City will have until December 2024 to commit these funds to a purchase/project, and December 2026 to expend the funds.
- The Auditor of State's Office released accounting guidance on proper recording of the funds. The Office recommends creating a separate special revenue fund, like the accounting used for the CARES ACT funds. There is a request for Council to approved creation of a new special revenue fund on the July 27th agenda.
- Staff is preparing plans and analysis using the most recent guidance from the U.S. Treasury.
- A STAR Ohio investment account was opened to deposit the funds and earn interest in the short-term. Any interest earned on these funds may be deposited into the City's General Fund and is not required to be used on ARPA eligible uses. The 1st disbursement was transferred into the STAR Ohio account upon receipt.

Staff will keep the finance committee and council apprised of the recent proposed legislation, along with a strategic plan to effectively utilize the funds.

WATER DEPARTMENT

Active Projects:

- Filtration plant pipe repainting project underway, currently on high service.
- Berlin Road water main installed, currently taking bacteria samples of new mains.
- Berlin Road water service to homes – installation to begin week of July 26th.
- Filter #1 media received, scheduling demo of current media for replacement with new.
- Zenner meter systems on site with four personnel to work on the AMR meter system.
- 12" Sawmill Parkway water main abandoned just east of current facility.
- Water taps completed at Northport and Stride Mobility.
- Low Service Pump #1 and Backwash Pump #1 inspected. Both impellers had normal wear and are in Cleveland being rebuilt. Pumps out of service pending return of parts.
- Replacing five (5) filter drain actuators as part of our annual actuator replacement program.

STREETS DEPARTMENT

N/A

PERSONNEL

Assistant City Manager – Longtime Assistant City Manager, Mike Spafford, will be leaving his post in September – we are still talking internally about when his last day with the City of Huron will be. Mr. Spafford has a tremendous professional opportunity, and we wish him well in his next professional chapter. His knowledge, passion and competence will be truly missed.

Juneteenth: Administrative staff officially observed Juneteenth in 2021 on July 19th. Staff anticipates approaching Council by the next meeting or two with a series of MOU's with all the bargaining units to ensure they are afforded the benefit of the new federal holiday which is now observed locally. Moving forward, this holiday will be observed on June 19th in future years.

CONTRACTS

2021 will be busy with renegotiation of several multi-year agreements/contracts that expire this year. Agreements/contracts to be reviewed and renegotiated for 2021 include:

- OHM Advisors (Engineering) – **Completed.**
- Erie Soil and Water Conservation District (Engineering) – **Completed.**
- Chief Building Official and Inspection Services (Building) – **Completed.**
- Prosecutor (Court) - **Completed**
- HJRD Annual Agreement (Recreation) – **Completed.**
- Huron Township Fire Protection Agreement (Fire)
 - Staff has met with Huron Township regarding renewal of the above agreement. It was a very fruitful conversation with both jurisdictions verbally coming to agreement on multiple mutually beneficial changes to the new agreement – which will be either a two- or four-year agreement to not have this contracts expiration coincide with the expiration date of the fire bargaining unit contracts. Staff and legal counsel have completed a redline update to the existing agreement and have sent said agreement to Huron Township for review and consideration. We will update Council as that agreement moves along.
- Seeley, Savidge, Ebert & Gourash Co., LLP (Law) - **Completed.**
- FOP – Patrol Officers (Police)
- FOP – Sergeants (Police)
- IAFF (Fire)
- AFCSME

It should be noted we are likely to hold off on consideration and negotiation of both FOP agreements, IAFF and AFCSME until beginning of Q3 to have a better understanding of any COVID related impacts (or lack thereof) to the City's budget.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

July

Public Information Meeting – Road Diet/Bike Lanes: Tuesday, July 27, 2021, at 5:00pm at McCormick Junior High.

Council Meeting: Tuesday, July 27, 2021, at 6:30pm at McCormick Junior High.

Planning Commission/Design Review Board: Wednesday, July 28, 2021, at 5:00pm in Council Chambers.

August

Utilities Committee: Wednesday, August 4, 2021, at 5:00pm in the Main Conference Room.

Finance Committee: Monday, August 9, 2021, at 5:00pm in the Main Conference Room.

Board of Zoning Appeals: Monday, August 9, 2021, at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.

Council Meeting: Tuesday, August 10, 2021, at 6:30pm in the Council Chambers.

Council Meeting: Tuesday, August 24, 2021, at 6:30pm in the Council Chambers.

Planning Commission/Design Review Board: Wednesday, August 25, 2021, at 5:00pm in Council Chambers.