



CITY OF HURON
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

December 9, 2022

Matthew Lasko, City Manager

ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Firelands Scientific: Planning Commissioner recently approved revised site and façade plans for Firelands Scientific's proposed expansion. With these approvals in hand, the City Building Official and Zoning team are providing a final review of construction drawings in hopes of permitting the project shortly.

The Company has materials staged at the site in hopes of commencing construction as soon as the permit is issued.

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 has officially broken ground on its new facility located at 309 Lake Erie Parkway. The approximate \$10.0M investment will be the company's second Ohio facility. To date, the structure for the marine storage facility has been erected as well as the shell of the marine repair and sales facility. We anticipate the marine storage facility to be completed first in advance of the winter storage season with the second building to come after.

ConAgra: The City has been working with the development team on revisions to the site plan. These proposed revisions will include a slightly lesser density, bigger units, moving to an all for-sale product and altering the location of the commercial use(s). Tweaks to the public green space are also being considered but will still ensure public access around the entire perimeter. We are envisioning the next steps being the consideration of the revised conceptual site plan at an upcoming planning commission meeting. Once a conceptual site plan is approved, developers and the City's engineering team can begin moving forward with detailed site plan and engineering plans.

The City, as of the week of October 31, has received a draft proposal from KS & Associates to handle seawall engineering. The City has not yet reviewed the proposal and will be doing so shortly in hopes of sending any comments or questions to the firm in the next 2-3 weeks.

The development team will be presenting to the Planning Commission on Wednesday December 14th for consideration of their conceptual site plan. 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.

Sawmill Creek: The annexation of Sawmill Creek Resort was effective November 11th, 2022. As of that date, the City is now responsible for providing police services in addition to Fire and EMS services already being provided. Additionally, this marks the date that the City will now start receiving income tax revenue from the employment base.

Staff from the Regional Income Tax Agency have been in conversations with Cedar Fair regarding their upcoming obligation to withhold the 1% income tax from employees. Currently, at facility is employing 219 full-time, part-time, and seasonal employees with an average monthly payroll of approximately \$520,000. Based on these estimates, the city anticipates receiving between \$60,000 - \$65,000 annually in new income taxes from the facility, which is higher than our anticipated \$50,000 estimate. We hope to begin receiving these funds in either November or December of this year.

Finally, the City is finalizing the \$2M bond issuance to Cedar Fair which will need to be completed by December 31, 2022.

Warren Slag Property: On Thursday November 17th, the City fully executed the final purchase and sale agreement with Warren Slag.

OHM Advisors are currently surveying the property, which started during the week of December 5th. Mannik & Smith Group completed the Phase I Environmental Assessment activities, and the report has been issued. The report does not find any issues with the property and has recommended no further action. Therefore, the City has released its environmental contingency. The City has also received all title work and reviewed existing easements or encumbrances on the property. After review and consultation with SSEG, the City will also be releasing its title contingency.

We also met with representatives of EDA, ECEDC and Erie Regional Planning regarding the development of what is called a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). A CEDS is now a requirement for any applicant seeking EDA funding. Erie County and Huron County will be partnering on the completion of this plan. Additionally, Erie County Regional Planning has submitted a grant application to EDA to help offset 50% of the cost of the CEDS plan. The application required a match of \$26,000 which has been paid for by Erie County and the Greater Sandusky Partnership. Thank you to both entities for their financial contribution and leadership in submitting the grant application so quickly. Results of the application should be known in a few weeks.

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.

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.

Rt 6 Phase II: OHM has completed the results of the traffic study for Route 6 Phase II. Results of this study are paramount for making final recommendations to the public/ODOT and Council on recommended designs for roadway and bike lane improvements for the second and final phase of the project. A scope meeting with ODOT District 3 was held on Monday September 26th to determine what traffic options ODOT will permit for RT. 6 Phase II. Based on that meeting, staff and OHM have been busy at work developing visuals of the options explored and denoting which options are permissible by ODOT and supported by the traffic study. Results and visuals were presented to Council during a presentation on October 11. During the presentation, staff displayed a preferred option for the second phase which includes the following: removing the traffic signal at Center Street, closing off Jim Campbell at Center Street to vehicular traffic, extending the bike lane from Williams Street westward to connect to the Lakeshore Electric Trail, and installation of a single-lane roundabout on Route 6 near the intersection of Jim Campbell and Liberty Drive. Based on feedback received from Council as well as ODOT, staff will pursue commencing the public outreach process prioritizing this treatment for the second Phase. Further, staff is in ongoing conversations with funders who may be able to contribute additional dollars to the second Phase.

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.

Additional scope for this project is being considered and assessed. Extending the sidewalks on the south side to Lincoln Ave to connect to the existing sidewalk, and an additional portion on the north side from Gateway Blvd to Anchorage Circle. The City has also met with Township who has given verbal approval of their intention to fund 50% of the project still and that they are accepting of the project moving forward regardless of whether additional funding subsidies are received. We are so appreciative of the continued partnership with the Township and their support of this effort to increase accessibility and safety in the City and Township.

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) impacted property owners who all shared support for the installation. The City's law department will begin the process of drafting up ROW acquisition documents which will also be dependent on survey work and legal description development by OHM Advisors.

Pavement Condition and 2023+ Resurfacing: OHM has completed the 2022 Pavement Condition Report. This bi-annual document rated the conditions of all public roadways in the City and will be the main informational guide for the City's future road resurfacing recommendation in 2023 and 2024. Based on this information, the city will quickly look to prioritize road resurfacing recommendations for 2023 during the fall of 2022. As mentioned in past reports, the City is looking to undertake a multi-year, multi-million road resurfacing effort beginning in 2023 based upon the City's available debt capacity.

Staff has presented a design proposal to Council in November which was approved. Per the proposal, the City is recommending asphalt over concrete overlay in the Chaska, Old Homestead I and Old Homestead II neighborhoods. This treatment would address every single street in each neighborhood as well as address curbs, signage and catch basins.

Main Street: The Erie Regional Planning Metropolitan Planning Organization held its combined Technical Advisory and Policy Committee meeting on June 23. At that meeting, the committee considered the funding recommendations for the 2025/2026 Surface Transportation funding. A reminder, Main Street was tentatively recommended to receive \$360,000 from the scoring committee. At the meeting on June 23, the committee voted to approve the \$360,000 award to the City of Huron for future Main Street enhancements. This is a significant funding award for the future overhaul of the corridor which will be informed by the currently underway Mainstreet/Downtown planning and visioning process – which is set to wrap up around the end of the year or very early 2023. Again, and big thank you to Erik Engle and his team and the folks at OHM Advisors.

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.

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. Departments have identified a funding possibility for the fall of 2022 – with

implementation in 2023. Staff anticipates seeking Council approval to make a grant application in late summer or very early fall of 2022.

Staff have interviewed multiple providers, while also carrying out in-person demos of providers of Body Worn Cameras, in-car systems, remote activation systems and Digital Evidence Management Systems. This technology should be comprehensive and should be managed by a single point of activation. There is a grant opportunity upcoming in early September which we are getting ready to apply for.

Huron Police Department successfully submitted their grant request for body worn cameras on September 8. Results of the grant application were anticipated to be announced in October of this year. It has been rumored that the announcements are being pushed back to December or January of 2023.

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.

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. Staff and the law department have been finalizing this code update and hope to present to the planning commission at an upcoming meeting.

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 16th, 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. These recommendations will be tweaked and refined during additional public process in very early 2023.

Solar Panels: Staff has been presenting alterations to the zoning code to address both roof mounted and free-standing solar structures. Two planning commission meetings have been held to discuss with further meetings to occur based on the complexities of the matter and the need to review the entire accessory structure component of the code. At present roof installations are subject to electrical plan submission and structural analysis, but generally permitted anywhere in the city. Free standing structures also have generally been permitted anywhere in the city and treated as an accessory structure required only to meet setback, height, and lot coverage requirements – but no concern beyond that. Staff is proposing to permit roof mounted structures in all districts subject to electrical and structural review but to only permit freestanding structures as a conditional use in residential and commercial districts and therefore subject to a greater degree of scrutiny.

A Public Hearing will be held on establishment of a new Section 1126.18 Solar Structures under Chapter 1126 of the Planning and Zoning Code on Tuesday, December 13, 2022, at 6:30pm in Council Chambers. Members of the public are welcomed to provide input regarding the proposed legislation at this hearing.

Urban Renewal Code: The City's existing zoning code includes a section pertaining to Urban Renewal. It particularly pertained to the City's desire to undertake widespread blight removal and redevelopment in the 1950's and 1960's in line with the Federal Government's Urban Renewal Program. Since urban renewal has long been over for many decades, staff will be recommending repealing this code section in its entirety. This was considered at a recent Planning Commission who agreed to repeal this code section and recommend such to Council. **Council has already had two readings on this appeal and will be hearing the final reading on December 13, 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.

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 27th 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. completed Interior demolition in the barn structure. Tree removal is complete. A tentative house demolition schedule is set for the second week in December beginning December 12. Final fine grading and seeding will not occur until the Spring of 2023. The Fire Department has also utilized the residential structure during the week of December 5th or training.

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. Additionally, the School District will be considering continued participation in the HJRD at their December 20th, 2022, board meeting.

Fieldhouse: The City organized a kickoff brainstorming session regarding the potential development of a field house – which was held on November 17th. 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. Based on the enthusiasm at the meeting, stakeholder representatives will be reporting back to their respective organizations to better determine what level of participation each entity desires to have. The group agreed to reconvene in early January to further conversations.

Christmas Tree: Several individuals have approached the City about considering bringing back having a dedicated Christmas Tree for the City, beginning in 2023. There is support internally from staff about looking at locations and costs for such a tree in hopes of developing a plan for implementation next year.

FINANCE

2023 Budgetary Meetings: the City and Finance Committee held its final budgetary meeting on Monday November 14th to review the capital improvement plan, capital equipment schedules existing debt and future debt capacity and spending plan. This meeting highlighted several large-scale projects on the horizon including, but not limited to, Rt. 6 Phase II, Main Street transformation, new service complex and large-scale neighborhood street resurfacing. At the committee meeting, the finance committee also unanimously approved the budget and recommended to move the budget to Council for consideration which will be done in December. A huge thank you to the finance committee, departments and especially Mr. Swaisgood and the finance department for their excellent work in drafting the 2023 budget.

Additionally, the team at Sudsina & Associates updated the debt analysis and capital financing plan which was presented at the November 14th meeting for projects the city would desire to bond out. This is a follow up to the plan that was drafted in February of 2022 but updated with more accurate construction numbers.

WATER DEPARTMENT

Recent Activity:

- **Boilers.** Installation of new boiler heat system in the water treatment plant is complete.
- **Manual Water Meter Readings.** Manual reading of failed water meter transmitters for final billing cycle of 2022 have been completed.

- Neptune AMR Transmitters. Installation of Neptune AMR transmitters continue throughout the system.
- Sed Building Improvements. In-house construction of 12'x12' storage room is 50% complete.
- Lead Service Grant. Compiling data tables related to vertical and horizontal assets associated with the GIS implementation project.
- Annual Report. Compiling data, metrics, and pictures for annual report – 50% complete.

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. Currently awaiting EPA response for an extension to marry this project with the alternate intake given the route of the installation is shared on our parcel.
- Alternate Intake. Awaiting engineering proposal from Poggemeyer Design Group and preparing to bid engineering. Additionally, looking to engineer/bid a 24" force main as a base bid and an alternate 36" force main for potential consideration.
- Primary Intake. The annual intake crib inspection was completed on August 10th. 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.

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.

South Main Street Watermain Replacement: Staff held an initial meeting with OHM to generate a proposal for the South Main Street watermain replacement program. The proposal has been agreed to between the City and OHM and will be considered at our November 22, 2022, meeting. This asset management-based program involves ongoing replacement of aged underground infrastructure. The current project headed to engineering involves the replacement of the below

and was selected due to criticality, age, and number of failures (water main breaks) as outlined in the asset management report:

- 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.

PERSONNEL/ADMINISTRATION

Police Chief Search: The City has completed two (2) evenings of interviews thus far on December 1st and 6th respectively. To date, seven (7) candidates have been interviewed. Applications will continue to be received through December 15th. If additional interviews are to be completed, the search committee is reserving the evening of December 19th for those.

Brandon Brown: Water filtration plant operator Brandon Brown passed his Water Supply Class II examination, further advancing his education in the field. Brandon is a true asset to our team, and we are excited to see him progress through the OEPA licensure levels. Congratulations, Brandon!

Zoning Inspector/Assistant Planner: The City has begun advertising for this position and has begun accepting applications and resumes as of December 2nd.

CONTRACTS

Agreements/contracts that will expire in 2022/early 2023 include:

- **OHM Advisors (Engineering) – Expires 12/31/22**
 - Staff is currently reviewing the existing agreement to determine what if any changes are desired in the next contract with OHM. Staff hopes to present a contract to Council for consideration at the December 27th meeting.
- **Erie Soil and Water Conservation District (Engineering) – Expires 1/31/23**

- 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.
- HJRD Annual Agreement (Recreation) –expires 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 Resources Officer – **Expires 8/31/23**
- Dynegy Energy Services – Electric Aggregation Program – expired 10/31/22 **Not renewed due to price of supply.**
- Bricker & Eckler – HPP Legal Services (Law) – **Expires 9/30/23**
- Erie County Cablevision, Inc. (Buckeye Cable) Franchise Agreement – Expires 12/30/22 **Franchise will be renewed at the State level – local ordinance submitted to continue receiving franchise fee payments.**
- City Prosecutor Employment Agreement – expires 12/31/22
 - The City and Mrs. Andrea Rocco have agreed to terms to extend this agreement through 2023. This agreement will be considered at the December 27th meeting.
- Personnel Officer Employment Agreement – expires 12/31/22
 - The City and Mrs. Andrea Rocco have agreed to terms to extend this agreement through 2023. This agreement will be considered at the December 27th meeting.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

December

- Finance Committee – December 12, 2022, at 5:00 in the Council Chambers
- Board of Zoning Appeals – December 12, 2022, at 6:30 in the Council Chambers
- City Council – December 13, 2022, at 6:30 in the Council Chambers
- Planning Commission – December 14, 2022, at 5:00pm in Council Chambers
- City Council – December 27, 2022, at 6:30pm in Council Chambers

- **Reminder the City will be observing Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve respectively on Friday December 23rd and Friday December 30th. On those days, the City will be closed at noon.**
- **Reminder the City will be observing Christmas Day and New Year's Day respectively on Monday December 26th and January 2nd. On those days, the City will be closed for the entire day.**