

**Infrastructure/Streets**

**US 6 (Phase I)**

- **Striping**: Crews permanently removed the remnants of the initial white paint that was errantly installed prior to including the center turn lane at River Road. This completes all striping as part of the road-diet temporary traffic pattern.
- **Lighting**: The City has authorized proposals from OHM/EPS to design and prepare bid documents for pole procurement and installation of new harbor style streetlights along the US 6 corridor. The pole bases were installed as part of the paving project. We are targeting an early spring advertisement date and early summer project kick-off. The Street Light Assessment is being utilized to fund the project.
- **Signage/Traffic Lights**: OHM is working with ODOT to discuss temporary options for bagging the light for eastbound traffic on US 6 at Main St. Also, all signs reflecting the new traffic pattern as part of the road diet are now installed. Crews also almost nearly done with removal of unnecessary or redundant signs along the corridor.
- **Route 6 Feedback**: Reminder to all residents and interested parties that the City has established a dedicated telephone line for folks to leave feedback and thoughts on the temporary bike lanes and stripping plan. Individuals can call and leave feedback on this dedicated line at anytime and staff will be documenting the feedback. A reminder of this line was included in the most recent water bill mailings. The phone number again is (419) 433-5000 (extension 1105).

**US 6 (Phase II)**: The City will be holding a work session on potential corridor layouts for the second Phase of Route 2. The work session will be held at 5:30 on February 9<sup>th</sup> in the Council Chambers. Representatives from OHM Advisors will be present share design options for the second Phase with the public and Council.

**Radar Speed Monitor Signs**: The mobile radar signs have now been received by the City. During the week of January 4<sup>th</sup>, two (2) signs were installed along Laguna Drive. These signs are intended to both slow down traffic to adhere to the currently posted speed limit but also to gather data to determine if any alterations to the existing posted speed are warranted. These signs can be moved throughout the City as needed or requested. The City will be discussing at next Safety Committee what other locations throughout the City warrant having these signs installed along traffic thoroughfares.

**Sawmill Parkway:** The City was unsuccessful in its application request to EDA-CARES funding for \$2 million in grant funds to help reconstruct Sawmill Parkway. However, the City is in ongoing discussion with EDA about potential funding via a different grant program. Staff also is planning to provide an update to Council on the current status of the project and potential sources and uses of both options (partial reconstruction and full reconstruction) at the January 26<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.

### **Economic Development**

**USGS/Harbor North:** At the end of October, the Harbor North Marina was sold. The City has held several discussions with the new owners and their contractors – as the new ownership group is looking to make significant investments into the property. Conversations centered around the plan review and building permit process. It is also anticipated that the USGS facility will also be located at Harbor North with construction hopefully commencing soon on this facility as well. The planned renovations for the project were approved by the Planning Commission on November 18, however other elements of the project, namely aesthetic ones related to fencing and landscaping still need reviewed and considered by the Design Review Board – which will occur at a later date. Crews have started installing new portions of sheet piling throughout the site.

**IAC:** Ownership of the IAC facility has now officially changed hands. The property, and related acreage, located at 1608 Sawmill Parkway sold on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. The City is currently in conversations with the new owners regarding plans for the existing facility and expansion possibilities. The new owners, Ardagh Group, are immediately moving forward with new signage installation which will be considered at the January 2021 BZA meeting. Ardagh has committed to minimally hire an additional two hundred (200) employees and is already advertising these positions for hire through their website.

#### **ConAgra:**

- **Utility Construction:** The City recently discussed easement options with Norfolk Southern for utility installation at ConAgra. There are still some significant unknowns, specifically timing and cost, that will likely make this option no-longer the preferred one. Staff is working with OHM to move forward with exploration of the utility installation solely in City right-of-way. Staff is approaching Council for consideration of a contract amendment with OHM to complete construction documents and bid books for eventual bidding out of eventual utility work.
- **Tax Increment Financing:** The City adopted a TIF by ordinance in 2011 that incorporated the ConAgra parcel as well as the bulk of the downtown area north of US 6. The ordinance established a 30-year TIF with proceeds to be utilized to reconstruct specific projects. To-date, this TIF has not been active. The City has engaged Bricker and Eckler, LLP (with the blessing of SSE&G) for a legal review of the existing TIF and potential modifications. Based on the review, I would anticipate legislation forthcoming in the early part of 2021. Prior to moving forward with the infrastructure at ConAgra, the TIF needs to be firmly in place to ensure reimbursement of City funds/expenses.

## Housing/Real Estate Development

**Two Rivers:** The City had several conversations with a revamped development team who are exploring developing the remainder of the Two Rivers Planned Unit Development (PUD). The previous PUD has since expired. The development team will be working to partially redesign the development and related infrastructure and will hopefully be submitting a new PUD application to the City for review in the upcoming weeks/months. The City is also working with the proposed developers to investigate the condition of the existing infrastructure to determine what if any improvements or repairs are needed.

## Zoning/Code

**Transient Rental:** Staff and members of Council (along with great input and recommendations from the public and transient rental operators) continue to explore modifications to the existing transient rental program. In addition to modifications to the existing program, staff and Council are also exploring the creation of transient rental overlay districts that will allow customizable differences between neighborhoods based on their unique characteristics. Works sessions will begin on January 26<sup>th</sup> and will continue until final legislation is prepared for Council consideration and adequate time has been allotted for public feedback.

## Parks and Recreation

**ODNR Public Fish Cleaning Station:** Staff had a follow-up discussion with ODNR regarding a public fish cleaning station. ODNR confirmed that they have a budgetary green light to move forward with at least one, if not two, facilities on Lake Erie (preferably Erie/Ottawa Counties) with Huron and Port Clinton being the two primary locations based on anticipated utilization. Staff is currently reviewing potential plans for locations of a fish station along with potential operational costs annually to maintain such a facility. It is anticipated that the costs for construction would entirely be borne by the State, but maintenance would occur locally.

## Utilities

**Sale of Transmission Assets:** The City has put the finishing touches on the Purchase Agreement with AMP-T. The Board of AMP has approved the purchase of the transmission asset and, contingent on Council approval of the sale, closing is scheduled for February 1, 2021. All proceeds received from the sale will be applied to the outstanding sub-station debt obligation. The City will explore whether the remaining debt should be refinanced in upcoming weeks.

**Pump Station and Force Main Project:** Erie County will be making major changes to the "A" Street sewage pumping station across from "The Gym" and installing (2) 10" force mains from that location all the way East to Mitiwanga. The project is already bid so we can expect work in 2021 along the US 6 East corridor. After a preliminary look at the prints it looks as though a

bulk of the work will be directional drill with excavations every 500'. Where it gets technical is around the pump station itself as we have two water mains, various taps, and valves. The County will be funding a waterline relocation in that area and we are working to determine the ideal layout, customers impacted, and whether we have any mains outside of that zone that would be impacted by the relocation of assets. The County will have multiple sewage bypass pumps in place during this construction to move sewage around the "A" street station. It does not appear there will be significant work in areas that were recently paved so that is a plus but I'm sure we can expect some minimal service disturbance.

### **Finance/Budget**

**End of Year Financial Update:** After closing out 2020, the City is in a good financial position for 2021. Actions immediately taken by City leadership and departments at the beginning of the pandemic resulted in 2020 ending fund balances of essential operational funds remaining or exceeding 2020 beginning fund balances. After transferring \$100,000 each from the General Fund to the Capital Improvement Fund and Economic Fund, and receipt of BWC's dividend, the City's General Fund balance at 12/31/2021 was approximately \$1.25 million, or 25% of total expenditures. Other essential services' fund balances, such as the Water and Fire Levy funds, ended the year 2% to 3% higher than 2020 beginning balances.

### **Personnel:**

**Water:** In 2021, the Water Plant is anticipated to move towards 24/7 operation, which has long been a goal of the City. To do so, this will require the addition of one more employee. The City has already begun the advertising process in hopes of having someone hired and on board in March of this year.

**Police:** The City is working with the National Testing Network to administer the testing process for potential candidates to be considered for officers of the Huron Police Department. The testing process has begun with candidates likely to be identified hopefully by March of this year. The City is planning to hire two (2) full-time police officers – 1 of which is backfilling a recent retirement and 1 of which is an additional new officer.

**Zoning/Planning:** The City is anticipating hiring a full-time planning/zoning administrator in Q1/Q2 of 2021. This position will be responsible for zoning permit review, zoning inspections, liaison to BZA, DRB and PC and will assist in other planning and development activities. This position will undertake traditional zoning duties that were historically carried out by OHM Advisors. The City has begun advertising for this position with applications and resumes due to the City by January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

## Agreements

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)
  - o The City has proposed entering into an approximate two (2) year contract with OHM Advisors to provide general engineering services on behalf of the City. The proposed contract would exist through December 31, 2022.
- Erie Soil and Water Conservation District (Engineering)
  - o The City's current agreement with the Erie Soil and Water Conservation District expires on January 31, 2021. The City is currently in conversations with the District about entering into another one (1) year agreement to assist with the City's stormwater management activities. Both parties are awaiting issuance of the new MS4 Permit Improvement plan (likely in February or March) to inform the scope of work that should be included in the next agreement between the City and the District. The District has committed to continue working on compliance matters with the City until a new agreement is entered into – which we greatly appreciate. The 2021 budget does include an allowance for stormwater management services.
  
- Chief Building Official and Inspection Services (Building)
- Prosecutor (Court)
- HJRD Annual Agreement (Recreation)
- Huron Township Fire Protection Agreement (Fire)
- Seeley, Savidge, Ebert & Gourash Co., LLP (Law)
- 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 end of Q2 so as to have a better understanding of any COVID related impacts (or lack thereof) to the City's budget.