



CITY OF HURON
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

July 13, 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 will be presented to the Planning Commission at their next meeting for consideration. We look forward to this project as they would be a welcome addition to the community.

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 firm's 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. The next step is for the group to undertake extensive one on one interviews with each firm which will occur in the next 2-3 weeks. Staff hopes to make a final recommendation to Council in August and will request a public presentation from the preferred firm at that time.

Sawmill Creek: The City and Huron Township have been in detailed discussions about the possible annexation of 9 township parcels into the city. The property of the nine parcels, Sawmill Creek, LLC (affiliated with Cedar Fair, LP) approached the City about the need to construction subsidy for the project. As Cedar Fair is exiting the pandemic, there is great competition within the

company for capital dollars amongst all its markets, with less capital funding available. One of the methods of ensuring the redevelopment of Sawmill Creek, LLC was prioritized, was to show a great return on investment and reduced capital outlay to complete the project. One of the means to subsidize the project is through a Section 41 TIF in which the City would provide funding to the project, which would be repaid through the projects' future real estate tax liability. A Section 41 TIF however, can only be approved by a municipality – townships are able to approve Section 41 TIF's. This is the reason why a possible annexation is being considered. If the annexation is initially approved by Huron Township and City this week, there will be a series of legislative actions needed over the course of the next several months to effectuate the annexation. It should be noted that the existing residential parcels and properties within the Sawmill Creek property are not subject to annexation and will remain in Huron Township.

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 May 21, the application was still being reviewed by their architectural and engineering teams.

Berlin Road Waterline: The new main has been installed on Tyler Street and Berlin Road from Dairy Queen south to railroad tracks. The new water line still needs to be installed South of railroad tracks, Paris Street, and Stedman Street. Boring under the tracks should be occurring this week in hopes of installing the southern portion of the pipe shortly thereafter.

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 are planning to have results of the findings and revised final striping plans available to the public and Council one week prior to the July 27th public meeting.

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.***

Broadband: As an update, as part of the State's biennial budget, the Senate approved a provision that would place significant restrictions on the creation of a municipal broadband system. The bill would have restricted service territories to those currently unserved (meaning no access to any broadband provider), restricted service to being within the municipal boundary, restricted ability to utilize outside funding sources (particularly federal funds) and eliminated the ability to earn a return on funds invested (any profit must be refunded). We are pleased to report that these provisions were removed from the final approved budget bill.

ZONING/CODE/PLANNING

Masterplan Update and Visioning: The City is hosting a joint work session of Planning Commission and City Council to review a rough first draft of the Vision 2020 update document. This document will expand upon the selected initiatives prioritized through past work sessions adding additional narrative, timelines, rough costs, and maps/renderings where necessary. Staff and consultants, City Architecture and ReStartSmart, hope to solicit broad feedback on the document in hopes of presenting a final draft/plan to Planning Commission and Council in August of 2021.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Riverfest: A big thank you to the Riverfest Committee, our Parks and Rec Department and all the volunteers who worked so hard to put on a great event Saturday. The city was jammed with people and families enjoying the parade, food, music, and fireworks. Great job to those involved and thank you to those that came out to enjoy the day.

FINANCE

Monthly Financial Report: The monthly financial report for June will be emailed by July 15th to Council and the Finance Committee. Please let the Finance Director know if you have any questions with the report or are interested in seeing additional information in the monthly report going forward.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA): The following is what we know as of July 9th:

- The Finance Department is currently in the process of registering with the State to confirm the City's final allocation and initiate disbursement from the State. The latest estimate indicates the City's initial allocation of \$1.3 million was nearly cut in half. The city is expected to receive approximately \$700,000 over two years. The State approved to reduce allocations to municipalities and disburse ARPA funds to all townships in Ohio.
- The State received the funds in June and subsequently approved disbursement of the funds following registration from the City. The city is expected to receive 1 of 2 disbursements by July (50% of total award). The second disbursement will not be received until 12 months after the first disbursement.
- 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.
- 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.

Staff will keep the finance committee and council apprised of Huron's final allocation, 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 replacement – new main installed on Tyler Street and Berlin Road from Dairy Queen south to railroad tracks. New pipe still needs to be installed South of railroad tracks, Paris Street, and Stedman Street.
- Jack and bore beneath railroad for 12" water main on Berlin Road – northern approach of bore completed, anticipated bore under tracks Monday 7/12
- 12" water main on Sawmill Parkway vacated immediately east of current Ardagh facility. 12" main abandoned via insertion valve and cap. This is part of the process for the ultimate vacation of the end of the roadway for the eventual Ardagh development eastward.

STREETS DEPARTMENT

There was a broken 12' storm line that occurred on Taylor Avenue – mid block between Wilbor and Wilder Avenues. The broken line has since been excavated, repaired, and backfilled with stone. Crews will complete the blacktop repairs within the next week or so.

PERSONNEL

Police Department: On July 1, Officer Curt Fleming retired after 28 years of service. We cannot thank Officer Fleming enough for his dedication to this community and his experience will be very much missed. We wish him and his family all the best in retirement.

To replace Officer Fleming, the city has hired Logan Bethard as a full-time patrol officer. Officer Bethard has been promoted from a part-time Officer – where he has served the city for the last three years. We are thrilled to have Officer Bethard full-time and wish him all the best of luck as he begins his full-time appoint with the force.

Juneteenth: If approved by Council, the city will officially observe Juneteenth this year on July 19th. Going forward, the holiday will be observed on its normal day. On July 19th this year, administrative staff will be given the day off work. However, the city will remain open that day as all bargaining units will still be working. However, staff intends, soon, to bring MOUs to Council for consideration to ensure all bargaining units are afforded the benefit of the holiday in 2021. Beginning in 2022, the city will be closed in observance of the holiday.

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)
 - The city has provided a redline draft to the Township for review. The Township is currently reviewing that draft agreement in hopes of finalizing in the next week or so. Staff is hoping to present a new 5-year agreement to Council for consideration at the July 27th meeting.
- 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

Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting: Monday, July 12, 2021, at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.

Council Work Session: Tuesday, July 13, 2021, at 5:00 in Council Chambers

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Council Work Session: Tuesday, July 27, 2021, at 5:00pm at McCormick Junior High.

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