

Infrastructure/Streets

US 6:

- **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 expected for delivery very soon and will be installed upon arrival.

Leaf Pickup: The City's leaf pickup program for 2020 has been completed. A big thank you to our Streets Department for another successful year and ability to undertake four complete trips throughout the City. As a reminder, the City's contract with Republic does provide for year-round curbside pickup of yard waste should residents still have materials to dispose of.

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 2nd. The City hopes to have further discussions with the new owners about the plans for the facility in upcoming weeks. It

is our understanding that the new owners are still finalizing plans for the facility as it relates to any improvements that may be made to the existing facility or via expansion efforts. Additionally, it is unknown whether the new owners will be seeking any form of City assistance or incentive. Regardless, the repositioning of this property to a new ownership group bodes well for the facility and the City's efforts to secure funding through the Economic Development Administration (EDA) for the eventual reconstruction of the entirety of Sawmill Parkway. The City anticipates learning the results of the EDA application and funding request in a few weeks.

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 unless Council has objection and would like this to be further explored.
- 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. Future work sessions will be held soon to review the most updated draft modifications and to review preliminary overlay district legislation.

Parks and Recreation

Showboat Property: Staff has completed removal of the majority of the black chain link fence along the eastern portion of the parking lot. In its place, staff has installed parking blocks to mirror the parking blocks that exist on the western portion of the site.

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.

Utilities

Sale of Transmission Assets: The City continues to put the finishing touches on the Purchase Agreement with AMP-T. Staff is planning to present final legislation to Council in January of 2021 for finalization. It should be noted that the Board of AMP has approved the Purchase and Sale Agreement contingent on finalization of an interim Operations and Maintenance plan/agreement.

Finance/Budget

Coronavirus Relief Funds: The performance period for using CARES ACT funds from the State ends on December 30th, meaning the City must spend the federal grant by the 30th. The City received \$462,646 in multiple disbursements in 2020. In October, the Administration presented a plan to spend down the grant funds by the end of the year. Unfortunately, the virus impacted many City personnel in November and approximately \$50,000 of the funds were used to pay emergency sick leave and overtime to cover shifts during that month. This was in addition to the 10% threshold set by motion to allocate safety service salaries to the grant. It appears the City will end 2020 by allocating the grant funds to the following expense categories:

- Personnel Services – \$262,163
- COVID19 related Supplies/Equipment/PPE – \$77,811
- Building and Technology Improvements- \$122,672

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. It is anticipated that the hiring process will occur in the first half of 2021 with the goal of having the new employee trained and on board around May of 2021.

Water: A big congratulations to Jason Gibboney (Water Superintendent) – who was awarded the Operator Meritorious Award – Treatment, from the American Water Works Association. Jason was recognized for his operations of the plant which includes overseeing critical upgrades to both the facility and technology along with his strong work ethic and commitment to excellence in water treatment. A big thank you to Jason and his entire staff – as this award, albeit individual, is a team effort.

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. Staff hopes to begin this process in upcoming weeks in hopes of making hiring decisions in early 2021.

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.

Dispatch: In late 2017, the City and Erie County entered into a 3-year agreement in which the County would provide emergency dispatch services to the City. That initial agreement was to expire on December 31, 2020. However, the agreement provides for an automatic 3-year renewal so long as both parties desire to maintain the agreement. HPD and HFD have been very pleased with the service provided by Erie County and have recommended renewal of the agreement. As such, the City has agreed to extend this agreement for an additional term.