



CITY OF HURON  
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

September 20, 2024

Matthew Lasko, City Manager

## ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**ConAgra:** The City received three (3) submittals from qualified and interested development companies. Interviews commenced during the week of March 11th – with two interviews occurring with each respective development team. Based on those interviews and fact-finding efforts, the City has narrowed the list down to two (2) finalists including K. Hovnanian/Knez Homes and Prephan Enterprises. These two finalists presented to the Council and the public at two (2) separate work sessions on July 9<sup>th</sup> and July 23<sup>rd</sup>. Council discussed the preferred developer at the August 24<sup>th</sup> regular Council meeting. After discussion regarding the pros and cons of each development, Council made a motion directing staff to begin negotiations on a purchase/option agreement and development agreement with K. Hovnanian/Knez Homes. The Law Department has provided an initial draft of a Letter of Intent (LOI) to the administration to review. Once finalized, this LOI will be sent to the development team for review and comment. This LOI will capture the high-level agreements between the parties which will become the main deal points of a purchase agreement and development agreement.

**Norfolk Southern Holdings:** The city hosted Solomon Jackson from Norfolk Southern approximately a week ago to talk about their holdings and the future of the Carmeuse Plant. Per Norfolk, the lease with Carmeuse expires in early 2024 and neither party desires to renew it. As such, Carmeuse continues to work on site cleanup as required by the lease. Upon vacation, Norfolk Southern will be working with the City to ultimately facilitate the sale and development of their waterfront acreage.

**Two Rivers Residential Development:** Reminder that there will be a Builder's Preview event for the restart of the Two River's development on September 14<sup>th</sup> from 1-4 p.m. Council should have been forwarded the email invitation as RSVP's are required. There will also be a ribbon cutting event soon for the construction of their model home. We look forward to this development restarting and welcoming many new families to the City of Huron.

## INFRASTRUCTURE/STREETS/UTILITIES/IT

**Rt 6 Phase II:** Pursuant to authorization provided by Resolution No. 50-2024 adopted by Council on June 11, 2024, the city executed an Agreement with TranSystems Corporation of Ohio for professional design and bidding services relating to the US 6 Phase II Project in the amount of \$369,469. Legislation was passed for this project on June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and a contract has been signed. We will work on design and will carry out public engagement throughout the project. It is hoped to construct this project in 2025.

Survey of the project limits has commenced. Once this step is completed, design can start for the layout and limits of all aspects of the project. Staff continue to hold project meetings.

**East Side Sidewalks:** For the southside portion, we are currently working through some ODOT ROW acquisitions for temporary access enabling construction. Once this has been concluded, we are ready to put this project out to bid.

ROW acquisition is complete. ODOT are now reviewing our stage three plans. Once this is complete, staff are ready to put this project out to bid.

For the Northside portion, RMH Concrete and Foundations were the lowest and best bidder at a Construction cost of \$52,309.50. Work commenced at the end of April, and as of now the sidewalk has been poured and restoration work has been completed.

**Route 13 Crosswalks:** The City has applied to the Ohio Department of Transportation for Systemic Safety Dollars and was awarded funding to cover 90% for this project. The expected cost is \$134,000, with \$120,600 being covered by grant funding. This project will install new crosswalks and flashing beacons on Route 13 at both Forest Hills and Valley View. It is not yet known if these will be able to be installed during the S. Main Street Watermain replacement and resurfacing project or will have to be installed in 2025.

The final design package has been submitted to ODOT for approval. As soon as this is approved, we will put this project out to bid. We are still expecting to contract this in 2024.

**Pavement Condition and 2023+ Resurfacing:** All construction work is completed, and a final walkthrough was carried out 7/2/2024. A punch list has been generated and associated work should be completed by the end of August.

The contractor has remobilized and is working on the punch list. Concrete work is in process, to be followed up by crack seal work and striping work. Lawns will be tackled after Labor Day to give the grass seed the best chance. The intent is to remove the topsoil and replace, then seed. Other misc. items will be tackled along the way.

Concrete repairs and crack seal repairs have been completed. Lawn restoration is underway. Other misc. items will be worked on in conjunction with the lawn restoration.

**South Main Street Streetscape Design and Engineering:** Staff continues to meet regularly with representatives from OHM regarding initial plan designs and preliminary engineering. Shortly, OHM and City staff will begin meeting individually with property owners to review preliminary drawings.

A conceptual plan has been developed and the next step will be to engage business owners within the project limits. These discussions will be very high level explaining the intent of the plan and talking through any potential issues that the concept plan may cause to the operations of each business.

**South Main St Watermain Replacement Project:** This project was advertised December 14<sup>th</sup>, and bids were received on February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Spear Brothers, Inc were lowest and best at a bid amount of \$2,549,899.00. The pre-award meeting was carried out on March 1, 2024. This award was presented to the Council at the March 12, 2024, meeting.

All water taps have been completed on Huron and Mills St. Restoration work began the week of the 26<sup>th</sup> of August. The paving contractor started on Huron Avery and will move north, through Valley View, Forrest Hills and Hickory. The paving will result in single lane closures/temporary closures at times as the crews move through.

Full curb replacement has been added to the Valley View, Forrest Hills and Hickory area. Curbs that were originally deemed to be salvageable were in a worse condition than assessed once we milled the road surface. The contractor will lay the base course (tentatively scheduled for Friday 27<sup>th</sup>), then remove the remaining old curbs and replace, then the paving contractor will remobilize and lay the top finish course. Huron St patching and Mills St resurfacing is tentatively scheduled for the week of the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

A low-interest loan has been granted from OWDA with a repayment term of 20 years at 3.48%.

The City recently executed an Ohio Public Works Commission Infrastructure Program Project Agreement relating to the South Main Street Water Main Replacement Project for financial assistance in the form of a grant and loan in an amount not to exceed \$412,500. The grant portion is in the amount of \$275,000 and the loan portion is \$137,500. The project must be completed by April 2025 to be eligible for these funds.

**Bike Lane Repainting:** This project went out to bid on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and closed May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023. We received two bidders, but unfortunately both were outside the 10% allowance of engineers estimate. Both bids were rejected. Staff will analyze why the delta between the estimate and bids was so wide. **This project has been moved to 2025.**

**Huron Public Power Expansion Phase 1:** This is the first expansion project for Huron Public Power. The city is finally out to bid on our first expansion project for Huron Public Power. This project will allow Huron Public Power to be extended northward down Rye Beach Road, under the railroad tracks and across the entrance to Sawmill Parkway. This project went out to bid 1/4/2024 and bids closed on 2/16/2024. A single bid was received in the amount of \$369,870.00 and was presented to Council for consideration at the March 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. There was also a purchase of switchgear before Council for \$58,700, bringing the project cost to a total of \$428,570.

**The city received the final go ahead to start boring under the tracks. Once the contractor mobilizes, we expect this project to take less than a month.**

**Huron Public Power Rate Study:** Staff engaged Sawvel and Associates of Findlay, OH to carry out a rate study for HPP. This cost-of-service study will look at our distribution and capital costs, along with our revenue history and projections to ensure this utility is efficient and can keep expanding to serve other businesses and start serving residents.

**Website:** Six vendors presented, and the committee narrowed these options down to three for a deeper dive. In August, the final three carried out in-depth presentations and took question and answer sessions. After final voting, [Revize](#) of Troy, Michigan was selected, and a proposal has been approved by Council. Work has commenced on the website, and we hope to unveil in 2024.

**City Hall Parking Lot:** Work has commenced on selective City Hall parking lot improvements. Work includes selective concrete replacement, catch basin reconstruction and some sidewalk replacements. All work is schedule to be completed in approximately 10-14 days and we apologize for any inconvenience this causes to City Hall visitors.

## ZONING/CODE/PLANNING

**Coastal Management Assistance Grants:** We expect to have this project completed by the end of 2024 or shortly thereafter. A second meeting (conceptual) was carried out this week and staff feedback given. We expect to see some more concepts at the end of the month. The next step will be a joint Council/Planning Commission/HJRD work session on October 8th.

**Light Trespass:** The law department has completed an initial draft to address light trespass on residential buildings. Staff is in the process of reviewing prior to being presented to Council for a first reading and discussion.

## PARKS AND RECREATION:

**State Capital Budget:** The city submitted State Capital budget requests for during the week of April 1<sup>st</sup> to our respective state legislators – Sen. Nathan Manning and Rep. Dick Stein. Each request was for \$750,000 which is in line with past state capital grant awards in previous years.

The city has informally been told that we will be receiving between \$200,000-\$250,000 from the State of Ohio as part of the first \$350M in one-time Strategic Investment funding. There will be another \$350M announced shortly which is on top of the state capital funding bill. The \$700M is from a one-time allocation of surplus operating funds from the state of Ohio. These funds will be used to offset part of the necessary capital improvements needed at the Boat Basin site. We will keep Council up to date as we get more formal information about this funding.

**Nickel Plate Beach:** As some may be aware, the city currently leases the beach and parking areas from Norfolk Southern Railroad. The lease, as written, permits Norfolk Southern to terminate the lease with 30 days' notice to the city. The city has reached out to Norfolk Southern to begin conversations on securing this regional asset as publicly accessible recreation space – in perpetuity. We will keep Council and the public informed as the process moved forward.

**Berlin Road Park:** The floating dock has now been installed and is open for public use. Additionally, the city has commenced the naming process for the Berlin Road Park. Staff has narrowed the list of potential names down to 10. These 10 names will be presented to the HJRD at their next meeting with the goal of sending three (3) finalists to Council for final selection. The city is simultaneously working on entry sign designs for eventual installation in early 2025. Because the entry of the park is technically in Huron Township, we have begun conversations with the Township about the process to permit and construct the sign.

## SAFETY SERVICES

**FLOCK License Plate Readers:** After six months of operation, the FLOCK cameras have recorded over 1 million license plate reads. The program continues to be a huge asset for the police department with investigations and the solvability rate of our hit/skip accidents has increased exponentially.

**12-Hour Shifts:** The police department started 12-hour shifts on Sunday, August 4<sup>th</sup>. The transition has been very positive and the operational and economic benefits will continue to be evaluated.

**Officer Training:** Several officers received additional training in self-aid/buddy-aid, defensive tactics, and standardized field sobriety testing.

**Buoys:** All of the buoys are in the process of being removed for the summer season.

## FINANCE

**Income Tax:** Resolution No. 57-2024 was passed unanimously by Council on its third and final reading. The income tax increase will appear on the ballot for the November 5<sup>th</sup> General Election. Staff has finalized dates for four (4) public income tax meetings which have been added to the calendar below and on the City calendar. We will also continue to advertise via social media.

Also, staff has made multiple presentations to the Greater Sandusky Partnership (GSP) to discuss the proposed income tax increase, its necessity and benefits to Huron and Broader region. Presentations have been made to both their Governance Committee and the entire Board. Based on this, the Board of GSP has unanimously endorsed the proposed income tax increase which will be on the November ballot.

**2023 Financial Audit:** The onsite portion of the 2023 audit was completed this month and we are awaiting official release of the audit from the Auditor of State.

**2025 Budget:** We are in the beginning stages of the 2025 budget process and have completed initial meetings with all departments and will continue regular meetings through the early fall.

**August Financials:** [https://stories.opengov.com/huronoh/published/p6r1Pp5\\_v](https://stories.opengov.com/huronoh/published/p6r1Pp5_v)

## WATER DEPARTMENT

### Recent Activity:

**Lead Service Lines:** Distribution staff has completed investigating meter pits for service line material and entering them into the GIS database. The lead service line inventory is due to the OEPA by October 16th. Staff discovered one lead service lines which was on the customer side. They were informed of this discovery.

**Hydrant Flushing:** Distribution staff will start flushing next week. Updates will be posted on social media.

### Active Project Updates:

**Alternate Intake/Sludge Lagoon:** Boring samples were completed at the tower site on 5/13, and the river intake site was completed on 5/14. Electrical engineers have also been onsite to assess utility needs and availability for both sites. Due to timing constraints, it is being advised that a low-interest loan from OWDA will be the best option for funding the balance of the water tower project.

**West Side Water Tower:** The City accepted a proposal from Kleinfelder on January 12, 2024, in the amount of \$132,250 for design and bidding services. On June 16<sup>th</sup>, The City was awarded \$5M from Governor DeWine's Ohio BUILDS water and wastewater infrastructure grant program. This is the largest allowable grant in the State of Ohio, and we believe it to be the largest single grant the City of Huron has ever received. We are thankful to our State and Local partners that help make projects like this possible. Surveying has been completed for the water tower site. Boring samples have been taken and the Ardagh site has been deemed as a good site. Staff are working with Ardagh on site access and acquisition. Kleinfelder has provided renderings of the new water tower.

**Plant Re-Rating:** Kleinfelder has applied to the EPA on behalf of the City for a plant rerating of 5.5 MGD; Approval from the EPA is still pending, and the Water Superintendent has notified the Ohio EPA of this urgency. The EPA indicated on 5/3/24 that the city should receive a response in the coming weeks. No further correspondence from EPA Plan Review has been received at this time. The Northwest District office indicated that the city will not receive violation at this time for producing beyond 3.4 MGD. This is because the rerating application is in review. The WFP did exceed our current rating on 6/17/24 as 3.455 MG of water was produced that day. The EPA was notified.

## STREETS DEPARTMENT

**Radar Speed Signs:** The radar speed signs have been moved from Strowbridge Drive to Adams Avenue.

**Street Signs:** Staff have updated all street name signs in the Rye Beach neighborhood.

**Crosswalk/Stop Bar Painting:** Staff have completed painting of stop bars and crosswalks in the Rye Beach, Wexford, and Village Green areas.

**GIS Mapping:** The Streets Department continues with GIS mapping/updating of catch basin, manholes and storm lines. The east side of town has been completed.

## PERSONNEL

**Union Negotiations:** The City will be commencing bargaining unit negotiations during this week. All four (4) bargaining unit agreements are set to expire at the end of the year.

**Clerk of Council:** Reminder that Terri Welkener began medical leave on September 19<sup>th</sup>. Worst case scenario, she will be out through Christmas but may return sooner. In the interim, Jen Kilbury will be assuming most of Terri's responsibilities and has been appointed acting Clerk of Council.

**Police Department Update:** Regrettably, Det. Ian Foos has submitted his resignation from the police department effective 09/20/2024 as he has accepted a position as a Special Agent with the United States Secret Service. The police department is honored to have one of our officers represented in such a prestigious and respected organization. Out of over 27,000 applications, the Secret Service selected the best 200 candidates. The advertisement and hiring process for a new officer will begin very soon.

**Planning Director:** The city has put a hold on hiring a full-time planning director. We do believe strongly that additional manpower is still needed in that department, but we are evaluating the best method to staff that department moving forward. I do want to recognize and comment Christine Gibboney and Alec Romick for their remarkable work while down a staff person.



## AGREEMENTS/CITY MANAGER APPROVALS

N/A

## PROJECTS OUT FOR BID

N/A

## CONTRACTS

- Emergency Services Agreement with Huron Township (Res 68-2021) – Expires **12/31/24** **The City is in conversations with Huron Township to do a simple 1-year extension of the existing agreement with all terms remaining the same. Our Law Department has drafted a first amendment to the agreement which is being viewed internally prior to sending to the Township for their review.**
- HJRD Annual Agreement (Res 51-2024) – Expires **12/31/24.**
- Dispatch Agreement – Erie County Sheriff (Res 71-2023) – Expires **12/31/24.**
- City Prosecutor Employment Agreement (Res 86-2024)– expires **12/31/24.**
- Personnel Officer Employment Agreement (Res 85-2023) – expires **12/31/24.**
- OHM Advisors (Res 2-2024 Engineering) – Expires **12/31/24.**
- IAFF Collective Bargaining Agreement (Res 47-2021) – Expires **12/31/24.**
- FOP-Sergeants Collective Bargaining Agreement (Res 2020-79) – Expires **12/31/24.**
- FOP – Patrol Officers Collective Bargaining Agreement (Res 2020-79) – Expires **12/31/24.**
- AFSCME Collective Bargaining Agreement (Res 48-2024) – Expires **12/31/24.**
- Erie Soil and Water Conservation District (Res 3-2023 Engineering) – Expires **1/31/25.**
- Seeley, Savidge, Ebert & Gourash Co., LLP (Res 47-2024) – Expires **6/3/25**
- Dynegy Electric Aggregation Agreement (Res 29-2023) – Expires **7/30/25.**
- Dynegy Electric Standard Large Stable Service Agreement (Res 54-2023) – Expires **08/2025.**
- Building Official – Service Agreement (Res 43-2021) - Expires **7/25/2026**
- School Resource Officer (Res 32–2024 & Res 33-2024) – Expires **8/31/26.**
- Republic Services (Res 44-2023) – Expires **12/31/26.**

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### September Meetings:

- Council Work Session – Tuesday, September 24<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm in Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday, September 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.
- Huron Joint Port Authority – Wednesday, September 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm at Huron Township Hall.

### October Meetings:

- Huron Joint Rec. District – Tuesday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.
- Joint Council Work Session – Tuesday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30pm in Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.
- Income Tax Public Meeting – Wednesday, October 9<sup>th</sup>, at 6 PM at the Huron Boat Basin
- Huron Pumpkin Fest – Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 11 AM to 5 PM at the Huron Boat Basin
  - The Actual Pumpkin Drop will take place at 2:30 PM
- Building & Zoning Appeals Meeting - Monday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, in Council Chambers
- Income Tax Public Meeting – Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, at 6 PM at the Huron Library
- Planning Commission – Wednesday, Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>, at 5 PM in Council Chambers
- Finance Committee – Monday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, at 4 PM in Council Chambers
- Council Meeting – Tuesday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, at 6:30 Pm in Council Chambers
- Income Tax Public Meeting – Wednesday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, at 6 PM at the Huron Boat Basin
- Finance Committee – Monday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, at 4 PM in Council Chambers
- Income Tax Public Meeting – Tuesday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 PM at the Huron Library
- Trick or Treat – Thursday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, at 5 PM