



CITY OF HURON
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

May 24, 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. The city anticipates doing one more round of conversations – this time focused more on the business points, and what each team may be seeking from the city to develop the site.

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.

Oster's: The City contracted with Barnes Nursery to undertake road removal, final tree and stump clearing and grading and seeding. To date, all three roadways throughout the park have been removed, multiple stumps and dead/decaying trees and final grading and seeding has been completed.

Firelands Scientific: At the February meeting of the Planning Commission, plans were approved for two (2) expansions at the facility. First an approximate 15,000 square foot cultivation addition was approved which will consist of four (4) new smaller greenhouses and secondly a nearly 3,000 square foot addition was approved which will allow for increased lab space. We anticipate construction to occur this year. We are very appreciative of the company's continued investment in their facility and commitment to Huron.

Humanetics: As a follow up to a press release circulated to Council earlier, we wanted to recognize and thank Humanetics for 15 years of operations in the City of Huron. The 45,000 square foot facility in the Huron Corporate Park employs 120 individuals. To celebrate this achievement the Company recently raised a billboard on Rt. 2 (near Rye Beach Road) to remind the community that the safety design of every vehicle in the world has been tested with a crash test dummy originating from Huron and these devices have saved million of lives. And we all should be very proud of that. So, thank you again to Humanetics for their commitment to Huron but more importantly the work they are doing to keep every driver and passenger safe.

INFRASTRUCTURE/STREETS/UTILITIES/IT

Rt 6 Phase II: Staff finally received a letter of intent from the Ohio Department of Transportation to allow a 100ft LA Break adjacent to Liberty Ave on Rt6. This break will allow the city to move ahead with planning and resident engagement for a proposed roundabout on Rt6 at Liberty Ave. This project would also close Jim Campbell Blvd at Center St, remove the unwarranted light at Center and Rt6 and add a multi-modal pathway on Jim Campbell. The roundabout will take Rt6

from a two-lane road down to single lane road east of the walk-bridge, slowing traffic coming into town.

A scope meeting with our preferred designer, TranSystems was held during the week of February 19th. Staff will be working with the firm over the next few weeks to present a design proposal to the Council for consideration.

Staff also met with representatives of Shores and Islands, Ohio to request funding for a public art installation within or around the proposed roundabout. This funding would allow for gateway signage denoting both Huron and the broader Shores and Islands region.

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.

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. We expect this project to be closed out in the next few weeks.

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.

Pavement Condition and 2023+ Resurfacing: Bids closed for this project and DL Smith Concrete LLC were the lowest and best at a construction cost of \$2,148,655.30. Preliminary construction schedule will be from the beginning of April to mid-June and will be firmed up in the next few weeks.

Work is ongoing on this project. Many areas in Chaska have already been addressed with new concrete and curbing poured. The contractor is finishing up in Chaska and has started in Old Homestead. The expected completion date (weather dependent) is still June 21st.

South Main Street Streetscape Design and Engineering: A scope meeting with our preferred designer, OHM Advisors, was held during the week of February 12th. Staff will be working with the firm over the next few weeks to present a design proposal to the Council for consideration.

A kickoff meeting was held May 9th with OHM Advisors to verify scope and work on estimated project schedule. Currently, we expect to be finished with design and ready to go out to bid in spring of 2025.

South Main St Watermain Replacement Project: This project was advertised December 14th, and bids were received on February 15th, 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.

Construction on this project has started, working from the southern City limits on Huron Avery, northeastward. This project will require road closures to enable new waterline installations. These road closures will be kept to a minimum as much as possible.

Mudbrook Road was made a one lane road, starting the week of May 20th and will last approximately 60 days, from Rivers Edge south. We will maintain single lane traffic for as long as possible before performing a full closure. Once any full closure takes place, access will be maintained for Emergency vehicles, trash, school buses and local traffic access. The detour will be via Bogart west, Rye Beach south, and Sheid east.

Bike Lane Repainting: This project went out to bid on April 24th, 2023, and closed May 11th, 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.

US 6 Connectivity Corridor: ODOT held a public information open house on March 28th from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at BGSU Firelands (Cedar Point Center Auditorium) for folks to learn more about the project and ask questions. The project was very well attended by the public. Reminder, there is a 30-day virtual option for folks to still learn about the project which will is open now – April 28th. If interested in this option, you are encouraged to visit publicinput.com/USR6.

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 12th meeting. There was also a purchase of switchgear before Council for \$58,700, bringing the project cost to a total of \$428,570.

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.

ZONING/CODE/PLANNING

Coastal Management Assistance Grants: The City received six (6) proposals for conceptual design work and selected to negotiate a design contract with OHM Advisors after interviewing three (3) finalists. A scope meeting occurred during the week of February 19th, and the Council will consider approving a design proposal for \$67,000 at the April 9th, 2024, regular Council meeting. This plan will look to suggest potential upgrades to the former Showboat property along with enhancing connectivity and accessibility between the Showboat property, through Lakefront Park and to the beach behind the water plant. This project is funded on a 50/50 split, with a maximum grant amount from ODNR of \$35,000.

A kickoff meeting was held with OHM Advisors on May 9th to discuss scope and project timeline. We expect to have this project completed by the end of 2024 or shortly thereafter.

Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area: As part of the main street/downtown plan – we heard from many folks about the desire to have a designated outdoor refreshment area, also referred to as a DORA, in Huron. DORA's are governed by the State of Ohio and have recently been approved in Sandusky, Milan, and Port Clinton. Staff have met internally to begin discussing the possibility of such an area within the city and begin to understand the potential safety and operational challenges of such a district. We are still very early on in the process and ultimately, if moving forward, will be subject to significant public and stakeholder feedback.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Anchor Memorial Public Art Dedication:

SAVE THE DATE! The Anchor Memorial Public Art Dedication & Celebration will be held on **Friday, May 31st at 1:00pm** at the Huron Boat Basin & Amphitheater, details to follow.



Lake Front Market – Sunset Sip & Shop:



SAVE THE DATE! The Huron Chamber of Commerce Lake Front Market – Sunset Sip & Shop event will be held on Friday, June 7th from 5-9pm, and on Saturday, June 8th from 10am-8pm at Lake Front Park, details to follow.

State Capital Budget: The City submitted State Capital budget requests for during the week of April 1st 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.

Berlin Road Park: The City recently approved a contract with DL Smith Concrete to install a larger, and better delineated parking area at the park. This work will widen the entrance, expand the gravel surface with proper base and significantly enlarge the parking area in the southeast portion of the site. The work is just under \$20,000 and was included in the 2024 budget. This is one of two upgrades we hope to make at the park this year – the second being the purchase and installation of floating dock systems on the pond.

The Courts at Fabens Park: A Big thank you to the Parks and Recreation Department and Jen Kilbury for organizing the ribbon cutting even last week. We had a great turnout and beautiful weather for the event. Another big thank you to the project funders including Huron, Huron Township, and the Huron Joint Recreation District.

Amphitheater Canopy Grant Funds: The Parks & Recreation Department has been awarded an Erie Metroparks Local Improvement Grant in an amount sufficient to replace the canopy at the Boat Basin Amphitheater. Application for this grant made in April 2024.

SAFETY SERVICES

Flock LPR Cameras: With over ½ million license plate reads since February, the Flock system continues to be an asset for the police department with investigations. Just this week, the police department solved a hit/skip accident investigation with assistance of the Flock system.

Amber Alert Training: The Huron Police Department will be hosting an Amber Alert training on "Search & Canvass" at Sawmill Creek on May 15th and 16th. There are over 62 officers from around the country registered including Alaska. There are many local officers attending including seven officers from the Huron Police Department.

Officer Training: Several officers attended training this month on the following topics: self-aid/buddy-aid, testifying in court, critical incident leadership, railroad crash investigation, bombs & explosives, crisis intervention, and canine legal update. Sgt. John Orzech graduates from a 3-week advanced leadership course (Supervisory Training & Education Program – STEP) on May 22nd.

FINANCE

April 2024 Financial Report: The April financial report is linked below. Through the end of April, the City's income tax revenue is 1% higher than YTD April of 2023. The unencumbered balance in the General Fund is \$1.8 million, or 27% of annual expenditures. This balance will be reduced by \$400,000 in May due to second quarter cash transfers out of the General Fund to pension, debt, and capital funds. We will continue to closely monitor the income tax collections and General Fund performance for any negative revenue trends or unanticipated increases in expenditures.

[April Report](#)

Income Tax: Staff recently concluded its four (4) public meetings regarding a potential income tax increase. We have one more meeting scheduled with a local HOA in June and continue to be willing to meet with any person or organization moving forward. The Finance Committee, who met on May 14th, did unanimously approve the staff recommendation for how to structure a proposed increase. This topic will be revisited in late June as Council will be holding a public hearing on June 25th.

WATER DEPARTMENT

Recent Activity:

Backflow Tracking Software: The Water Department has entered into a contract with Backflow Solutions Inc. (BSI) to manage backflow tracking and reporting. This is essential to keep customers and the city compliant with OEPA regulations.

Sludge Retention Dikes: Smith Paving has been given a notice to proceed with the removal of the south sludge retention dike at the WFP. This work will take less than a week to complete and will be scheduled prior to June 2024.

Water Plant Production Record: The water plant recorded its highest single month of water production, setting a record of 85.301MG. The Water Superintendent has been in contact with the Ohio EPA regarding the urgency of the plant rerating.

Sodium Permanganate Feed System: The new sodium permanganate feed system has been installed and is operational. This work took approximately 28 hours to complete, and the chemical was not able to be fed during that time. Raw water quality was favorable, and no treatment issues resulted from this shutdown. A quote is being procured from Firelands Electric to wire these pumps to the PLC/scada system. PAC Engineering will provide a quote for programming. The goal is to have this chemical controlled from scada, flow-paced, and display chemical weights on scada, as well.

Backflow Management: A new backflow management solution went live with Backflow Solutions Inc. (BSI) on 5/1/24. All backflow reports from contractors are being submitted and monitored online through BSI. An automated backflow survey will be issued to necessary customers in the coming weeks.

Sludge Retention Dikes: Smith Paving has begun removal of the south retention dike. Work is expected to be completed by May 28, 2024. The crew has done an excellent job thus far.

Water Plant Open House: The plant is planning to host an Open House/tour on Tuesday, June 18th, 2024, at 6:30PM. This will be on a first-come basis, maxing out at 20 residents. Depending on the responses, a second open house will be organized. This event was advertised on the City's Facebook page on May 22nd.

Northwest Ohio American Waterworks Association: The City of Huron will be hosting the Northwest Ohio American Waterworks Association summer meeting on Thursday, June 20, 2024. The meeting will be held at Mesenberg's with a plant tour to follow at the Water Filtration Plant.

Active Project Updates:

Alternate Intake/Sludge Lagoon: The City accepted a proposal from Kleinfelder on January 12, 2024, in the amount of \$344,840 for design, bid and administration services. Staff met with Lead Engineer, Tom Borck, on January 17, 2024, to discuss this project in depth. The sludge lagoon rehab scope was identified with Kleinfelder, as well. A grant/loan combination was applied for through OPWC for an amount not to exceed \$262,500. Surveying has been completed.

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 only 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 16th, 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 are the next step. 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.

S. Main Street Water Line Replacement Project: Boring work began on Monday, 5/6 and pipe was being installed on Tuesday, 5/7. The roadway on S. Main St. is still open but is reduced to one lane currently. The contractor has neared completion of installation on Main Street and will be shifting towards Mudbrook. The watermain on Main St. will be dechlorinated and pressure tested. Once negative bacteriological samples are returned, the contractor will have a separate crew onsite to begin tap work for each residence on Main St. This work will be concurrent with installing a watermain on Mudbrook. A full closure of this intersection is expected within the next 2-3 weeks. A low-interest loan (3.37%) will be applied for from OWDA with a repayment term of 20 years.

STREETS DEPARTMENT

Troy Halstead: Troy Halstead has completed and passed all state exams and now has his CDL license. Congrats to him!

1234 Marina Drive: The culvert installation at 1234 Marina Drive has been completed.

Catch Basin Repair: Repair of the catch basin at Gumwood/Maple Avenue has been completed.

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

Planning Director: The city continues to receive applications and undertake interviews for this position.

Finance Director: The city continues to receive applications and undertake interviews for this position. In the interim, the city does intend to enter into a consultant contract with Mr. Swaisgood to continue to assist the finance department operations until the full-time position is filled.

Zoning Inspector: After interviewing several applicants, Huron resident, Alec Romick was offered the position of Zoning Inspector. Mr. Romick will be starting with us on June 3, 2024. Alec comes to us with 20+ years of project and customer service experience at Barnes Nursery, as well as independent construction projects.

Charter Review Commission: On Thursday May 23rd, the Charter Review Commission completed its initial review of the Charter and list of proposed changes to send to Council. The Chairman of the Commission as well as the other members of the Commission will be attending our June 11th Council meeting to present their proposed changes and explain their reasoning behind each proposal. A reminder to the Council that you can accept all, some, or none of the proposals to put on the ballot in November. A huge thank you to all the members of the Charter Review Commission who dedicated their time to this cause and for executing their job with thoroughness.

AGREEMENTS

LPA Federal Local-LET Project Agreement: The City has entered into an LPA Federal Local-Let Project Agreement with ODOT for the sidewalk and crosswalk improvements at Forest Hills and Valley View Drive along SR 13. This agreement is required when federal funding is used by local public agencies. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has designated ODOT as the agency in Ohio to administer FHWA's federal funding programs. This agreement sets forth requirements associated with the federal funds available for the Project and to establish the responsibilities for the local administration of the Project.

PROJECTS OUT FOR BID

N/A

CONTRACTS

- Seeley, Savidge, Ebert & Gourash Co., LLP (Law) – Expires 6/3/24 (on the current agenda).
- HJRD Annual Agreement (Recreation) - Expires 12/31/23.
- Dispatch Agreement – Erie County Sheriff – Expires 12/31/24.
- City Prosecutor Employment Agreement – expires 12/31/24.
- Personnel Officer Employment Agreement – expires 12/31/24.
- OHM Advisors (Engineering) – Expires 12/31/24.
- Erie Soil and Water Conservation District (Engineering) – Expires 1/31/25.
- Dynegy Electric Aggregation Agreement – expires 7/30/25.
- Dynegy Electric Standard Large Stable Service Agreement – expires 08/2025.
- Building Official – Service Agreement - Expires 7/25/2026
- School Resource Officer – Expires 8/31/26.
- Republic Services – Expires 12/31/26.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

June Meetings:

- Utilities Committee – Wednesday, June 5th at 5:00pm in the main conference room.
- BZA – Monday, June 10th at 5:30pm in Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday, June 11th at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.
- Council Work Session on ConAgra Development – Tuesday, June 25th at 5:30pm in Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday, June 25th at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.
- Public Hearing on Tax Budget for Fiscal Year 2025 – Tuesday, June 25th at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.
- Public Hearing on Firelands Scientific's Petition to rescind Ordinance 1121.08 and update other sections of the Huron Codified Ordinances to align with ORC Chapter 3780 – Tuesday June 25th at 6:30 in the Council Chambers.
- Public Hearing on proposed revisions to Chapter 185 relating to local income tax – Tuesday, June 25th at 6:30p, in the Council Chambers.
- Planning Commission – Wednesday, June 26th at 5:00pm in Council Chambers.

REMINDER: City offices will be closed on June 19th in observance of Juneteenth.

- **SAVE THE DATE:** The Huron Public Library will be celebrating the completed renovation of the Children & Teen Area with a ribbon cutting on Friday, June 21st at 12pm. Musician Zak Morgan will kick off the celebration with a concert at 11am.

- A huge thank you as well to all the city departments and outside organizations that participated in another successful Water Safety Day last week.