



CITY OF HURON  
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

May 7, 2021

Matthew Lasko, City Manager

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Ardagh:** The Planning Commission approved the site plan for all 3 phases of future development of Ardagh. The Design Review Board approved phase 1, with a broader design package anticipated for phases 2 and 3. Phase 2 and 3, which is the major addition, is contingent upon a vacation of ROW request from the developer to the City. They have requested, and we have begun evaluating, a request to vacate roughly 350-450 ft. of Sawmill Parkway. This will ultimately require review and approval of Council. In addition, the City is exploring the installation of a cul-de-sac at the end of the Parkway for emergency vehicle purposes.

From a construction standpoint, site clearance has commenced on the additional seventy (70) acres of land along with removal of western portions of the parking lots in front of the existing loading docks.

The City also is in receipt of a Community Reinvestment Area tax abatement request which is currently being reviewed for completeness. Upon verification of completeness, the request will be considered by the Tax Incentive Review Council.

**USGS/Harbor North:** The Design Review Board officially approved the design and landscape package for the new USGS facility. Anticipated completion date is still slated for early to mid-summer 2021.

**Stride Mobility:** The company continues to move forward with construction activities on its new facility on Sawmill Parkway. Construction is on schedule and is anticipated to be completed in the upcoming months. Their ribbon cutting celebration is scheduled for September 2nd.

**ConAgra:** On May 6, the City officially released the Request for Qualifications and Preliminary Development Proposals (collectively referred to as the "RFP") for ConAgra. Responses are due to the City no later than 5:00 p.m. on June 21. Upon receipt, the City will move forward with a selection process that will include internal team review and scoring of proposals and developer qualifications, development team interviews, and also public/council presentations with either a proposed finalist or group of finalists. The City hopes to identify a chosen development partner in late summer or very early Fall.

## INFRASTRUCTURE/STREETS/UTILITIES

**Cleveland Road Street Lighting:** Advertisement for bids will be published in the Sandusky Register on May 10th and 17th, with the pre-bid meeting to be held on May 18th and bid opening on May 27th. Once allowing time for ordering and delivery of light poles, work is estimated to commence in late summer.

**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 19<sup>th</sup>, 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 anticipates fully executing grant paperwork in the upcoming weeks.
- 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.

**Pump Station and Force Main Project:** The construction component of the Erie County force main project that has been ongoing along Cleveland Road/Route 6 is substantially completed. Contractors have begun the restoration phase of the project including but not limited to, grading, and seeding, concrete walk repair, drive apron repair, etc...The timing of this project has resulted in a delay to the City and its engineers completing the Route 6 Phase 1 punch-list walkthrough. This will be completed as soon as the County's contractors have completing their restoration to any disturbed areas.

**Speed Limit Radar Signs:** Radar signs for the High School and McCormick Junior High, as well as beacons for Shawnee, are awaiting delivery and installation. We are expecting this to occur any day.

#### **Route 6 Phase I/II:**

- OHM Continues to collect traffic study data on the road diet striping plan and will continue to do so through mid-summer. Based on this data, coupled with community feedback, it is anticipated a decision will be made on the final striping plan shortly thereafter in hopes of completing final striping in September.
- OHM continues to develop renderings of what formalized bike lanes could look in a final striping plan along with instruction on how to utilize the bike lanes appropriately.
- The City will be restriping the temporary roadway markings in the next week or two to ensure their visibility through the summer in advance of final decided upon pavement markings in early fall.
- OHM continues to collect data on Route 6 Phase II.

## ZONING/CODE/PLANNING

**Masterplan Update and Visioning:** The City and Council have completed two (2) work sessions to develop a revised vision for the City along with a series of decision-making principles and goals that should guide project priorities over the next 3-5 years. Staff is currently in the process of evaluating capital projects and initiatives to present to Council (in line with the previously developed goals) initially at a work session on May 25. Ultimately staff will be looking to present to Council an update of the masterplan for consideration and eventual adoption in late June or early July.

**Grass and Weeds:** Staff in conjunction with the legal department are recommending modifications to the current grass and weed maintenance regulations to streamline and strengthen enforcement actions. These changes include reducing the amount of time for an owner to abate the issue, adding additional notice methodologies, and increasing penalties for additional infractions.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

**Fish Cleaning Station:** Staff is working with engineering and ODNR officials on a potential agreement for a fish cleaning station that would come before Council. One of the next steps will be working with the Erie County Sewer District to determine how to handle waste. ODNR is working on a preliminary draft for review.

**Safety Town:** The City has started taking reservations for Safety Town. This year, Safety Town is divided into two sessions to allow us to serve children entering Kindergarten and 1st Grade who missed last year during the pandemic. Safety Town will be held at Shawnee Elementary June 14-17 and June 21-24. Registrations for "extended camp" are full for the first session and are limited for the second session.

## FINANCE

**Permissive Tax Enhancement:** Vehicle registration permissive tax is a tax that can be levied by counties, municipalities, and/or townships on vehicle registrations. It is defined in Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Chapter 4504: Local Motor Vehicle License Tax. There are five \$5.00 levies available to municipalities. The City must pass legislation for each levy to become effective. Currently, the City is collecting \$20 per license registration, or four levies. The Ohio Revised Code allows for the City to collect up to \$25 per registration, or five levies, as of July 2019. Permissible uses of the permissive tax, per ORC Chapter 4504, include planning, constructing, improving, maintaining, and repairing public roads, highways, streets, and for the maintaining and repair of bridges and viaducts.

The City collects approximately \$160,000 per year of permissive tax revenue. See table below. The revenue is accounted for in the City's Street Maintenance Fund (Fund 212). The additional \$5 per license levy is expected to generate approximately \$30,000 to \$40,000 more in revenue for the purposes listed above in accordance with ORC Chapter 4504. Specifically, this additional revenue is expected to offset the financial burden of paving and repairing City streets in critical condition. The City cannot rely on the annual revenue collected ([click here for revenue history](#)) to meet timely demands of repairing and paving City streets. Although the City's General Fund is expected to carry most of the financial burden in repairing and paving City streets, the additional \$5 tax will help offset a portion of the General Fund's share. In review of the statewide permissive tax, three local municipalities in Ottawa County are currently at the maximum allowed tax of \$25. The higher populated counties in Ohio assess this tax at \$25, such as municipalities in Cuyahoga County.

The additional permissive tax levy will be presented and discussed at the Finance Committee meeting on Monday, May 10.

**American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA):** The \$1.9 trillion bill was approved and signed into law on March 11. The City is estimated to receive approximately \$1.35 million. Here is what we know as of April 22nd:

- The State is expected to receive the funds in May and has 60 days to disburse funds to the local governments. 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 use these 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.
- Official U.S. Treasury guidance has not been released on permissible uses. Although the bill generally defined allowable uses for the funds (e.g., revenue loss and economic assistance), Treasury guidance will provide a better roadmap for the City as a local ARP strategy will be developed. The Office of Budget and Management is hosting a spring webinar series that began on April 29<sup>th</sup> to provide more information on ARPA. No additional information was available during that webinar.

Staff will keep the finance committee and council apprised of Huron's final allocation, along with a listing of eligible uses when official guidance is released.

## WATER DEPARTMENT

### Active Projects:

- New Employee Hired – Alex Hoyt starts on May 10<sup>th</sup> which will permit the water plant to convert to 24/7 operation once the new hire is fully trained.
- Filtration Plant pipe repainting project underway – currently on filter gallery.
- Repaired majority of road surfaces disrupted by water main breaks.
- Engineering completed for tube settler/building.
- Tube Settler/Building to be advertised 5/5 and 5/12 with bids due in the upcoming weeks.
- Rye Beach water tower repair currently underway and expected to be back in service on May 7<sup>th</sup>.
- Sedimentation Basin #5 rake system repaired in-house vs. \$10,000 to Kirk Brothers for the same repair. Basin is fully operations and back in service.
- Completing new construction water service taps for spring construction projects.

## STREETS DEPARTMENT

**Northport Lane Signage:** The speed limit and no parking signs have been installed on North Port Lane.

**New Equipment:** New 72" John Deere ZTrac mower has been delivered.

**Radar Speed Signs:** Radar speed signs have been relocated back to Laguna Drive.

## PERSONNEL

**Water Plant – Maintenance Worker III:** Alex Hoyt starts work on May 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Huron Police Department:** Conditional offers have been extended to two (2) candidates. Currently, both individuals are in the process of completing pre-employment psychological and physical exams and hope to join the police force in the upcoming weeks.

## 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)
- Prosecutor (Court) - **Completed**
- HJRD Annual Agreement (Recreation) – **Completed.**
- 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 to have a better understanding of any COVID related impacts (or lack thereof) to the City's budget.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### May

**Finance Committee:** Monday, May 10, 2021 at 5:00pm in the Main Conference Room.

**BZA:** Monday, May 10, 2021 at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.

**Council Meeting:** Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.

**Extended Council Work Session:** Tuesday, May 25, 2021 from 5:00pm to 6:30pm in Council Chambers.

**Council Meeting:** Tuesday, May 25, 2021 at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.

**Planning Commission/Design Review Board:** Wednesday, May 26, 2021 at 5:00pm in Council Chambers.