



CITY OF HURON  
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

December 6, 2024

Matthew Lasko, City Manager

## ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**ConAgra:** All pertinent documents have been sent to the development team which include drafts of a LOI, Development Agreement, Purchase Agreement, Mortgage and Promissory note. The LOI is set to be legislated at our November 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. Additionally, we anticipate KS & Associates to begin surveying work for the seawall reconstruction in December of this year.

The City is finalizing the process with ODNR to formally dedicate a portion of the ODNR boat launch property as public right of way – the preliminary dedication plat has been sent to Erie County for review and will be legislated by Council and signed in the next few weeks. As part of the plat, the City is providing a temporary name for the new roadway for purposes of getting the plat recorded as possible – which will be simply “Access Street.” Ultimately the new public roadway will need a permanent name, and the staff is proposing calling it River Road as a continuation of the existing River Road – south of Rt. 6 – similarly to how we treat Berlin Road.

Finally, the City is putting the finishing touches on a joint easement agreement with ODNR which will permit the City temporary construction easements outside of the formal roadway while also providing ODNR an access easement for the property that is being dedicated as public right of way to ensure people have perpetual access to the boat launch.

**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 an 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 with 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.

**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. The punch list has been completed and all associated work has been completed. Staff are working with contractors and OHM to complete the project close out.

**South Main Street Streetscape Design and Engineering:** Staff continue 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:** Construction of this project is now substantially complete. There was a final walkthrough on November 18<sup>th</sup> and a final punch list was developed prior to officially closing out the project.

**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 on December 2nd. We expect this project to take less than a month finally allowing HPP to continue expansion efforts to bring affordable and reliable electricity to businesses.

**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:** We expect to have this project completed by the end of 2024 or shortly thereafter. The survey has closed, and we received over 300 responses to the concept ideas. Staff will be meeting with OHM over the next few weeks to determine if any alterations to the original concept plans are needed based upon feedback. We want to thank all the individuals who shared feedback and comments during the survey process.

**Light Trespass:** The law department has completed an initial draft to address light trespass on residential buildings. The Planning Commission has reviewed and recommended this legislation be forwarded on to Council. We plan to introduce this legislation to Council at the December 18<sup>th</sup> meeting for its first reading.

**Race Permits:** The City, very similarly to what is required for parades, is exploring a similar permitting process for races (such as 5k's). Based on recent feedback from streets and police departments, it is critical that the City, minimally, understand the proposed race route, staging areas if any and times of race to ensure proper road/intersection closures and is properly staffed from a safety service standpoint.

**802 Williams Street:** As a follow up to a previous email, the City will no longer be exploring donation of this property. The property owner decided to sell the property instead – which occurred in late November. The property is currently in the process of being renovated. As such, the City has notified the Erie County Land Reutilization Corporation that the previous financial commitment of \$20,000 is no longer needed.

## 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 Berlin Road Park. Staff have 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.

**Ring-the-Bell for the Huron Salvation Army:** Members of the Police Department participated in the "Ring-the-Bell" for the Huron Salvation Army in front of Cornell's Food on Tuesday, November 26, 2024.

## FINANCE

**2025 Budget:** Finance committee meetings concluded on Monday November 25<sup>th</sup>. The Finance Committee unanimously recommended the budget be sent to Council as presented which will be considered at the December 18<sup>th</sup> meeting following a public hearing.

**Income Tax:** Income tax receipts, although still down compared to 2024, are improving. Receipts are down approximately 4.5% compared to last year which is an improvement to the -7-8% we were sitting at in mid-Fall.

**Ohio House Bill 296:** Staff are paying close attention to House Bill 296. The bill would increase employer contributions to the Ohio Police & Fire Pension – specific to police officer. If approved, contributions would increase from 19.5% to 24% over a 6-year period. The bill has already been approved by the house and is moving to the senate. Countless municipalities as well as the Ohio Municipal League have come out against the bill's passage due to the major financial constraints this will place on municipalities.

## WATER DEPARTMENT

### Recent Activity:

- Erie County usage has decreased significantly, but is on par with October 2023 usage of 45.185 MG. However, judging by their usage for the last week of October, it appears they are trying to slow down to stay within their max average daily usage for the year of 1.699 MGD per the contract. I would expect usage for November and December to each approximately be 40 MG or 53,475 CCF, which equates to an estimated bill of \$63,100.50 per month.
- A full sanitary survey was conducted by the Ohio EPA at the WFP on 10/23/24. The city received zero violations and 13 recommendations. Many of these have already been completed. Thank you to all Water Department staff for all their hard work and dedication!
- Distribution staff continue annual hydrant flushing and valve exercising. Updates will be provided to the public via Facebook. Staff are currently flushing in the Old Plat and will continue to move to the south and east.

**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 was due to the OEPA by October 16th. Staff discovered one lead service line which was on the customer side. They were informed of this discovery.

**Staff Updates:** Congratulations to Kyle Capodice for passing his Water Supply 1 examination!

### 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. An extension was granted to commit funds for the \$5M grant from the Department of Development. The project must be awarded by 6/30/25 and construction must be completed by 8/1/26. Kleinfelder estimated the project will be completed by 5/31/26.

**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.

The EPA issued a response on 10/11/24 that included requests for additional information. This will be reviewed by the Water Superintendent and Kleinfelder. The Water Superintendent provided answers to questions from the EPA and returned this document to Kleinfelder on 10/30/24. This will be resubmitted to the Ohio EPA as soon as possible after being reviewed by Kleinfelder

## STREETS DEPARTMENT

**Radar Speed Signs:** The radar speed signs have been moved from Adams Avenue to Buckeye and Deerwood.

**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 has commenced bargaining unit negotiations. Multiple meetings have been held with all four (4) bargaining units. Status of each:

- Patrol Officers voted to approve the contract and will be considered at the December 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- Sergeants voted to approve the contract and will be considered at the December 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- AFCSME reps have tentatively agreed to approve contract. Vote of membership to occur during the week of December 9<sup>th</sup>.
- IAFF – negotiations are ongoing although sides are reviewing final proposed agreements.

## AGREEMENTS/CITY MANAGER APPROVALS

**ODOD First Amendment to Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Program Grant Agreement:** A City Administration entered into a First Amendment to Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Program Grant Agreement to extend the expiration date for the \$5 Million grant obtained for construction of the new 2 million Gallow Water Tower to June 30, 2025.

## PROJECTS OUT FOR BID

**HPP Substation Switchgear Procurement:** A Request for Bids was posted on December 4, 2024, for the HPP new substation switchgear procurement. The last day for questions is December 30, 2024, and the bids are due on January 6, 2025, at 2:00pm.

## CONTRACTS

- HJRD Annual Agreement (Res 51-2024) – **Expires 12/31/24.**
- Dispatch Agreement – Erie County Sheriff (Res 71-2023) – **Expires 12/31/24.**
  - **To be considered at the December 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Council.**
- 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.**
- Emergency Services Agreement with Huron Township (Res 85-2024) – **Expires 12/31/2025.**
- OHM Advisors (Res 95-2024 Engineering) – **Expires 12/31/24.**
  - To be considered at the December 10<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.
- 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.**
- City Prosecutor Employment Agreement (Res 79-2024)– expires **12/31/26.**
- Personnel Officer Employment Agreement (Res 78-2024) – expires **12/31/26.**

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### December Meetings:

- Finance Committee Meeting – Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm in Council Chambers
- City Council Meeting - Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM in Council Chambers
- Planning Commission Meeting – Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm in Council Chambers
- City Council Meeting – Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm in Council Chambers

## REMINDER:

City offices will be closed on the following dates:

December 24, 2024 – closing at 12:00pm (1/2 day)  
December 25, 2024 – closed  
December 31, 2024 – closing at 12:00pm (1/2 day)  
January 1, 2024 - closed