



CITY OF HURON
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

January 24, 2025

Matthew Lasko, City Manager

ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ConAgra: The purchase agreement has been sent to the development team for signature. As soon as received, the agreement will be sent to the title company, and the due diligence process will officially commence.

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.

River Rd. Land: The city, considering the recent income tax failure, is undertaking a major review of our future capital projects – many of which will be delayed or removed from the list. As such, it is not likely a new service complex will be constructed soon – which was the primary motivation for purchasing the farmland on River Rd. Therefore, the City is looking to sell the land to recoup our investment.

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 14th 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: 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. 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. ODOT are now reviewing our stage three plans. Once this is complete, staff are ready to put this project out to bid.

Pavement Condition and 2023 Resurfacing: After receiving our final pay request for the project, the City anticipates the project will come in at around \$530,000 below budget. Since the City issued bonds to pay for the project and has already received the bond proceeds, we met with our bond counsel and financial advisor to determine what options we may have. Per their guidance, the remaining funds must be spent on future paving and reconstruction projects. If that is not possible, the City must transfer the excess proceeds into the bond retirement account to be used to pay debt service on the bonds. Staff will continue to work with council over the next month or two to determine the preferred use of these excess funds.

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.

A Stakeholder meeting was carried out on Wednesday 15th @ 10:00AM in the Council chambers. This meeting presented the conceptual plan and garnered feedback from property and business owners within the project area. There was a lot of constructive feedback and staff were able to clarify and address concerns that arose.

South Main St Watermain Replacement Project: Construction of this project is now substantially complete. There was a final walkthrough on November 18th and a final punch list was developed prior to officially closing out the project.

Website: The new website went live on the 17th of December. There is still work to do, and functionality needs to be added. We would like to thank Jen Kilbury, Terri Welkener and Chris Gibboney for their hard work during this project.

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.

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.

Long John Silvers: The former Burger King building on Cleveland Road W. was purchased and the new use is intended to be a Long John Silver restaurant. Planning and Zoning plans and permits are in review. The building department held a demolition meeting on 1/23/2025, and the demolition permit has been issued. Demolition is expected to take place after Ohio Edison has removed power from the site.

PARKS AND RECREATION:

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 Property: Staff intends to seek final Council direction on a formal and permanent name for the recently acquired greenspace on Berlin Road at our next Council meeting on January 28th. Once decided the City will be able to move forward with purchasing the new signage for the park. The City has already secured a variance from Huron Township for placement of the sign since the sign's proposed location is within the Township limits.

SAFETY SERVICES

FLOCK License Plate Readers: As an update to our Flock camera program, five (5) cameras were installed in February of 2024. For 2024, the total vehicle volume was around 450,000 per month which equates to around 5 million license plate reads per year. We are installing three (3) additional cameras in 2025 which will bring our total to eight (8) cameras. The program continues to be a tremendous asset for the police department with investigations and the solvability rate of our hit/skip accidents and thefts has increased exponentially.

K-9 Program: The police department would like to thank the community for their continued support and donations to fund our K9 program. Several generous donations have been received, including a recent \$9,000 donation. The K9 program continues to be an asset for the police department with narcotics detection and public relations.

FINANCE

Income Tax: Income tax receipts ended the year 1% below 2023 receipts and 4% lower than budget. On a positive note, the unencumbered general fund balance ended up over \$1.8 million or 28% of expenditures.

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:

- The Water Filtration Plant experienced frazil ice conditions each day from 1/14/25 – 1/17/25. Frazil ice occurs when open lake waters experience a rapid temperature drop causing ice formation. The “water door” was utilized in each one of these instances, allowing water to continue to flow through the intake.
- A leaking curb stop at 638 Taylor Ave. was reported 12/30/24. Staff made this repair on 1/2/25.

Active Project Updates:

Alternate Intake/Sludge Lagoon: Engineering and design are nearing completion for the water tower and the Water Superintendent will advise on progress. Preliminary designs for the Water Tower and the pump station for the intake have been sent to the city for review. 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. 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.

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. 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: 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

School Parking Sign Project: The Streets Department completed installation of the new street sign configuration at Woodlands. HPD will be at the school all week instructing drivers of the new traffic patterns. We thank all our partners for this collaborative project.

Snow: The City has seen a lot of snow and freezing temperatures in the last week. We would like to recognize the hard work by Staff, and many hours spent in the cab of the snowplows to keep our residents safe.

HURON PUBLIC POWER (HPP)

Distribution Rate Study: This has been progressing for several months. With the increasing costs of maintenance, and the additional debt being borne from the purchase and installation of the new third transformer, a rate increase is required. This will go to the Utilities Committee meeting on February 5th for consideration.

New Customer: HPP received an application from a new customer looking to join HPP. This will be the first new customer based on the HPP expansion project which will expand HPP footprint to the base of Sawmill Parkway.

PERSONNEL

Open Positions: The City is currently advertising the open positions of Finance Director and Secretary for the planning and zoning department.

Operator Kyle Capodice received his Water Supply 1 license with the Ohio EPA on 1/23/25. Congratulations, Kyle!

AGREEMENTS/CITY MANAGER APPROVALS

Erie Soil & Water Conservation District MOA: The City Manager executed a Memorandum of Agreement with Erie Soil & Water Conservation District to set forth the terms and conditions of a cooperative working agreement for implementation of the Construction Site Runoff Control Program for the 2025 calendar year. There is no charge associated with this MOA.

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. Bids were opened on January 6, 2025, with a single bidder. The total bid amount was \$710,780.000. This bid has been reviewed internally and is being placed on the Council agenda for consideration at the 1/28 meeting.

CONTRACTS

- 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 12/31/25.**
- HJRD Annual Agreement (Res 9-2025) – **Expires 12/31/25.**
- Erie Soil and Water Conservation District (Res 8-2025) – **Expires 1/31/26.**
- Building Official – Service Agreement (Res 43-2021) - **Expires 7/25/26.**
- 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.**
- Dispatch Agreement – Erie County Sheriff (Res 101-2024) – **Expires 12/31/26.**
- FOP-Sergeants Collective Bargaining Agreement (Res 100-2024) – **Expires 12/31/27.**
- FOP – Patrol Officers Collective Bargaining Agreement (Res 99-2024) – **Expires 12/31/27.**
- AFSCME Collective Bargaining Agreement (Res 102-2024) – **Expires 12/31/27.**

- IAFF Collective Bargaining Agreement (Res 7-2025) – **Expires 12/31/27.**
- Charles E. Harris & Associates GAPP Conversion (Res 10-2025) – **Expires 12/31/27.**

UPCOMING MEETINGS

January Meetings:

- City Council Work Session – Tuesday, January 28th at 5:30pm in Council Chambers.
- City Council Public Hearing on proposed Turtle Bay PUD amendment – Tuesday, January 28th at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday, January 28th at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.
- HJPA – Wednesday, January 29th at 6pm at Huron Township Hall (**tentative**).

February Meetings:

- Huron Joint Recreation District – Tuesday, February 4th at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.
- Utilities Committee Meeting – Wednesday, February 5th at 5:00pm in the Main Conference Room.
- BZA – Monday, February 10th at 5:30pm in Council Chambers.
- City Council Work Session – Tuesday, February 11th at 5:30pm in Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday, February 11th at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.
- Planning Commission Meeting – Wednesday, February 19th at 5:00pm in Council Chambers.
- Records Commission Meeting – Thursday, February 20th at 9:00am in Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday, February 25th at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.

REMINDER:

City administrative offices will be closed on Monday, February 17th in observance of President's Day.