



CITY OF HURON
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

March 21, 2025

Matthew Lasko, City Manager

ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ConAgra: As required by ORC, the City sent the required notice to Erie County with our intent to ultimately approve an Incentive District TIF on the site to pay for the costs of the seawall. The County did not formally object to the TIF.

Finally, the permit for the seawall enhancements has been submitted by KS & Associates. The City will be awaiting the outcome of whether our permit will be considered maintenance or reconstruction as this has a major bearing on how quickly the permit will be issued.

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.

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: At the last Council meeting in February, Council approved a purchase and sale agreement with Triban Investment for \$700,000. The development team is anticipating constructing between 170-220 single-family homes. The City is still awaiting the purchase agreement back from the development team to officially start the 6-month due diligence process. We anticipate receipt of the agreement any day now.

As a condition of the sale, the property also must be rezoned to R-1. A public hearing at the planning commission has been scheduled for March 26th on this request.

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.

East Side Sidewalks: This project was put out to bid on February 24th. Bids were received on March 20th. The City received three bids for the project. OHM and staff are reviewing the bids for completeness and accuracy. We are hoping to present a recommendation to Council at one of the Council meetings in April.

An additional grant was secured for this project to assist in paying the Construction Inspection costs, in the amount of \$68,000. As always, we would like to thank our partners at ODOT for their continued support.

Route 13 Crosswalks: This project was put out to bid on February 24th. Bids were received on March 20th. The City received two bids for the project. OHM and staff are reviewing the bids for completeness and accuracy. We are hoping to present a recommendation to Council at one of the Council meetings in April.

South Main Street Streetscape Design and Engineering: Staff continue to meet regularly with representatives from OHM regarding initial plan designs and preliminary engineering.

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.

ZONING/CODE/PLANNING

Public Hearing to Rezone River Road Property: The Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on March 26, 2025, at 5pm on the City's application for the rezoning of the City-owned parcels on River Road from the current I-2 to R-1. Legal notice and mailed notifications were issued pursuant to code requirements. Recommendation from the Planning Commission to City Council to follow.

Firelands Scientific Temporary Greenhouse Structures: Firelands Scientific has submitted applications and plans for four (4) temporary greenhouse structures, which were approved previously by the Planning Commission/Design Review Board. The application and plans are currently in Zoning Review and have been distributed to OHM Advisors and Erie Soil and Water for SWPPP evaluation and plan review deposit determination. Following approval by Zoning and approval of the SWPPP, the applications and plans will be submitted to the Building Department.

Zoning Map Revisions: Staff have found the current Zoning Map requires revisions to reflect legislative action taken within the last few years. The map had been updated internally in recent years, however, prior to that, the County was provided with information, and they would revise the city map as well as their information. Staff found a property that had a court-ordered action which reverted the undeveloped areas of an R-2 PUD (Two Rivers original R-2 PUD) to R-1 Single Family Residential Zoning. A portion of the same property was approved as an R-1 PUD along Sheltered Brook, which will also need to be reflected. These changes are being presented to Council on March 25th for final consideration.

Coastal Management Assistance Grants: The final lakefront parks plan was adopted by Council on March 25th. Staff will be working over the next few weeks to close out this project and the related grant. A major thanks to ODNR for their funding assistance with this project.

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. All Zoning and Building permits have been issued. Demolition completed and construction underway.

Investigation- Lodging Tax Registration for Transient Rentals: The Zoning Inspector conducted a review of current Transient Rental properties and review of registrations through Erie County for Lodging Tax. As a result, 19 properties were found not to be registered with the County. This could be due to the owners not renting the property or operating but not reporting/collecting taxes. Notices have been issued to these property owners with response required. Staff will continue to review; taking steps pursuant to the code as needed.

Research/Review Relating to Code Amendments: Signage Code-Legal Non-Conforming was reviewed with our legal team earlier this month. Legislation pertaining to historical signage in the right-of-way will be presented to Council for a first reading on March 25th.

Ohio House and Senate Bills: Staff and the SSEG team are keeping tabs on several Ohio State Legislatives bills that are marking their way through the statehouse. As these bills progress, we will continue to keep Council apprised. Relevant bills include:

- Senate Bill 104 – relating to transient rentals. The proposed bill would erode home rule authority on a jurisdiction's ability to limit the number of transient rentals and manage certain elements of their operations.
- House Bill 160 – related to recreation marijuana. The bill would make alterations to the newly enacted recreation marijuana program. Of most interest to Huron is whether the existing 3.6% local tax that was permitted in the original law will remain in any potential amendments.
- House Bill 113 – related to annexation. The bill would create limitations to a jurisdiction's ability to proceed with annexations as they have historically – namely, providing more power the County Commissioners or County bodies to determine ultimately if an annexation between City/Village and Township is "in the best interest" of the County.

PARKS AND RECREATION:

State Capital Budget: The city has informally been told that we will be receiving \$200,000 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: At the final Council meeting in January, it was decided the greenspace on Berlin Road would be renamed Dancing Waters Park – as a bit of an acknowledgement to the family that was responsible for developing the man-made lake on-site. Staff are moving forward with ordering the signage for installation sometime in the Spring of this year.

SAFETY SERVICES

FLOCK License Plate Readers - UPDATE: The first of three new FLOCK cameras included in the 2025 budget were installed on Rt. 6 at By-the-Shores west bound. The eventual addition of these three cameras in 2025 will bring our total to eight 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 Donation: The Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 2529, graciously donated \$5,000 to our K9 Program. The Police Department and the City of Huron would like to thank the VFW and all veterans for their service and their gracious donation.

Training Update: Sergeant John Orzech graduated from the Police Executive Leadership College on Friday March 21st after three weeks of advanced training. This is a major accomplishment, and we want to congratulate Sgt. Orzech on this accomplishment and his continued dedication to the Huron Police Department.

FINANCE

Income Tax: Through February, income tax receipts are 11% higher than in 2024 and are 6% above budget. February receipts were just over \$310k in line with last year. We will continue to monitor receipts as it is difficult to get a clear picture of performance until around June of each year.

Monthly Financials (February): <https://stories.opengov.com/huronoh/published/8C9DxuAkG>

WATER DEPARTMENT

Recent Activity:

- New raw wet well screens are currently being built by Lake Erie Diving, Inc. The existing screens are original and have deteriorated over time. These screens prevent large debris found in the lake water from entering the wet well which can cause damage to raw water pumps.
- There was a watermain break on Ohio Street on 3/3/25. This was caused by a crack in the watermain and was repaired by Water Distribution staff.

Active Project Updates:

Alternate Intake/Sludge Lagoon: Engineering and design are nearing completion for the water tower. 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.

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

N/A

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 went before the Utilities Committee on February 5th for consideration and left with direction to return with a final draft for review.

Expansion Under the Tracks: The City and contractor received permission to move the boring location under the tracks to another location – which will allow the project to move forward. Due to not being able to locate a major fiber line in the preferred area, the boring location required relocation which has now been approved. We are currently waiting for a flagger to be assigned by the Railroad so we can re-commence work.

PERSONNEL

Finance Director: The City continues to accept applications for this position and has interviewed 2 candidates thus far. Interviews will continue during the month of March.

2024 Annual Report: Staff, and mainly Jen Kilbury completed the 2024 annual report. We anticipate this report to be available to Council at one of our next two meetings and will be shared publicly thereafter.

AGREEMENTS/CITY MANAGER APPROVALS

N/A

PROJECTS OUT FOR BID

Cleveland Road East Sidewalk Project – received March 20th.

Routh 13 Pedestrian Crossing Project – received March 20th.

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

March Meetings:

- City Council Work Session – Tuesday, March 25th at 5:30pm in Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday, March 25th at 6:30 in the Council Chambers.
- Planning Commission Meeting – Wednesday, March 26th at 5:00pm in Council Chambers.

April Meetings:

- HJRD – Tuesday, April 1st at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.
- Public Hearing on the ConAgra TIF – Tuesday, April 8th at 6:30pm immediately preceding the regular Council meeting in Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday, April 8th at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.
- BZA – Monday, April 14th at 5:30pm in Council Chambers.
- Planning Commission Meeting – Wednesday, April 16th at 5:00pm in Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday, April 22nd at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.
- Utilities Committee Meeting – Wednesday, April 23rd at 5pm in the main conference room.