



CITY OF HURON
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

May 9, 2025

Stuart Hamilton, Interim 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.

USACE issued the permit for the Seawall project. We are waiting for confirmation that ODNR does not have any additional requirements. KS will now prioritize the design completion and approval process, so we are ready to issue it at the correct time.

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 May 13th on this request.

INFRASTRUCTURE/STREETS/UTILITIES/IT

East Side Sidewalks: Staff have recommended contracting with RMH Concrete for this project. The project is expected to be substantially completed in 2025.

It should be noted; the bid came in roughly 50% lower than projected – meaning the City has excess grant funds from ODOT and Erie County Regional Planning. Staff will soon be engaged

each entity about the possibility of moving these funds to other relevant and eligible projects, but our only option is to return any unused monies.

Route 13 Crosswalks: Staff have recommended contracting with DL Smith for this project. The project is expected to be substantially completed in 2025.

South Main Street Streetscape Design and Engineering: The City has received updated cost estimates from OHM and is reviewing internally. Once reviewed by staff, Council will be briefed and a work session scheduled to determine if we desire to move forward with the project and if so, whether the proposed scope of work should be amended.

Rt 6 Phase II: The City has received updated cost estimates from OHM and is reviewing internally. Once reviewed by staff, Council will be briefed and a work session scheduled to determine if we desire to move forward with the project and if so, whether the proposed scope of work should be amended.

ZONING/CODE/PLANNING

ConAgra Development: The General Development Concept Plan was received. Staff coordinated an internal departmental meeting to conduct preliminary review of the plans to identify any non-compliant items, safety concerns, input/comments from city staff. The reviews will be incorporated into the staff report that will be presented to the Planning Commission/DRB during a public hearing on May 21, 2025. This will likely be the first of at least two public hearings at the PC/DRB level before a recommendation is made to City Council.

Business/Commercial Meetings: Staff has met/corresponded with several businesses over last few weeks on inquires related to signage, accessory structures, and expansions/additions. Staff has provided an overview of zoning requirements and reviewed the process of approvals and permits required. We anticipate applications to the PC/DRB in the near future.

Code Amendments: We continue to document code sections that are antiquated, contradictory, absent and/or unclear as written. As time allows research and documentation into other municipal codes are compiled to be shared with Administration for review and approval to introduce to City Council. Staff has also continued researching and reviewing the impact of ADU's in R-1 Zoning Districts at the request of City Council; an internal meeting is anticipated with Legal to discuss.

Status Update on Zoning Map Updates: With the adoption of the Two Rivers zoning changes, which will become effective 30 days from the date of adoption, staff will then submit the certified legislation to Erie County to have the zoning map revised. Once received, we will update the map on our website.

Transient Rentals- Lodging Tax Registration: The Zoning Inspector has completed research and follow up into registered properties that appeared not be registered with the County for Lodging Tax collection. It was determined many are not renting the properties, while others have since registered. The Zoning Inspector continues to monitor and coordinate with Erie County.

We presently have 14 applications on the Wait List. We have been as high as 22 a couple of times and the list continues to move with expiration of certificates, and buyers who do not desire or meet the deadline to transfer an active certificate.

The database of registered properties and the wait list database are posted on the website.

Preliminary Reviews: Staff has met with several residential property owners in recent weeks contemplating substantial additions and/or rebuilds. These meetings provide an overview of the code regulations, and an opportunity to discuss potential options for plan revisions to reduce and/or eliminate the need for variances. We will have four residential cases for the upcoming May BZA meeting – all properties being pre-existing/non-conforming with regard to one or more setbacks.

Public Hearing to Rezone River Road Property: Planning Commission recommended the rezoning of the property to R-1 and Council has set a public hearing on the rezoning for Tuesday, May 13th at 6:30pm.

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.

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.

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:

Kids Learn to Fish Day: The City of Huron Parks & Recreation Department were fully funded \$2,500 from the Wightman/Wieber Foundation grant application to support its inaugural "Kids Learn to Fish Day" scheduled for Tuesday, August 12, 2025, at the new Dancing Waters Pond Park located on Berlin Road. This event will provide 30-40 children with an engaging, hands-on fishing experience while also offering an educational component about fishing techniques, water safety and conservation.

Erie Metroparks 2025 Local Park Capital Improvement Grant Funds Awarded: The HPRD was also successfully awarded the Erie MetroParks 2025 Local Park Capital Improvement Grant Program in a total amount of \$4,368.00. Funding for this Local Capital Improvement Grant Program has been provided by the Erie MetroParks Board of Park Commissioners as a component to the Park District's property tax levy. The Parks & Recreation Department will use these funds awarded on replacing the Access Mat System that enables beachgoers a safe, stable, obstacle-free means of accessing the beach and water's edge. The project includes installation of two (2) sections of a 5'x50' recycled polyester rollout mat (AccessMat by Access Rec, LLC) to promote and encourage ADA access to the beach for special events and valuable family time on the beach.

Clock Tower Repairs: The clock tower at the corner of Main St. and Cleveland Rd. needs their motors and micro switches replaced. AmeriClock, the company that installed the clocks in 2016, is providing the parts and Brady Signs will be installing them.

Fish Sculpture at Huron River Boating Access Facility: The Parks & Recreation Department has been working with the Fish Huron Ohio group as they would like to donate a hanging fish sculpture to be located at the Huron River Boating Access Facility. This public art piece will provide fishermen with the ability to show off their catch and take pictures while promoting Huron as a fishing destination. The donation will be made to ODNR and through the terms of the existing MOU, the City will be responsible for managing and maintaining the donation. The art

installation would be a stainless-steel sculpture with a concrete base to be located north of the existing fish cleaning station.

Restroom Demolition: The demolition and removal of the old restroom building on the south side of the Boat Basin Marina continues. These restrooms were built in the early 1970's and were last cosmetically updated in 1996. These restrooms are being demolished as part of the plan that included construction of the "new" marina in 2021 due to increasing operational maintenance costs. Demolition of the structure began on May 6th and is ongoing.

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

Ryan Boesch Promoted to Sergeant: Ryan L. Boesch, a 17-year veteran of the Huron Police Department, will be sworn in as Sergeant at the May 13, 2025, Council meeting. Ryan has a Master's degree in Public Administration and currently serves as the K-9 Officer and Field Training Officer for the Department. Sergeant Boesch will be in charge of Squad 4, which is the night shift on the back half of the week.

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.

Training Update: Some of our officers received training on liquor permits and active shooter response.

FINANCE

2024 State of Ohio Audit: The Auditors will be on premises from May 12-16 to conduct the audit of the City's 2024 finances.

Income Tax: Through April, income tax receipts still are trending positively and are 8% higher than this time in 2024. Through the end of April, receipts total \$1,332,548. We will continue to monitor receipts as it is difficult to get a clear picture of performance until around June of each year, but it has been a positive start to 2025.

Real Estate Taxes: The City's first half tax settlement was approximately \$112,000 higher than 2024 receipts. Assuming the second half settlement is similar, the City would anticipate receiving approximately \$225,000 in increased real estate tax receipts due to the re-evaluation process. This would represent an 8% increase compared to last year (City budgeted for a 3% increase).

Monthly Financials (March): <https://stories.opengov.com/huronoh/published/PKvecGPw->

WATER DEPARTMENT

Recent Activity:

- A new plug valve for Sedimentation Basin #1 has been received. The original valve from 1992 has failed. The new valve will be installed by staff in the near future.
- The filter-to-waste Rotork actuators are onsite and are in the process of being installed. The main line filter-to-waste valve was replaced by staff and a significant increase in flow has been observed.
- Staff is currently working with BissNuss, Inc. to install the new chemical pumps. Several pumps have already been installed and are operational. This project should be completed in the coming weeks.
- The East Side Water Tower painting project began on 4/21/25 and the tower is and has now been returned to service. The water tower was drained, pressure washed (interior and exterior), received touch-up paint on the dry interior, and received 2 overcoats of paint on the exterior. The Tower was painted white and the new city logo is displayed on 2 sides of the tank. The city is extremely pleased with the end result, the painting crew, and USG. This project was completed in half the amount of time as projected and the contractors did a fantastic job. The fire department and Erie County have been notified that the tank is expected to return to service on 5/2.

Active Project Updates:

Alternate Intake/Sludge Lagoon: The emergency intake and sludge lagoon rehab drawings have been completed. Minor changes were recommended by the Water Superintendent. The design and engineering for this project have been sent to the Ohio EPA for approval. Once approved by the OEPA, the project may go out to bid. This project was also nominated for interest-free funding through WSRLA. A response from the OEPA was received on 4/4/25 with numerous questions and comments. The largest concern is that the OEPA is requesting 12-months of water quality

data from the Huron River. The Water Superintendent inquired with Kleinfelder numerous times over the past 2 years if the city should be collecting water samples for analysis. The city was assured that this was not necessary as this intake is to only be used in an emergency and will not be a permanent source. The Water Superintendent is awaiting a response from Kleinfelder.

West Side Water Tower: Water Tower – Designs for the water tower were approved by the OEPA on 4/23/25. The current schedule is as follows:

Advertisement – 4/28/2025

Open Bids – 5/21/2025

Letter of Recommendation – 5/29/2025

City Award – 6/15/2025

The water tower project will be advertised in the Sandusky Register on 4/28 and 5/5 (2-weeks). The Water Superintendent worked with Kleinfelder to nominate the tower project for interest-free WSRLA funding. The city will receive the additional funding for the balance of this project and the terms will be announced by 6/1/25. 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. Staff met with Ardagh on 5/1 to discuss the easement and expect everything to be signed and official with the property transfer in coming weeks.

Plant Re-Rating: A response was received from the OEPA on 4/17/25. The Water Superintendent is navigating a response and will accurately provide the information being requested by the OEPA. A professional engineer will be needed to sign off on the project for final approval and this will be provided by Kleinfelder.

STREETS DEPARTMENT

Paving/Street Repairs: Blacktop was repaired at the intersection of Elmwood and Cleveland Rd. W. due to storm line repairs; continued with filling potholes city-wide.

Infrastructure Repairs: Repair broken manhole cover and concrete at Center and South Street; repair broken catch basin and concrete at 804 Glenview.

Tree Removal: Trees were removed at Oklahoma Park due to rot and weather; fallen tree at 305 Ohio Street removed by Buckeye Tree – temporary street closure until cleared.

Mower Repair: John Deere zero-turn mower has been repaired, and the Department is catching up on mowing city-owned lots.

Curb Painting: The newly installed curbs on Forest Hills and Valley View were painted for no parking at the fire hydrants.

Tree Program – District 3: Resident responses to the tree maintenance letters mailed earlier this spring are picking up now that the weather has improved. There has been a lot of activity by both homeowners and contractors removing and/or trimming trees in the Old Plat neighborhood.

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 and was presented to the Utilities Committee one final time on May 7th for consideration. It was recommended, and legislation will be drafted and brought before Council for consideration for three readings in June.

3rd Transformer: The City participated in a bond ratings call with Moody's during the week of March 31st as a lead up to the bond issuance for the 3rd transformer. A follow up call will be held on April 9th to understand our current bond rating (which we anticipate remaining the same – which is a good thing) prior to us going out to the market for bids. We do know unfortunately that, given the limited number of customers on HPP and the fact that they are all private entities, the bonds are expected to be taxable versus tax-exempt, meaning higher interest rates.

These bonds were sold on April 17th 2025 at a rate of 5.55% over a 15-year period. Our excellent Moody's rating helped keep this rate down.

Switch Gear Delivered: The switch gear that will connect the new transformer to our existing infrastructure was delivered on May 7th. Council previously approved the switch gear purchase from PEPCO in January of 2025 in the amount of \$710,780.

Expansion Under the Tracks: This project is progressing well. Electrical cable is still to be pulled, along with dome final restoration work to be completed. This will allow us to provide electric service to Sawmill Parkway, with our first new customer expected to join HPP in May of this year.

Electric Aggregation: The City aggregation program expires in July. Due to the market, we are unable to provide meaningful aggregation pricing and therefor will let the program expire. We will continue to monitor the electric market and will aggregate again when pricing make this beneficial. Residents will be automatically returned to the Utility and will not need to take any action. However, we suggest they shop around on their own to find competitive pricing. Sites like Energy Choice Ohio Apple to Apples ([Energy Choice Ohio - Apples to Apples](#)) will present options or Residents to sign up on their own.

PERSONNEL

FF Austin Gardner: Firefight Austin Gardner sadly submitted his letter of resignation, with his final day with the City being May 16th. We thank him for his service and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

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 May.

Police Officers: The City continues to pursue all avenues to hire Police Officers for our open position and upcoming retirements.

Part Time/Seasonal Staff: The City is still accepting applications for part-time/seasonal staff to work at the Boat Basin.

AGREEMENTS/CITY MANAGER APPROVALS

Army Corps of Engineers West Pier Project License Agreement: The City Manager will be entering into a License Agreement with Morrish-Wallace Construction, Inc., dba Ryba Marine Construction, Co., to allow them to drive concrete trucks onto a portion of City property for the purpose of emptying their payloads of uncured concrete into a concrete pump as part of the West Pier Bank Wall Project being run by the Army Corps of Engineers. The Licensee will be granted non-exclusive use from September 2, 2025 through October 24, 2025. The City retains the right to terminate the Agreement with 48 hours' notice. There will be no charge for use of the licensed property.

PROJECTS OUT FOR BID

West Side Water Tower Bid: Designs for the water tower were approved by the OEPA on 4/23/25. The current bid schedule is as follows:

Advertisement – 4/28/2025

Open Bids – 5/21/2025

Letter of Recommendation – 5/29/2025

City Award – 6/15/2025

The water tower project will be advertised in the Sandusky Register on 4/28 and 5/5 (2-weeks). The Water Superintendent worked with Kleinfelder to nominate the tower project for interest-free WSRLA funding. The City will receive the additional funding for the balance of this project and the terms will be announced by 6/1/25. 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. Staff met with Ardagh on 5/1 to discuss the easement and expect everything to be signed and official with the property transfer in coming weeks.

S. Main Street Pedestrian Crossings RFQ: RFQ for inspection, construction administration and associated field-testing services will be advertised on Monday, May 12 and Monday, May 19, with responses due on June 3, 2025 at 2pm.

Cleveland Rd. E. Sidewalk Extension to Huron Green: RFQ for inspection and construction administration services will be advertised on Monday, May 12 and Monday, May 19 (2 weeks), with responses due on June 3, 2025 at 2pm.

CONTRACTS

- Seeley, Savidge, Ebert & Gourash Co., LLP (Res 47-2024) – **Expires 6/3/25. New contract on agenda for Council's consideration 4/22/25.**
- Dynegy Electric Aggregation Agreement (Res 29-2023) – **Expires 7/30/25.**
- Dynegy Electric Standard Large Stable Service Agreement (Res 54-2023) – **Expires 08/31/25.**
- Emergency Services Agreement with Huron Township (Res 85-2024) – **Expires 12/31/25.**
- 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

May Meetings:

- BZA – Monday, May 12th at 5:30pm in Council Chambers.
- Finance Committee – Tuesday, May 13th at 5:30pm in Council Chambers.
- Public Hearing on River Road Rezoning – Tuesday, May 13th at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday, May 13th at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.
- Planning Commission – Wednesday, May 21st at 5pm in Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday, May 27th at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.