

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT
October 28, 2024 Council Meeting

1. Appalachian Community Grant Program (ACGP) update: This major project is finally getting some positive traction. Last Wednesday we conducted a Kickoff meeting with Eastgate to talk through the sole source procurement process and the scope and schedule of our Streetscape project funded in part by the \$2.6M ACGP grant award.

First, with our current engineering firm CT having already designed several aspects (phases) of the proposed Streetscape conceptual design, as well as their current involvement with impacted city infrastructure (Depot St.), we requested that CT be our planner/design firm for this project. As such, we were successful in qualifying CT under Sole Source procurement, which was recently approved by the funding source (GOA). This is huge because with the limited time to complete this project (Oct., 2026), CT's familiarity with the project and city infrastructure will save us a lot of time. We will be working with CT and Eastgate to get a Subrecipient Agreement in place asap.

Second, with CT onboard, their first order of business will be to develop a preliminary plan based on the originally submitted concept plan. At different intervals of completion, it will be presented to Eastgate for their review (10%, 30%, etc.). The best part of this process is they're giving communities much leeway on design, as long as it reflects the original concept behind the plan.

Finally, on the storefront façade aspect of the project, we're partnering with the Ash. Co. Landbank (as is Ashtabula City) to oversee architectural design and construction administrative services. The Landbank is preparing an RFP for such services, with a deadline to submit of December 2, 2024. Under this schedule, project activity could begin as early as March, 2025. Much more to come.

2. Safe Streets 4 All (SS4A) Grant update: I'm happy to announce that last week, we conducted a Kickoff meeting to discuss the path forward on this 2025-26 Planning Grant process. Being the lead applicant, we expect to receive our agreement from the USDOT soon, which we'll work closely on with our consultant. Once we complete this detailed process, we plan to have an organizational meeting with the two other grant benefactors, Geneva Twp. and Harpersfield Twp. to chart our path forward.

Being a "planning" grant, the to-be organized activities are designed to create a *Comprehensive Roadway Safety Action Plan* for each of the participating communities. The awarded amount is \$265,000 with a local match (between the three communities) being \$53,000. Other Key-deliverables for each community in this project include:

1. GIS Mapping of all transportation elements – including roads, rails, sidewalks, trails, and on-street parking.
2. Comprehensive Safety Assessment of roadways, intersections, and pedestrian/cyclist infrastructure and identification of countermeasures.
3. Broad Public & Stakeholder Engagement
4. Public Education and Outreach
5. Community Developed Land Use Plan

Regarding timeframe: It was estimated that all community applications should be received by the DOT and forwarded to the Office of Acquisition and Grants (HCFA) within approximately 4 months. As such, we see the planning activities getting started in early 2025 (Feb/Mar). Much more to come.

3. Union Negotiations for Contract Years 2025-27: FYI- We've been in contact with all four of our Bargaining Units and we're in active discussions with three of them; OPBA Patrolmen and Sergeants & Dispatchers and the IAFF (Fire Dept.). While we believe we're having productive conversations, it's way too early to predict the timeframe for concluding our discussions. The timeframe on when we'll meet with Local 860 is not certain at this time.
4. Upcoming Meetings:
 - a. Finance Committee Meeting- Review of the 2025 operating budget. Thursday, November 7, 2024, 8:30 AM, council chambers
 - b. Utility Committee Meeting- Discussion on Water/Wastewater rates for 2025-29. TBD
 - c. Zoning Code Update Presentation- Review the current status of the code update project. The rescheduled presentation date is yet TBD