



City of Gahanna

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Meeting Minutes

City Council

*Merisa K. Bowers, President
Trenton I. Weaver, Vice President
Jamille Jones
Nancy R. McGregor
Kaylee Padova
Stephen A. Renner
Michael Schnetzer*

Jeremy A. VanMeter, Clerk of Council

Monday, November 3, 2025

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

A. CALL TO ORDER: Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call

Gahanna City Council met in Regular Session on Monday, November 3, 2025 in Council Chambers. President of Council Merisa K. Bowers called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Vice President Trenton I. Weaver delivered an Invocation and led members in the Pledge of Allegiance. The agenda was published on October 31, 2025.

Present 7 - Merisa K. Bowers, Jamille Jones, Nancy R. McGregor, Kaylee Padova, Stephen A. Renner, Michael Schnetzer, and Trenton I. Weaver

B. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA:

President Bowers stated that Ordinance 0045-2025 would be removed from the Consent Agenda and added to the Regular Agenda under G(2) - Ordinances for Second Reading and Adoption.

C. HEARING OF VISITORS:

Ross Goldsmith, 276 Gary Lee Drive. Mr. Goldsmith expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to attend the meeting. He explained that he ran for City Council two years ago and during his campaign he talked extensively about the need for the city to adopt a Strategic Plan. He expressed excitement at the city's decision to embark on the Strategic Plan project, and gratitude for the opportunity to serve on the Steering Committee. He said the process highlighted things that Gahanna is doing right, what it could be doing better, and where the city needs some major work. He said the Strategic Plan process made clear what needs should be accomplished, how it should be done, and ensuring it is broadly communicated. He stated that Gahanna faces the same issues as many municipalities, and that the Our Gahanna Strategic Plan creates thoughtful strategies to guide the work, implementation, and reporting to the community. He acknowledged that the plan would not satisfy every neighbor but felt it would help to build community. He encouraged the city to consider what parts of the plan new legislation responds to when introducing ordinances.

Tim McClurg, 935 Leaflock Court, spoke on the Strategic Plan. He stated he was also part of the Steering Committee and was previously a Citizens Academy cohort member. He stated that through these processes, he learned about how a city runs, and how different it is from the way people run their own lives. He noted there are many rules to be followed, and he felt people did not truly understand what goes into the operations of the city. He described city workers as dedicated, adding that the different departments want what is best for the city. He thought the Our Gahanna Strategic Plan was a good one, adding that failing to plan leads to failure. Mr. McClurg felt that what residents would look for next is more detail in the plan, such as how it would be carried out. He thought one part of that was the Reimagine Creekside plan, as Creekside was a major focus within the Steering Committee. He described city leadership as competent and dedicated to their jobs. He closed by encouraging community members to attend City Council meetings to speak up about what they do or do not like within the city.

D. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Pursuant to Council Rules 9.10 and 9.11, the President of Council shall give a brief statement or explanation of the item under hearing. Prior to the opening of the public hearing, the administration may make a presentation of slides, videos, photos, staff comments, or combination thereof. Public comment will be opened with 3 minutes allowed per speaker. Speakers must complete a speaker slip and come to the podium when called and state their name and address for the record. Additional time, if needed, may be requested and permission is at the discretion of the President of Council.

ORD-0042-2025 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH CONNECT REALTY LLC, BENSON CAPITAL, LLC, AND THE GAHANNA COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF VACANT AND BLIGHTED PROPERTIES IN THE CREEKSIDER DISTRICT

President Bowers introduced the ordinance under Public Hearing. She encouraged viewing the Creekside Reimagined web page for all prior meeting presentations and slides. She anticipated this evening's presentation to be more high-level and brief. She explained that the ordinance would allow the Mayor to enter into a development agreement with Connect Realty, LLC; Benson Capital, LLC; and the Gahanna Community Improvement Corporation for the redevelopment of vacant and blighted properties in the Creekside District. The item is scheduled for a vote on November 17, 2025. President Bowers invited Mayor Jadwin to provide additional remarks.

Mayor Jadwin added that Economic Development Director Jeff Gottke would

have comments as well. Mayor Jadwin explained the project under consideration has been in progress for years. She stated that the community has been vocal about its desire to see a vibrant, successful Creekside. She shared that for over a decade the City has worked with economic development experts, private business and development communities, Creekside area businesses owners, and residents, to understand what Creekside needs to maximize its potential. She felt that the interest was reaffirmed through the Our Gahanna process, adding that Creekside has its own chapter in the Strategic Plan. Mayor Jadwin explained that the Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) had purchased approximately 5 acres of parcels in the Creekside District, and the parcels were the subject of the conversations that have been had during Council and Committee of the Whole meetings. The CIC then issued a request for proposals (RFP) for the purpose of having the parcels redeveloped. Over the last three years, the CIC and the city's Economic Development Department have been engaged in negotiations to have the parcels redeveloped. Mayor Jadwin invited Director Gottke to provide additional comments.

Director Gottke explained that it would be helpful to recap some of the public engagement steps that has happened through the process, and wished to provide an overview of comments received thus far. The Creekside Reimagined website had been created, along with an email address specifically to receive feedback on the Creekside plans. There were four public events held, two of which were for the general public and two for business owners and residents in the Creekside area. There were also meetings with private groups and there had been extensive media coverage to this point. Additionally, there was a presence at events like Touch-a-Truck and the Mill Street Market. Finally, there would be an opportunity for feedback through the Public Hearing. Director Gottke also stated that informal conversations happen on a daily basis with residents and interested parties. He stated that feedback had been largely positive, and categorized feedback into four primary categories. First, there was much discussion about parking needs, and feedback regarding the 50 parking spots that are proposed to be removed. A study had been done to better understand the parking demands for the area. Traffic volume also continues to be a discussion point. He stated that traffic impact studies are required by the Engineering Department through the building and engineering approval processes. The studies are vetted by the city's experts to better understand how traffic will be impacted and what mitigation measures can be taken. Director Gottke also stated there were questions about what will happen during construction, such as whether residents would be able to access their apartments safely and efficiently, whether the parking garage will remain open, and how construction would be phased to keep businesses open. He stated that the Economic Development

Department is working toward solutions to these questions, adding that it will be under their purview to coordinate with stakeholders throughout the life of the project. Finally, there were broad questions about the economic need, such as whether the project was necessary and whether it was the best thing for Creekside. He felt the questions were valid to raise and work through. He described most feedback as cautiously optimistic: people want the redevelopment to work, but they have valid questions and concerns. He added that two letters had been received that day, one of which was from Mifflin Township Trustees and the other from a local Creekside District business owner.

President Bowers opened the Public Hearing to public comment at 7:21 p.m.

George Mrus, 1217 Sanctuary Place. Mr. Mrus stated that he and his wife had lived in Gahanna for over 19 years. Mr. Mrus currently serves as the secretary for the CIC and previously served as president. He stated one of the primary missions of the Gahanna CIC is to promote economic, commercial, and civic development in the city through maximizing available redevelopment solutions. He stated that in recent years the CIC had engaged in many conversations and had spent many hours doing due diligence, and a Councilmember had been present at each CIC meeting. Mr. Mrus described the current development agreement as one that meets the primary mission of the CIC. He stated the proposed development from Connect Realty and Benson Capital has an appropriate mix of uses that will support an enhanced and vibrant Creekside for many years to come, and described the agreement as "transformational." Mr. Mrus asked that City Council approve the development agreement with Connect Realty and Benson Capital.

Betty Collins, 917 Harmony Court. Ms. Collins stated that she and her husband had been members of the Gahanna community since September 2002. Her children were Gahanna Lincoln High School graduates, and she owned a business in the City from 1997 to 2012. She described Gahanna as her community of choice, adding that she served on the Chamber of Commerce Board previously, and was currently a volunteer CIC board member for the last ten years, and currently serves as the board president. She stated that in 2021, the CIC board, including two members of Council, the current administration, and the Economic Development Department, focused on a plan to promote economic development in the Creekside area. Ms. Collins explained that from her perspective as a business owner and CPA, the importance of economic development could not be underestimated. She explained that the property was purchased so the project could be controlled and come together in a way that means something for the entire area. She stated they wanted a developer that would meet the expectations of

mixed use, residential, and commercial. They also wanted to make sure the project was in alignment with the city's Strategic Plan. She stated that she believed Benson Capital and Connect Realty are the right developer for the project, and are in alignment with the city's vision. She respectfully requested that City Council support the development agreement. She ended by thanking City Council for the opportunity to speak, while noting that Gahanna is a unique city encouraging continued progress.

Tyler Abrams, 105 Brookhill Drive, introduced himself as the Board President of Visit Gahanna. Mr. Abrams stated that everyone in attendance this evening was working toward a better Gahanna, and added that he was excited to voice his support for the project. He stated that Visit Gahanna's job is to promote Gahanna and to bring people into the city. He stated that in its current state, Creekside is sorely lacking in activities and things to do. He felt there was ample opportunity to get more people in the area supporting local businesses, adding that local business money would support the City of Gahanna. In particular, adding a hotel would be extremely important, and there has not been a new hotel built in the area for 20 or more years.

Alveda Bates, 100 Jahn Drive. Ms. Bates stated she has been a Gahanna resident for around 55 years. She felt that one aspect that had been overlooked in regard to the revitalization was public art. She noted that since Gahanna hosts the iconic Creekside Blues & Jazz Festival, a mural of blues and jazz icons would be symbolic and timeless. Ms. Bates recalled Mayor Jadwin's persistence in growing the Blues & Jazz Festival, and encouraged art to be a part of the revitalization of Creekside.

Tim McClurg, 935 Leaflock Court, stated he supported the Creekside project. He shared his disappointment that there were only a few restaurants at Creekside, and there was no longer a place where one could have a glass of wine and look out at the creek. He recalled that Creekside was originally pitched as a river walk, and he noted that the path to walk on is limited. He hoped to see more shops and things to do along the river. He felt that the space was not utilized in the way it could be. Mr. McClurg acknowledged the potential issues with parking if the city lot is removed, such as less space for the Blues & Jazz Festival, and lack of parking for events held at the Sanctuary. He suggested the planned hotel have a restaurant overlooking the Creekside area, and closed his comments by reiterating his that Creekside could be designed in a way to support a river walk.

Keisha Smith-Jones introduced herself as the President of the Gahanna Area Chamber of Commerce, but wanted to speak from her role as a local business owner. Ms. Smith-Jones is the owner of The Executive's Wealth

Advisor, located at 81 Mill Street. She stated that although she lives and works through many of the same frustrations that have already been voiced, such as traffic and parking issues, that she recognized the development project as one that could strengthen the community. She highlighted four points in support of the project. First, she stated the project can revitalize local commerce could bring in more visitors who in turn would spend money supporting the restaurants, boutiques, and services at Creekside. Second, when residents and business owners see investment in the community, it signals growth and resilience and builds confidence and stability. In turn, the city can continue to attract new businesses and support those already existing. Third, with smart design and community input, the development can promote sustainable prosperity. It can expand the local tax base, support better infrastructure, and support the schools and services that sustain families and the workforce. Finally, Smith-Jones stated that Gahanna is an evolving Central Ohio suburban community. It is set apart from other surrounding communities by its walkability and sense of community. She noted that while she shared frustrations that had been expressed, there is an opportunity to shape Creekside into a destination that is reflective of the Gahanna community.

With no additional speakers, President Bowers closed the Public Hearing at 7:39 p.m.

E. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Minutes - To Approve:

2025-0205 Council Special Minutes 10.20.2025

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

2025-0206 Council Regular Minutes 10.20.2025

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

2025-0207 Finance Committee Minutes 10.23.2025

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

2025-0208 Council Special Minutes 10.27.2025

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

2025-0209 Committee of the Whole Minutes 10.27.2025

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

2025-0210 Finance Committee Minutes 10.27.2025

The minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda.

2. Resolutions:

RES-0051-2025 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE THE 2025 SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF GAHANNA AND THE COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION OF GAHANNA

The Resolution was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

RES-0052-2025 A RESOLUTION CONCERNING SERVICES TO PROPERTY PROPOSED FOR ANNEXATION: 7.6+- ACRES IN JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP (Jimmie Toney & Darlene Toney, PID # 170-000068-00, 4736 East Johnstown Road, Columbus, OH 43230; and Darlene Toney, PID # 170-000069-00, 4722 East Johnstown Road, Columbus, OH 43230) TO THE CITY OF GAHANNA, AND CITY BUFFER REQUIREMENTS AS REQUIRED IN OHIO REVISED CODE SECTION 709.023.

The Resolution was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

3. Ordinances for Second Reading and Adoption:

ORD-0044-2025 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN EASEMENT AGREEMENT WITH COLUMBIA GAS OF OHIO, INC., TO PROVIDE NATURAL GAS SERVICE TO THE CELL TOWER LOCATED AT LOWER MCCORKLE PARK

The Clerk read the Ordinance by title. The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

ORD-0047-2025 AN ORDINANCE TO ACCEPT A SANITARY SEWER EASEMENT ON PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 490 AND 495 CRESCENT CIRCLE, PARCEL IDS 025-014183 AND 025-014182

The Clerk read the Ordinance by title. The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

ORD-0048-2025 AN ORDINANCE TO ACCEPT THE PUBLIC SANITARY SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE LOCATED ALONG CRESCENT CIRCLE (SA-1113)

The Clerk read the Ordinance by title. The Ordinance was adopted on the Consent Agenda.

End of Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Renner, to Pass the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

F. RESOLUTIONS:

[RES-0046-2025](#) A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE "OUR GAHANNA" STRATEGIC PLAN AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Councilmember Padova thanked the members of the Steering Committee for the time they put into the Committee and their dedication to the community.

Councilmember Schnetzer echoed thanks, adding that many of the members hosted small group sessions, and appreciated their willingness to serve the community.

President Bowers echoed sentiments of appreciation for the volunteers, along with the work of Planning NEXT and Senior Director Vollmer.

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Jones, that the Resolution be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

[RES-0053-2025](#) A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING VETERANS DAY 2025 AND HONORING THE SERVICE AND SACRIFICE OF THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE SERVED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES

President Bowers noted there was a minor amendment to the resolution following its initial publication. Section 1 adds language to include veterans and active-duty service members.

Vice President Weaver remarked that Veteran's Day is a day to acknowledge who have worn the United States Military uniform and who have defended our country. He shared a clause in the resolution that stood out to him, which reads, "our veterans have demonstrated through service and sacrifice that defending the constitution is more than a duty, it is an act of faith in the American promise and a testament to the enduring strength of our democracy." Vice President Weaver believed these sacrifices allowed Americans to enjoy many of the freedoms that we enjoy. He said that as a first generation American himself, the impact of the service of veterans serves as a promise for, and inspiration to, future generations. He also offered thanks to local veterans service organizations for their efforts in supporting veterans. He closed his remarks with an expression of gratitude for those who have served the country.

A motion was made by Weaver, seconded by Padova, that the Resolution be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

G. ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING / ADOPTION:

Recommended Amendment (Substitute EXHIBIT A):

ORD-0043-2025 AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE 2026-2030 CITY OF GAHANNA CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN, SUPERSEDING ALL PRIOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANS, AND PROVIDING FOR FUTURE SUNSET

The Clerk read the ordinance by title.

A motion was made by Renner, seconded by Schnetzer, that the Ordinance be Amended by Substitution of EXHIBIT A. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Weaver, that the Ordinance be Adopted as Amended. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

ORD-0045-2025 AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING AN ACCESS EASEMENT AGREEMENT FOR 135 SERRAN DRIVE TO PROVIDE CITY ACCESS TO EXISTING SANITARY SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE

The Clerk read the ordinance by title.

President Bowers noted there was an amendment to pass the ordinance as an emergency. The first amendment would be to the title, to add the phrase "and declaring an emergency." The second amendment would be for the inclusion of the following language: "Whereas, the administration recommends passage of this ordinance as an emergency measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, property, health, safety, and welfare of the City of Gahanna; to wit: the grantors are awaiting approval of the easement prior to placing their home on the market and a miscommunication regarding the timing of this process necessitates immediate action." The third amendment is to section three, so that it reads, "That for the reasons set forth in the preamble above, this ordinance is declared an emergency measure which shall be in full force in effect after passage by this council and on the date of signature of approval by the Mayor.

A motion was made by Schnetzer, seconded by Renner, that the Ordinance be Amended to add the Emergency Declaration language to the title, preamble, and enactment sections. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

Councilmember Jones acknowledged Council's preference not to pass ordinances with emergency but had conversations with the residents and understood it was necessary in this case for residents' peace of mind.

A motion was made by Jones, seconded by Schnetzer, that the Ordinance be Adopted, as Amended, as an Emergency. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Bowers, Jones, McGregor, Padova, Renner, Schnetzer and Weaver

H. CORRESPONDENCE AND ACTIONS:

1. Clerk - None.

2. Council

2025-0223 World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims November 16, 2025

President Bowers explained there had been a request for the City of Gahanna to recognize World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims on November 16, 2025.

I. REPRESENTATIVES:

1. Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) - Renner, Padova

Councilman Renner said the CIC met October 21, 2025. The CIC ended September with \$268,000 and a Heartland Bank loan is no longer on the ledger. Treasurer Jeff Kessler also provided a 2026 budget at the recent meeting, indicating legal fees to increase along with \$16,000 in property taxes. Kessler also removed flood insurance for buildings set to be demolished and planned to attend Franklin County Auditor's appeals board meeting regarding property tax increases on a CIC-held building. Councilman Renner shared that the CIC entered into an executive session at 8:37 a.m. and returned to regular session at 9:17 a.m. There was also an update on the Amfield House with no action taken by the board. The next meeting will be held November 18, 2025.

2. Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) - Weaver

2025-0211 Councilmember Weaver's MORPC Report to City Council 11.3.2025

Vice President Weaver encouraged colleagues to view the report and shared that the next meeting would be held November 13, 2025.

3. Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) - Padova

Councilmember Padova shared that the Holiday Lights celebration was scheduled for Sunday, November 23rd from 3:00-6:30 p.m. at the Creekside District. Volunteers are needed and potential volunteers can visit Visit Gahanna's website for more information. The Santa Race 5k and Reindeer Dash will be held December 6 at Academy Park.

4. School Board (SB) - Jones

Councilmember Jones reported on upcoming school board meetings. A board workshop is scheduled for Thursday, November 6th at 6:30 p.m. at Clark Hall. A regular board meeting is scheduled for November 20th at 6:30 p.m., also at Clark Hall. She also shared congratulations to the high school girls cross country team for earning the OHSAA State Championship.

J. OFFICIAL REPORTS:

1. Mayor

Mayor Jadwin shared that local food pantries have seen an increase in patrons in recent months. GRIN recently shared statistics indicating a 41% rise in demand. She said that within the coming days, round two of the 2025 Community Grants Program would be implemented, which would utilize funds already appropriated. The second round of applications will be open November 5th through November 14th and would specifically focus on food insecurity. Major Jadwin shifted to express her thanks to all those who provided input on the Creekside redevelopment plans. She said that feedback would continue to be reviewed and ensured speakers their feedback would play a meaningful role in the project. Mayor Jadwin also remarked on the culmination of the Our Gahanna Strategic Plan. She called the approval a milestone, adding her thanks to everyone who made the effort possible. Mayor Jadwin said that the committee ensured there would be plan that reflects the vision of the community and remarked on their efforts in connecting with the public. She also extended her gratitude to residents who participated in surveys, workshops, and events. She called the plan more than a document, adding that it is a shared vision built for the community by the community. She also thanked Council for their Veteran's Day resolution, and shared that Gahanna Lincoln High School will hold a Veteran's Day ceremony on Tuesday, November 11, at 9:30 a.m. at the Memorial Plaza. The city will also hold a memorial event that day at 11:00 a.m. at Veteran's Memorial Park.

2. City Attorney

City Attorney Tamilarasan recalled that the city previously elected to

participate in litigation with the City of Columbus for the tobacco preemption litigation. Trial court and appeals court were both in favor of the city. As of the previous week, the Ohio Supreme Court has accepted jurisdiction over the case. She stated she would keep Council updated on the case.

K. COUNCIL COMMENT:

Councilmember McGregor thanked Parks & Rec and those who helped with the Great Gahanna Goblin Fest and shared her experience volunteering at the event.

Councilmember Padova shared her appreciation to the administration for opening the community grants program to help support those in need. She remarked on GRIN's impact on the community. She stated that a cash donation to GRIN can go further than food donations. They also have a program in partnership with the schools to identify students who need assistance with food security. She also remarked that individuals have reached out to her regarding installing or filling blessing boxes and said that Gahanna is a community that shows up for one another.

Vice President Weaver echoed thanks for the reopening of the Community Grants Program. He also expressed gratitude for all who attended and shared their thoughts during the public hearing portion. He reminded everyone in attendance that the following day was Election Day and encouraged all to thank their poll workers.

President Bowers also shared gratitude for the reopening of the grant program and inquired about the amount remaining. Mayor Jadwin stated there is about \$18,000 available. President Bowers remarked that the funds could go a long way for the two food pantries in Gahanna, both GRIN and St. Matthew's. Bowers said she continues to engage in dialogue with residents regarding the Creekside projects. She will hold constituent hours on Saturday, November 8th at 10:00 a.m. at the Gahanna library branch.

L. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Council, President Bowers adjourned the

meeting at 8:11 p.m.

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

*APPROVED by the City Council, this
day of 2025.*

Merisa K. Bowers