



City of Gahanna

Meeting Minutes

Committee of the Whole

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Trenton I. Weaver, Chair

Merisa K. Bowers

Jamille Jones

Nancy R. McGregor

Kaylee Padova

Stephen A. Renner

Michael Schnetzer

Jeremy A. VanMeter, Clerk of Council

Monday, September 22, 2025

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

A. CALL TO ORDER:

Gahanna City Council met for Committee of the Whole on Monday, September 22, 2025, in Council Chambers. Vice President of Council Trenton I. Weaver, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. The agenda was published on September 19, 2025. All members were present for the meeting. There were no additions or corrections to the agenda.

B. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE:

RES-0041-2025 A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE AMOUNTS AND RATES AS DETERMINED BY THE BUDGET COMMISSION AND AUTHORIZING THE NECESSARY TAX LEVIES AND CERTIFYING THEM TO THE COUNTY AUDITOR

Director of Finance Joann Bury requested a resolution accepting, authorizing, and certifying the tax year 2025 (collection year 2026) property tax rates and amounts. She explained that the request resulted from the tax budget the city filed in July 2025 which distributed the 2.4 Mills across the General Fund, Bond Retirement, and Police Pension.

Vice President Weaver asked for discussion. Seeing none, the resolution was recommended for placement on the consent agenda.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 10/6/2025.

C. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES:

Facilities Maintenance Worker Staffing Discussion

2025-0187

Facilities Staffing Discussion Presentation 9.22.2025

Miranda Vollmer, Senior Director of Administrative Services, explained that she returned to discuss facilities staffing related to 825 Tech Center Drive. She noted that the Facilities Division sat in the Department of Public Service and that the 2025 budget included a Facilities Superintendent position. She stated that Adam Grove received a promotion from foreman to superintendent, which left the foreman position vacant. Vollmer reported that the budget also included a Service Maintenance Worker II budgeted for quarter three, and she said the city planned to fill that new position and backfill Mr. Grove's role. She added that the city would fill two Service Maintenance Worker IIs positions at this time and would not backfill the foreman. Vollmer summarized the team that evaluated staffing models, including Project Manager Jen Hamillton, Senior Deputy Director Corey Wybensinger, Senior Director Kevin Schultz, Director Shawn Anverse, Superintendent Adam Grove, Mayor Jadwin, and herself. She then reported that they recommended hiring five Service Maintenance Worker I's to perform custodial and general maintenance work at the new facility. She compared costs, stating that the current custodial contract for City Hall, the Senior Center, and the Police Department ran about \$68,000 per year for approximately 48,000 square feet, while the estimated custodial contract for 825 Tech Center Drive would run about \$400,000 for roughly 130,000 square feet. Vollmer estimated staffing costs for five employees at approximately \$500,000, including salary and benefits, explaining that her projections assumed three hires at the starting step and two hires at the end step. She noted that the city calculates costs assuming family insurance and that actual employer costs would vary if employees elected different coverage levels.

Senior Director Vollmer explained the administration's rationale for recommending city employees rather than a vendor. She said city employees would demonstrate higher ownership and dedication to maintaining the new facility, that employees would provide emergency response coverage per the union contract, and that employees could assist with facility rentals, room setups, and teardowns. She noted that employees who require access to police areas must meet Law Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS) certification requirements. She described the requirement as including a quiz and a LEADS audit, elaborating applicants could not have a felony. Vollmer added that direct city oversight would avoid problems she observed with vendors, such as employees who do not show up or provide inconsistent service, and custodial staff could perform basic maintenance tasks, such as changing light bulbs, reporting other issues to Mr. Grove. Vollmer emphasized that the Service Maintenance Worker I positions constituted civil service roles and that the city needed to run the civil service process. She requested authorization to begin that process in October 2025 and to stagger hiring so staff would not arrive too early or too

late. She warned that if the city waited until budget approval and then started the civil service process when the building opened in quarter one, it would not have employees ready due to the length of the civil service process. Vollmer stated that the city did not need a supplemental appropriation because salary savings currently existed in the relevant accounts and because the administration did not expect to hire anyone until December or January.

Councilmember Schnetzer asked for confirmation that the comparable figures totaled approximately \$400,000 for the estimated contract versus \$500,000 for the staffing estimate. Vollmer confirmed those figures. Schnetzer observed that the \$500,000 estimate represented a worst-case scenario that included family insurance and that actual costs would likely come in lower. He asked whether the administration considered a hybrid model in which a contractor staffed non-sensitive areas while city employees staffed police-related areas. Vollmer replied that the team discussed a combination of a maintenance contract and city employees, however, they believed that approach could increase costs and create scheduling complications. The administration preferred that facility renters interact with city employees rather than a vendor and the Department of Public Service preferred a single managing group, city employees, rather than managing both union staff and a vendor.

Councilmember Jones asked whether, if the measure passed, a gap would exist between the vendor contract expiring and hiring the new positions. Senior Director Vollmer said the Service Maintenance Worker I position already appeared in the contract and explained that staff would meet with the union to request that the custodial hires join the union, adding that the union would likely agree. Jones clarified that she meant a gap related to renewing the vendor contract. Vollmer replied that the Department of Public Service included six-month renewal clauses in the vendor contract to extend services as needed while the City occupied the facility. Jones concluded that no risk of breaching the contract or owing the vendor would occur and thanked Vollmer.

Councilmember McGregor asked who currently cleaned the police station and whether the city experienced problems with the contract workers. Senior Director Vollmer explained that the city's current contract offered different service levels, low, medium, and high, and that the facilities on campus received the lowest level of service. She stated the city had no experience with the vendor providing a higher level of service. The new facility would require a high level of service due to its varied flooring textures, wall finishes, and overall building requirements to maintain its standard. When Councilmember McGregor asked about security or other problems with the

contract workers, Senior Director Vollmer replied that she had none to her knowledge, noting that the vendor typically provided one to two individuals to clean all three campus facilities, since one employee could not clean 130,000 square feet in one day. Councilmember McGregor observed the roughly \$100,000 difference between the estimated contract cost and the employee cost. Senior Director Vollmer replied that the \$500,000 figure represented a maximum, and, referring to Mr. Schnetzer's point, explained that the actual cost would likely be lower depending on employees' insurance elections and hiring steps.

Vice President Weaver asked if anyone had additional questions or discussion on the item. He noted that the presentation served as a preview rather than a formal request and said he preferred bringing the custodial and maintenance work in-house. He stated that, in his view, the estimated staffing cost versus the estimated contract cost and the greater ownership and control provided by city staff produced a net benefit, and he looked forward to the topic appearing in the budget.

Senior Director Vollmer confirmed they would proceed with the civil service process and prepare to hire at the end of December or the beginning of January. Vice President Weaver said that timing reflected his preference.

D. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING:

MT-0011-2025

A MOTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF GAHANNA BIDDING FOR THE HAMILTON ROAD AND GRANVILLE STREET AND EAST JOHNSTOWN ROAD SANITARY SEWER IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS (SA-1117)

Director of Engineering Tom Komlanc said he had three items for Council's consideration. He requested permission to bid two capital projects combined for economies of scale: a sanitary sewer repair and replacement project and a new mainline extension. He described the first area as the sewer crossing along Hamilton Road and Granville Street, noting the existing sewer crossed beneath the BP fueling station and that the department would reroute that section. He described the second portion as a mainline extension along East Johnstown Road near Pamela Drive, to provide sewer service to two city properties that currently relied on septic systems.

Vice President Weaver asked whether the two parcels along East Johnstown Road related to the pre-annexation agreement. Komlanc replied that they did not. He explained the new extension would proceed immediately south or east from Pamela Drive to serve the two unserved city properties. Weaver then asked whether the work would affect the parcels described in the earlier pre-annexation agreement. Komlanc responded that those two parcels would tie into the same sewer heading up to Morse Road.

Recommendation: Adoption on Consent Agenda on 10/6/2025.

MT-0012-2025

A MOTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF GAHANNA BIDDING FOR THE ANNUAL SANITARY AND STORM SEWER CLEANING AND CCTV PROGRAM

Director of Engineering Tom Komlanc requested permission to bid on sanitary and storm cleaning and televising of the storm water and sanitary sewers in the College Park and Heritage subdivisions. He said the work would support the city's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System ("MS4") National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) commitments and the sanitary sewer Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) capacity management, operation, and maintenance efforts to keep the systems in good standing.

Recommendation: Adoption on Consent Agenda on 10/6/2025.

ORD-0041-2025

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING CRESCENT CIRCLE (ST-1111) PUBLIC ROADWAY, STORM WATER, AND DOMESTIC WATER PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Director of Engineering Tom Komlanc requested acceptance of the storm, domestic water, and roadway improvements for Crescent Circle. He said the improvements lay in the area of Crescent Place, Ortho One, the new apartments, and the Sheetz development. He reported that inspectors approved the work, that the contractor entered the punch-list phase, and that the contractor was actively addressing the punch-list items.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 10/6/2025; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda 10/20/2025.

E. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

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 CREEKSIDE DISTRICT

Presentation Overview

Director of Economic Development Jeff Gottke stated that he felt great professional pleasure to present the item and thanked the Mayor and Council for their confidence. He said Council was being asked to vote on a development agreement that would serve as the foundation for a catalyst project in the Creekside District. He explained that the project, if approved, would continue to define Creekside as a vibrant town center where people could live, work, shop, visit, dine, and interact, and would help the district define the city's identity, attract visitors, build relationships, and give

residents pride. He quoted former President Biden, saying, "this is a big deal." Gottke said the agreement marked both an end and a beginning: it concluded the development negotiation and site assembly phases and began the transformation of Creekside and a multi-year construction project. He noted that any images shown that evening were conceptual renderings only and that the appearance would likely change throughout the remainder of the approval process. He said this development agreement formed one part of a multi-agreement process that would include purchase, Tax Increment Financing (TIF) agreements, a New Community Authority (NCA) application, and other agreements that Council would see. He said the Economic Development Department and the Administration would remain involved to verify performance during and after construction and to help the public, stakeholders, businesses, and residents minimize short-term construction disruption. Gottke said the site under discussion comprised all but one of the CIC-owned properties in the Creekside District and one city-owned parking lot.

The Development Process

Director Gottke introduced Mayor Jadwin, who recounted the Creekside history and the steps that led to the proposed development agreement. Mayor Jadwin said construction in Creekside began in 2004-2005 and the area opened in May 2007; she noted the district reached eighteen years of age and that the city developed one part of one side of Mill Street while adding nothing else to the area in the intervening years. She said many parcels remained vacant for years and that many buildings had become uninhabitable.

Mayor Jadwin recalled that a local developer proposed a mixed-use project for the same parcels in 2016, that the proposal later transitioned to an apartment-only project, and that city staff negotiated that project for six years across two administrations, including Mayor Kneeland's and her own. She said those negotiations ultimately prompted the city and the Community Improvement Corporation to ask how to achieve the community's desired redevelopment and to control the properties necessary to execute that strategy.

Mayor Jadwin said the city and Gahanna Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) initiated a Creekside redevelopment strategy in May or June 2021, conducted significant public engagement over a year, and involved private developers to ensure the plan aligned with market interests. She said the plan identified parcels suitable for redevelopment and acquisition, and that CIC subsequently purchased those parcels. She reported that the CIC issued an RFP (Request for Proposals) seeking a Master Developer to pursue a cohesive approach, that the city negotiated with one respondent for nearly two years, however, those negotiations did not produce the desired outcome, and that the city then explored other developer options without finding one willing to execute a cohesive Master Plan.

Mayor Jadwin said the city connected with Connect Real Estate and Benson

Capital in early 2024, conducted extensive research including facility tours, and believed the Connect-Benson team could deliver what the community envisioned for Creekside. She described the development team as having local ties to Gahanna and central Ohio, a proven track record, and a strong reputation. Mayor Jadwin said the team appeared to offer an innovative product and construction approach, referenced a forthcoming discussion about the team's visit with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development secretary, and stated that the agreement before Council represented about a year and a half of work with that team. She acknowledged Director Gottke and Nate Green of the Montrose Group for their ongoing involvement, and she then yielded the floor back to Gottke and the development team.

Roles of Involved Partner Entities

Director Gottke thanked Mayor Jadwin and said that, if approved, the project would proceed as a public-private partnership involving the Gahanna CIC, various local and state government entities, and other partners working around a publicly informed vision. He introduced CIC colleagues George Mrus and Jody Carder, who attended the meeting, and observed that the project would require multiple organizations, approvals, and defined roles to work in concert to complete the development.

Principles of Downtown Development & Creekside Visitor Trends

Director Gottke said Mayor Jadwin did an excellent job summarizing the project and that he intended to demonstrate how the proposed development fit with public sentiment and development best practices. He said best practices showed that downtowns should serve as civic, cultural, and activity centers for the community and that the Creekside District functioned as Gahanna's downtown and public square. He said planners expected the town center to host the highest concentration of uses and residents and to radiate outward, observing that this proposal would concentrate more people in the downtown area. He stated the development adage that "retail follows rooftops," noted that businesses considered market shed and customer base when choosing locations, and said businesses tended to come last. He said the Creekside District's residential saturation did not support businesses over the past 18 years. He said downtown development should cultivate a consistent and distinct look and feel, with mixed-use development optimized by land use by placing retail on ground floors and offices and residences above. He said he borrowed from the Roger Brooks study, which recommended a "10 + 10 + 10" mix, ten boutique shops, ten restaurants, and ten destination or experience businesses, to cultivate a vibrant visitor economy, adding an extra ten uses to serve concentrated residents with weekly needs such as a market, pharmacy, or bank.

Director Gottke referenced a chart displayed on the meeting screen, explaining it originated from a 2019 study and therefore proved somewhat dated. He said the chart illustrated the types of stores that typical towns like Gahanna possess and that the Creekside downtown did not. He noted that the gray boxes indicated higher-than-average spending within the Gahanna

customer shed, and he said those categories represented a target list of business types that could succeed in the Creekside area (apparel and accessories, beauty supplies, books/comics, delicatessen/sandwich shop, pet and pet supplies store, shoes, and specialty sporting goods).

Director Gottke referenced recent data from June 2025 provided by Placer, which tracked cell phone and credit card activity. He explained that the exhibit compared 2019 (the red column on the right on the chart) to 2024 (the blue column on the left of the chart) and that the layout appeared counterintuitive. He said the 2024 data showed declines in the number of visits, visit frequency, average dwell time, and year-over-year visits, he concluded that Creekside was falling behind as a visitor destination in both visitation numbers and duration of stay. He said a refresh and reimagining were in order, both for the public plaza and for the vibrancy and foot traffic that additional residential units would bring to downtown.

Public Sentiment and Our Gahanna Feedback

Director Gottke said the public sentiment data originated in the Creekside Redevelopment Strategy from 2022. He reported that seventy percent of respondents wanted more and a greater variety of housing. He identified the top four vote getters as: more and greater variety of housing; a wine and spirits shop; experience-driven businesses; and a food market/lifestyle business. He stated that he received first-round feedback from the Our Gahanna strategy, clarifying that he would not ask the Council to read all of the comments at the meeting, and that Council would receive a copy to review later.

Development Partners

Director Gottke introduced the development partners and then invited each representative to speak.

Frank Benson IV, principal and founder of Benson Capital based in Columbus, thanked the Council, city staff, the CIC, and the community for the opportunity to present. He said he participated in a year-and-a-half to two years of constructive collaboration and sustained engagement to evaluate a joint venture to revitalize Creekside. He said the community held personal meaning for him, that he attended school in Gahanna from pre-K through graduation, and that family members still lived in Gahanna. He recalled early memories at Creekside, including playing in the creeks, buying his first bike at a Creekside shop, and attending events at Creekside Event Center. Benson stated that his team committed to strengthening Gahanna's economic and civic fabric long term and listed Benson Capital's existing Gahanna ownership interests, including Stoneridge Plaza at Hamilton and Morse roads (anchored by Kroger and Cinemark Theaters), the Vista Rocky Fork Apartments and Vista Plaza (anchored by Fresh Time), and the Crescent at Central Park project, which includes Crescent Woods apartments across from John Glenn International Airport and which he said neared completion. Benson said his approach would prioritize listening first, transparency, and partnering with the city and CIC to elevate public spaces,

support local businesses, and create a vibrant district that reflected residents' values. He said he and Connect Real Estate planned to invest significant private capital to bring new dining and entertainment, best-in-class housing with modern amenities, and enhanced trail connectivity, tying Creekside into the broader community. He thanked the Council again and turned the presentation over to Bob Lamb.

Bob Lamb identified himself as Executive Vice President of Development for Connect Real Estate, a local company that Brad DeHays founded and owned. Lamb thanked the Council and staff for two years of work on the project. He said Connect worked on mixed-use projects across central Ohio, including in Marysville, downtown Columbus, and Springfield. He described Connect's investor base as local and tied to the state and region. Lamb cited Connect projects familiar to the community, including East Market, the Trolley District near Bexley, and the Municipal Light Plant redevelopment across from the Crew arena, and he said those projects won awards for design. He also noted that Connect's Housing Blocks manufacturing facility in Columbus received an employer award in 2024. Lamb said the partnership with Benson Capital produced a development team that cared about the local community and that the Benson-Connect team offered a unique combination of skills to advance the Creekside project.

Director Gottke invited the team to discuss their innovative housing block product.

Mr. Lamb explained that Connect Housing Blocks, a company founded by Brad DeHays, produced industrialized units for apartment complexes, single-family homes, and townhomes. He said DeHays anticipated construction industry challenges, including labor, materials, and costs, and assembled a team to launch the manufacturing approach. Mr. Lamb described the manufacturing process: rolled steel moved through machines to be shaped, punched, and formed into frames; those frames became the apartment units, including kitchens, bathrooms, living rooms, and bedrooms; state inspectors reviewed the units at the manufacturing facility; and, once approved, the units shipped to the project site and set in place.

Mr. Lamb said the primary benefit of the product returned to the speed of construction. He explained that manufacturing units off-site allowed simultaneous site work and unit production, reduced the number of on-site workers and parking impacts for surrounding businesses, and shortened the construction timeline. He said it could be "a third or more in a quicker response time." He added that the approach allowed higher construction standards, materially reduced waste (from about 1/3 < 70 percent), enabled steel recycling, reduced truck traffic and on-site waste, and produced a more environmentally friendly product. He said the product could achieve "lead silver certification."

Project Details - Phase I Development

Director Gottke described the proposed Creekside development site and key project details. He said the site included all but one of the CIC-owned

properties in the Creekside District and the existing city parking lot at Town and High Streets. He said the proposal consisted of one project delivered in two consecutive phases. He said Phase One would include two buildings, one on either side of Mill Street just north of the existing Creekside building and directly across the street from Walnut to Carpenter, totaling 263 apartments, a hotel with 55-70 rooms, two restaurants, a co-working space, and a parking garage. He said the development would be self-parked and would not require additional city parking facilities. He said the hotel and apartments would feature amenities such as a pool, a gym and a branded connector bridge over the street to link the two buildings and provide access between parking, amenities, and residential and hotel spaces.

Director Gottke clarified that the images shown represented conceptual renderings only and might not reflect final exterior finishes or design. He described perspectives that showed a restaurant space looking north from Walnut Street, the hotel entrance, a view looking south down Mill Street from Carpenter depicting a six- and seven-story building with street trees and pedestrian walkways, an above-plaza view showing the hotel foreground and residences behind with a rooftop patio, and a zoomed-out view that revealed the parking garage on the eastern building and parking allocation with approximately one parking space per floor and designated unit, public, and hotel parking. He invited Mr. Benson and Mr. Lamb to add comments; they had nothing to add.

Project Details - Phase II Development

Director Gottke stated that Phase Two contemplated 24 townhome units with first-floor parking for each unit, all self-parked and featuring private patios. He noted the drawing currently showed four rectangles and that the team continued to work on the site plan. He added that the site plan did not need to be complete for the development agreement to move forward and said they would explain why. He asked if there was anything further regarding the townhomes. There was nothing additional from the developer's team.

Development Agreement Terms

Director Gottke introduced Mr. Nate Green of the Montrose Group, who provided an orientation to the development agreement.

Mr. Green explained that the development agreement constituted a four-party agreement among the City, the Gahanna CIC, Connect Realty, and Benson Capital. He said the agreement provided the economic framework for the parties to invest the necessary capital and, in return, granted the developers exclusive rights to develop the site. He noted that the document did not address planning or design elements and that those matters would proceed through the planning, zoning, and engineering processes. Mr. Green said the project divided into two phases: Phase One would be the mixed-use project on Mill Street and Phase Two would be the townhome project on High Street. He stated the agreement set out the purchase and sale of the properties to the developer through separate purchase and sale agreements for Phase One and Phase Two, which would

be executed after the development agreement. Mr. Green said the sale price in the agreement equaled \$100 and that the land would effectively constitute the City's and CIC's investment in the project. He identified several exhibits to the agreement, including the purchase and sale agreements for both phases, a form of completion guaranty that established the developer's time frames to complete both phases, a form of construction manager at risk for off-site improvements, and a reconveyance provision should the developer fail to complete the obligations within the required time frames.

Mr. Green outlined the economic development incentives contained in the agreement. He said the project lay within a pre-1994 Community Reinvestment Area and provided a 15-year 100% tax abatement. He said the agreement included a non-school Tax Increment Financing (TIF) whereby the taxes generated from the project in the first 15 years would come from land and then, in the last 15 years, from land and building, and that the portion not allocated to the school would fund on-site and off-site improvements through the TIF. He said the agreement also contemplated the potential formation of a New Community Authority (NCA) with a hotel charge, a potential retail sales charge, and a potential millage charge, and that it contemplated pursuing other state programs, including the Transformational Mixed-Use Development (TMUD) tax credit.

Comparable Regional Projects

Mr. Nate Green of the Montrose Group said he, Director Gottke, and Mayor Jadwin discussed the value of noting other regional projects that used a public-private partnership model. He cited Whitehall's Norton Crossing project at Broad and Hamilton, saying the site previously contained apartment units, the city purchased the site and contributed it to Continental Real Estate, and the project represented a \$55 million mixed-use development for which the city contributed \$5 million worth of land. He said Dublin's Bridge Park involved roughly \$12 million in assembled land contributed by the city, along with other contributions such as a TIF and an NCA. He said the Marysville/Union County CIC and the city of Marysville invested \$7 million for the purchase and demolition of buildings, that Connect was working on that project, and that the project included a TIF, an NCA, and a CRA. He said Lancaster had an industrial project housing Magna Seating that involved CIC-owned property the city originally owned and then conveyed to Magna Seating. He said these projects provided comparisons as the council considered how to structure the development agreement.

Overall Financial Impact

Director Gottke presented the projected impacts of the Creekside development proposal. He stated the total construction cost would amount to approximately \$105 million and that the project would improve the property by that amount. He reported the annual contributions and economic effects as follows: the direct, indirect, and induced gross domestic product for residents, hotel, and restaurant activity would total about \$7.1 million within zip code 43230; the total economic impact would reach approximately \$10.4 million annually; annual local, state, and federal tax revenue would total

about \$1.4 million; labor income would equal about \$3.267 million annually, which would generate city income tax; the site would support about 74 jobs on site, primarily in hotel and retail/restaurant uses.

Director Gottke reviewed the “gives and gets.” He said the city would provide the existing CRA tax exemption by right. Under the agreement the parties agreed to share 50 percent of TIF payments until eligible costs were paid, to share 50 percent of NCA fees until eligible costs were paid, and to provide a 50 percent reduction in city review and approval fees. He noted nonfinancial obligations on the city’s side, including conveyance of the High Street parking lot and the need to vacate one block of North Street and one block of Lodge Alley between High and Mill Streets to construct the east building and parking garage.

Director Gottke summarized what the city would receive. He said the city would receive income tax, 50 percent of TIF payments and 50 percent of NCA fees until the fees were paid, with the remainder flowing to the city thereafter. He reported that the developer, Connect, agreed to support organizations and activities with a presence at Creekside for ten years through manpower, volunteer time, or financial support; to create internship programs with the Gahanna School District for ten years; to extend the existing multi-use path to Carpenter Road; to install a public art feature in Lintner Park; and to deed unwanted portions of the creek bank back to the city. He said the proposed parking structure would offset the loss of the High Street parking lot and that the team was conducting a parking demand study. He said the developer agreed to reserve 10 percent of the residential units as affordable housing targeted to households at 80 percent of area median income.

Director Gottke then presented a 30-year financial impact analysis for the city. He said the city would receive modest property tax millage revenue, just under \$0.5 million over the term of the CRA. He estimated the TIF would generate about \$10 million over its life and said a 50/50 split would yield roughly \$5 million to the city. He reported that quantified, the city “gives” totaled about \$5.5 million (including the shared TIF and other items) and that the city’s returns would total just over \$23.5 million over 30 years. He broke down the city’s projected receipts as approximately \$16.1 million in income tax from residents, about \$2.4 million in income tax from workers, about \$5 million in shared TIF receipts, and an additional, to-be-determined portion equal to 50 percent of NCA fees. He noted the analysis did not include the value of the approximately \$100 million in site improvements.

Timeline & Accountability

Director Gottke said the completion guarantee contained accountability timelines and measures. He stated the agreement required the developer to complete phase one within thirty-six months of receiving all necessary approvals. He said the parties would file paperwork to form the NCA within six months and that a sixty-day due diligence and inspection period would commence upon signing the agreement. He explained that, once the construction plans for phase one were submitted, the submission for the

phase two construction plan would occur eighteen months later, and that the parties intended to run the two phases as concurrently as practicable. Director Gottke said the agreement included reconveyance language that would return parcels to the city or the CIC if the developer did not obtain a Certificate of Occupancy within the thirty-six-month period. He said the city would insist on step-in rights for any financing or loan instrument so the city could assume the loan in the event of a default and continue the project to avoid a partially completed development.

Director Gottke said the measures aimed to protect the city and ensure the project would reach completion. He thanked the Council and offered to take questions.

Questions from Council

Vice President Weaver thanked Director Gottke, Mayor Jadwin, Nate Green, Frank Benson, and Bob Lamb for attending and noted he anticipated many questions. He said he and Director Gottke agreed the item should return to Committee of the Whole, at a minimum, to give Council time to review the agreement. He stated next week was a fifth Monday and there would be no meeting, that a request existed to move the item for first reading on October 6, 2025, and that the item would, at a minimum, return to committee on October 13, 2025. He then invited discussion.

Councilmember Renner thanked Director Gottke for his summary and noted Council held multiple Executive Sessions. He warned members might sound repetitive as they asked questions and then asked when the development agreement exhibits would be completed, observing that the agreement did not contain many exhibits. Mr. Green replied that Council should have at least the form agreements. He added that the items missing from the agreement included the on-site and off-site improvements and that some exhibits would be inserted after the fact. Director Gottke asked whether it proved uncommon to insert certain items after the development agreement. He said, from his experience, the development agreement provided the project framework while some details, such as a site plan produced from a property survey and included with the purchase and sale agreement, might follow and would not materially alter the agreement. Mr. Green agreed with Gottke. He explained that the team could insert Exhibit A-1 (the development site) and Exhibit A-2 (the development area) quickly, even the next day. He said the development plan (Exhibit B) would be inserted later during the inspection period because it would change as Connect and Benson completed their review and obtained Planning Commission approvals. He concluded that the on-site and off-site improvement exhibits would come later because the team did not yet know what those improvements would look like.

Mr. Lamb explained that, in this type of agreement, the developer would work with city staff during the review and development process and, as the required on-site and off-site improvements became clear, perform the work as part of the permit approval process. He said a traffic study would determine required turn lanes or signals and that, following approval from the

City Engineer, the developers would undertake the associated work.

Councilmember Renner observed that many moving parts remained and requested a schedule or timeline showing when the public could expect to see the various components referenced in the agreement. He acknowledged the sequential nature of the approvals but asked that the parties produce a relative timeframe and periodic update schedule for Council and the public. Director Gottke responded that certain items, such as the traffic impact study, constituted standard Engineering Department requirements and would appear on the department's calendar; he noted the city would not have that study completed before Council action. Mr. Green added that the overall development schedule would follow the inspection and due diligence period, explaining that the team could not set the schedule now because they had not completed inspections and due diligence. He said the inspection findings would dictate the timing for subsequent steps and construction.

Councilmember Renner thanked the speakers and asked Director Gottke to explain who would manage the project and how Council would receive updates, referencing the Administration's management of the 825 Tech Center Drive project and asking for an overview of project management and reporting if the development agreement proceeded.

Director Gottke explained that this project differed from 825 Tech Center Drive because the city did not own the land or building and would not manage day-to-day construction activities. He said the developer would manage the project, while city and state departments would handle permitting and inspections. Gottke stated that the development agreement required the developer to designate a city point of contact, likely within the Economic Development Department, and required the developer to provide biannual updates. He said the city would supplement those updates with frequent public communications through the Communications and Marketing and Economic Development departments, including a dedicated project website, progress reports, and notices about road closures or sidewalk changes. Gottke asked if that response answered the question.

Councilmember Renner replied that Gottke's answer addressed his question and asked whether Gottke's department would manage the public communications. Gottke said the department assignment remained to be determined but that he expected his department to manage those tasks. Mayor Jadwin concurred.

Councilmember Renner said the public would feel anxious about the project and asked for managed expectations and a public schedule. He then invited the Connect team to address sustainability and to reiterate the items shown on their presentation slide. Mr. Lamb stated that Connect would use Connect Housing Blocks industrialized units for the project. He said those units reduced on-site waste by approximately 70 percent through material efficiencies and by producing rolled steel components in a controlled facility instead of using on-site wood-frame construction that lost material to exposure. He added that the industrialized approach produced less site traffic and less construction waste. Mr. Lamb said Connect worked with a third party to determine lead certification of its units, that the firm committed to that verification for this project, and that they would have a third party

verify the manufacturing work rather than claiming certification at this time.

Councilmember Renner asked whether Connect could quantify benefits such as reduced traffic congestion and waste from prior projects. Mr. Lamb replied that the 70 percent reduction reflected results from previous projects using the same materials and that the primary quantifiable benefit came from a shortened construction period, which reduced impacts on surrounding properties and businesses and lowered traffic congestion. Councilmember Renner then asked about power requirements and building performance. Mr. Lamb replied that Connect had not reached a point at which it could guarantee an energy supplier, but he said the team intended to work with the community on how to handle that issue.

Councilmember Jones asked Mr. Lamb to confirm the number of apartment units, the meaning of the 10% Area Median Income (AMI) commitment for the community, and the anticipated rent ranges for those affordable units. Mr. Lamb responded that phase one proposed 263 apartment units and that the 10% affordability commitment equated to approximately 26 units, which he said would be rounded to 27. He stated that the affordability range would follow the AMI standard in effect and approved by the county at the time the units opened, and therefore he could not provide exact rent ranges at that time. He explained that the AMI standard derived from federal and state definitions and the county's adoption. Councilmember Jones asked about unit types. Mr. Lamb replied that the development would include a mixture of one and two-bedroom units and likely a limited number of three-bedroom units, though the number of three-bedroom units remained undetermined.

Councilmember McGregor recalled that, when Creekside originally opened, the city hired an engineering firm to provide construction oversight and she urged that the city ensure adequate oversight on this project. She thanked the team for protecting the flood plain by pulling the project back, even though that action reduced the unit count. She expressed strong concern about losing the High Street parking lot because many residents used that lot in the evenings. She asked whether the parking in the proposed garage would be free or paid. Mr. Lamb replied that he viewed the parking spots serving retail as free parking for at least a period of time, but he said the details and duration required further work. He stated that the garage would remain privately owned and that the garage's primary purpose would serve the development's retail uses and residents. He said the garage would provide parking for retail visitors and that the structure would provide more parking than the project alone required, but he could not guarantee that it would accommodate every visitor at any time. Councilmember McGregor noted that many Sanctuary event attendees currently used the High Street lot and said she worried those visitors would have nowhere else to park.

President Bowers asked whether the fiscal impact analysis could include an estimate of city service costs to maintain and support the additional residents the project would add and requested that staff return with that estimate. She thanked the development team for their time and engagement with Council. President Bowers asked whether the development team would continue to pursue the parcel immediately north of the city parking lot (between the Bauer House and the concrete block building, also referred to as the "Kumon

Building"). Mr. Lamb replied that they would continue to attempt to engage that owner, that they had not succeeded to date, and that the parcel was not critical for phase two of the project.

President Bowers asked whether the proposed co-working space would occupy the second floor. Mr. Lamb replied that he expected the co-working space to operate in partnership with the hotel, most likely on the first floor, and that planning of detailed uses had not occurred. He added that the co-working facility would function as a mixed concept available to hotel guests and to other users. President Bowers asked whether the developers saw that co-working model work elsewhere. Mr. Lamb said they currently operated a co-working space called The Branch in the Trolley District, which formed part of a building with multiple end users, and that the Creekside implementation would function somewhat differently. When President Bowers asked whether the co-working model would operate on a subscription basis, Mr. Lamb confirmed.

President Bowers asked whether the project would include any retail beyond the two restaurants and whether it would include office space beyond the co-working area. Mr. Lamb replied no to both questions. President Bowers asked about bicycle accessibility and trail connections. Mr. Lamb said the project would extend the trail in compliance with city standards and that the design would include bike racks and other amenities to support bicycle access.

President Bowers asked whether Article 9, which discussed eligible improvements, intended to identify only on-site and off-site improvements eligible for NCA reimbursement or whether the schedule would also flesh out the broader scope of the development project. Mr. Green replied that the schedule would identify improvements for the TIF and the NCA and would also encompass all eligible on-site improvements, making it larger than only those items eligible for TIF and NCA. President Bowers expressed concern that, despite the many meetings and renderings, the draft development agreement lacked sufficient structure to reflect Council's expectations and asked whether the parties could identify at least a range of the improvements being discussed. Mr. Green said they could talk through that and invited Bob Lamb to speak.

Mr. Lamb stated that the developers would adhere to the city's review and approval process, engage the city engineer for approvals, and work with the Planning Department on exterior, site plan, and design review approvals. He said the development agreement represented a first step in a multi-action process and that the city's approval processes would prevent the developers from undertaking work the city did not want. President Bowers acknowledged that the Engineering Department would conduct a different analysis than the use-based discussions Council and the CIC undertook, and she thanked Mr. Lamb for his public service experience and his engagement in the process. Mr. Lamb asked whether Council's concern related to the uses and offered to add an exhibit to the development agreement to address those concerns. Mr. Green agreed that the parties could work to narrow or clarify the uses and follow up as needed. President Bowers noted that recital paragraph C

could be tightened, and Mr. Green said the development team would be happy to work on that revision.

Vice President Weaver thanked the development team and the CIC for their long-term work on the project and raised a question about the project's reliance on external funding. He asked whether a "but for" threshold existed, that is, whether the project would fail to proceed if the team did not secure state funding or a Transformational Mixed-Use Development (TMUD) tax credit. Mr. Lamb replied that Connect specialized in pursuing local, state, and federal programs and often brought tax credits and other financing to projects, however, he could not guarantee TMUD success and only promised the team would pursue it.

President Bowers asked whether the team could still move forward if they did not obtain a TMUD. Mr. Lamb responded that the project would become more difficult without a TMUD, that TMUD would represent a critical component for the team, and that he could not give a final answer about whether the project would proceed without other financing structures.

Vice President Weaver asked for an estimate of the potential TMUD amount. Mr. Green stated that the TMUD could provide up to 10 percent of project costs; for a \$100 million project that potential equated to \$10 million. He added that Connect might apply for less and that a realistic request would likely fall between \$5 million and \$10 million. Mr. Green explained that TMUD credits tie to insurance premium tax and require entities that can use those credits; he noted the program's competitiveness and that recent guideline changes would require city support. He said the team would return to Council to request that support.

Vice President Weaver observed that some project elements fell inside the city's control and some did not, and he thanked Mr. Green and Director Gottke for their expertise in pursuing external funding. He noted the development report's statement that the agreement remained under legal review and asked the City Attorney for any concerns. City Attorney Tamilarasan reported that she continued to prepare a red line of the agreement and that her comments consisted mostly of minor items. She identified the primary outstanding issue as completing and incorporating the exhibits referenced in the document. She said she would circulate her red line to the Administration, probably that week, and be prepared to address any unresolved items before the next Committee meeting. Vice President Weaver concluded by thanking the developers for the tour of the Trolley Barn project, praising the housing-block product, reiterating concern about traffic impacts and noting that Director Komlanc's team would review traffic matters, stating that he appreciated seeing the item on the agenda.

Councilmember Padova thanked the development team for attending and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to tour the Connect housing-block manufacturing facility with Mr. Lamb. She spoke highly of the tour, noted the visible presence of the blocks on the facility's second floor, and commended the team's investment in people. Councilmember Padova asked for the estimated number of hotel rooms. Mr. Lamb replied that the hotel would

include between fifty-five and seventy rooms.

Councilmember Padova asked whether the city would convey all of the land at once or convey land for phase one and phase two in separate transactions. Mr. Green said the project would use two separate purchase-and-sale agreements (PSAs). He explained that phase one land would convey in the PSA immediately after the parties signed the development agreement and said phase two could take more time but that the team could convey both phases at or near the same time.

Councilmember Padova noted that the development agreement did not fix the timing. Mr. Green added that the current draft stated the transfers would happen at the same time, but confirmed the parties could phase the PSAs because the townhomes constituted phase two. Mr. Lamb said the team planned the townhomes as phase two and preferred to secure land earlier rather than later, so engineers and architects could proceed. He said the team would accept two separate PSAs and expected the transfers to occur fairly close in time, even if not simultaneous.

President Bowers stated a strong preference that the Council handle the two land transfers as two separate Council actions, with the second action deferred. She clarified that she sought two separate Council ordinances rather than a single ordinance covering both transfers. Mr. Lamb asked whether President Bowers sought to remove phase two from the development agreement. President Bowers said she sought to postpone the second Council action. Mr. Lamb said the team would accept a delay of the land transfer to the Connect/Benson entity but asked that the Council approve the overall project within the development agreement. Mr. Green agreed. Director Gottke said financing considerations typically required packaging related project components together. Mr. Lamb responded that the parcels could finance separately but he emphasized that demonstrating land control mattered to prospective investors. Director Gottke suggested possible accommodations to address concerns, such as a parking-lot leaseback if the city needed continued parking access, clarifying he was only speculating as to what Bowers' concerns might be. President Bowers identified two concerns: responding to Councilmember McGregor's parking-lot issue and maintaining a degree of city control to mitigate risk, asking whether the parties could include a stopgap or safety valve for further review. Mr. Green and Mr. Lamb discussed timing and reconveyance provisions. Mr. Green said the draft required phase-two permits to occur within a specified interval after phase-one approvals, and he explained that the agreement would include reconveyance provisions to return parcels to the city if the developers failed to complete the project in the prescribed time. He said those timing measures and reconveyance language aimed to mitigate city risk if the project did not proceed. Mayor Jadwin confirmed that the development agreement included reconveyance language to mitigate city risk and to enable the city to reacquire property if the developers did not proceed with phase two in a timely manner, or at all.

Councilmember McGregor asked the developers to explain Section 6.11, noting her concern that the provision stated the developers would have the exclusive right to "sell, lease, or own, market, and otherwise develop any or

all portions of the property." Mr. Lamb explained that the section highlighted the fact that the city would transfer the property to the developer and that, as the developer of the project site for both phase one and phase two, the developer would hold the legal right to develop the property under the terms of the development agreement. President Bowers added that the clause operated "in accord subject to and in accordance with this agreement," and she said that language functioned as the controlling condition. Councilmember McGregor acknowledged the clarification.

Councilmember Padova observed that the [former Harry Bauer House] in question had historical significance in Gahanna and reported that a resident recently sent a photograph showing a pleasing interior. She expressed concern that the city could demolish the house and then fail to complete phase two, leaving the community without the historic structure and without replacement development. She asked the developers to ensure they would not demolish the house before confirming that phase two would proceed. Mr. Lamb apologized for not knowing municipal code specifics, said the developers would need municipal approval to demolish a structure, and reported that he received a confirming head nod from the room. He stated that the developers could not proceed to demolish without the city's approval and that they would follow the required process. Director Gottke said he visited the house, declined to comment on its condition during the meeting, and said the administration and he were evaluating options. He said the city could consider historically appropriate actions to commemorate the property if demolition became necessary.

Vice President Weaver thanked the group, noted no further discussion at that time, and directed staff to schedule the item for First Reading on October 6, 2025, with an expectation that it would return to Committee of the Whole on October 13, 2025.

**Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 10/6/2025;
Further Discussion in Committee of the Whole scheduled 10/13/2025;
Anticipated Second Reading/Adoption on Regular Agenda on 10/20/2025.**

F. ITEMS FROM THE SENIOR DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS:

Without objection, the Chair announced a brief five-minute recess for Committee of the Whole. The Committee stood in recess at 9:07 p.m. and reconvened at 9:12 p.m.

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

Kevin Schultz, Senior Director of Operations, presented the annual update to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). He explained that the presentation followed the same cadence as the previous two years and that he reviewed a variety of introductory slides to give viewers a holistic understanding of the CIP. Schultz reported that he had updated the general plan language throughout the document and revised phrasing to state actions affirmatively

rather than hypothetically. He said he would review chapter 3 with the Council to explain changes to the plan phasing. He added that he updated all financial information and summaries to reflect the new five-year plan period of 2026-2030 and removed completed projects that appeared on last year's lists. Schultz noted that he updated chapter 10, including all detailed worksheets and summary worksheets, and added a project listing with funding sources to chapter 10 (section 10.2). He explained that the agenda packet included a summary list intended for the public and Council that identified the 2026 funding requests for the capital budget and that those requests would be relevant later in the presentation. Schultz reviewed the CIP definition and purpose, explaining that the CIP served as a working plan and management tool used by local governments to identify, prioritize, budget, and construct capital improvements over a given time period. He stated that the plan period was updated to 2026-2030. He emphasized that the CIP provided a systematic way to evaluate competing demands, sequence projects, and make the most efficient use of limited taxpayer dollars rather than proceeding in a "willy-nilly" manner. Finally, Schultz said the capital planning process drew guidance from a variety of existing plans and that he updated a slide to reference Our Gahanna. He also changed the term "thoroughfare plan" to "Comprehensive Transportation and Mobility Plan" on the slide for continuity.

Funding Capital Projects

Senior Director Schultz reviewed funding sources for the CIP. He said the largest pot of money was the Issue 12 capital fund and that Issue 12 passed in May 2019. He said that fund provided the financial resources to address deferred maintenance discussed in CIP Advisory Committee meetings and departmental conversations. He added that Issue 12 did not constitute the only funding mechanism and listed special and proprietary funds, utility funds, grant opportunities, TIF dollars, special assessments, and tax levies as additional sources. He noted this slide detailed each of those mechanisms.

Capital Planning Process

Senior Director Schultz explained that the capital planning process was streamlined and that staff followed the process for about three years. He said departments assessed their projects and submitted worksheets and justifications to the Mayor's Office, to him, to Senior Director Vollmer, and to other staff who participated in the review. He said staff then presented the projects to the CIP Advisory Committee and that Council ultimately acted either through a plan update or, when necessary, supplemental appropriations. He added that the approved projects then entered the CIP. Schultz emphasized that the procurement and legislative processes never got circumvented despite having a capital improvement plan. He noted that directors continued to request supplemental appropriations and that Director Komlanc brought permissions to bid that evening as part of the normal process. He said the slide also identified the annual capital budget process and that staff would review what that process would look like in the coming weeks.

Project Priorities & Plan Phases

Senior Director Schultz reported that the project priorities had not necessarily changed and that he kept the same priority categories. He said the city assigned Priority One to imperative projects that the city "must do," Priority Two to essential projects that the city "should do," and Priority Three to important projects that the city "could do." He explained that the plan also identified capital maintenance items that met the capital threshold for value and life cycle, giving life-cycle replacement of servers and network devices, managed by IT, as an example. Schultz said staff adjusted the plan phases and substantially revised the narrative in Chapter 3, reorganizing projects into assessment, actionable, and visionary phases. He explained that assessment projects involved feasibility work, that projects would move into an actionable phase once they entered design or active construction, and that visionary projects remained conceptual and lacked a fully defined scale, scope, or worksheet. He added that the bullets in the plan defined what the Council would see for each project in the CIP.

Completed Projects

Senior Director Schultz reported on recently completed capital projects and their current statuses. He said several projects progressed through the warranty phase and that some exited warranty and were fully closed. He noted the city no longer held retainage for those closed projects and that escrow monies returned in some instances. Schultz listed completed or nearly completed projects, including the Hamilton Road Bridge (he added an asterisk and said he hoped the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) would finish the remaining work in the next few weeks so the bridge could fully open), speed awareness signs, the Claycraft Road water line, the Havens Road water line, the water tower rehabilitation project, and the Academy Park Mountain Bike Trail. He apologized for any repetition with last year's presentation and explained that some projects appeared on both lists because they finished after last year's update.

Under Construction

Senior Director Schultz presented projects currently under construction. He said the city upgraded two traffic control cabinets throughout the city and painted over 300 street lights. He reported that the Morse Road (US-62/Reynoldsburg-New Albany) roundabout remained under construction as a joint project with the City of New Albany, Franklin County, the Franklin County Engineer's Office, and the City of Gahanna to repave that section of Morse Road. Schultz said the Lincoln High School capacity improvements and the sanitary/storm sewer Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) project moved to the bidding stage and that the Taylor Road water line would go out to bid for construction, with work expected to start later this year or early next year. He reported that the administration executed the construction agreement for Price Road House a few weeks earlier and that construction began one to two weeks before the meeting. He noted that 825 Tech Center Drive remained on the project list. Schultz said Chief Spence sent an email

earlier that day reporting that two emergency sirens were replaced and that Franklin County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) would complete a third siren this year. He concluded by noting that the remaining items on the slide were information-technology projects.

Canceled Projects

Senior Director Schultz reviewed the slide listing cancelled projects. He said staff identified one cancelled project: the parks and recreation core systems programming project. He explained that the department would perform a technology review and upgrade the existing Vermont Systems software package rather than replace the system entirely.

President Bowers asked whether residents should continue to interface with RecTrac. Schultz replied that staff would review the technology stack and the user interface, and that, based on enhancements RecTrac made, they would develop a list of improvements and implement those improvements over time. He added that the work would roll into the Department of Parks and Recreation operating budget for funding.

Capital Investments 2026-2030

Senior Director Schultz reviewed the capital investments planned for 2026-2030. He explained the plan organized projects into six categories, noted the number of projects in each category appeared in parentheses, and said the five-year projection identified actionable projects and their funding years. He noted some projects would receive funding over multiple years and that the pie chart was updated; he explained the city facilities percentage were higher in the previous document because it included approximately \$60 million for 825 Tech Center Drive. He said the plan projected about \$113 million in capital expenditures across all sectors from 2026 through 2030.

Councilmember McGregor asked whether police capital projects were distributed among those categories. Schultz replied yes, stating police cruiser replacements appeared under equipment and police technology projects appeared under the technology program.

Senior Director Schultz reviewed the next set of slides, explaining that the presentation contained one slide for each of the plan's six sections. He said the left side of each slide showed the number of identified projects for 2026-2030 and the projected investment over that five-year period, noting the transportation and mobility section reflected a projected investment of approximately \$39 million (rounded). He explained that the slide showed the 2026 request and that the right side displayed the detailed 2026 request by project. He stated the transportation and mobility 2026 request totaled \$8.1 million and that the street program, traffic control and street light improvements, West Johnstown Road improvements, and comprehensive transportation and mobility plan programming drove the \$39 million projection. He added a reference box for quick navigation to the full document: the section summary on page 20, the five-year projection on page

38, and the funding summary on page 148. Schultz next discussed utility systems, sanitary sewer, storm water, and potable water, saying the plan identified eight projects for 2026-2030 with a projected investment of \$28 million and a 2026 request of \$2.1 million. He explained the Westside Sewer Project drove a large portion of the \$28 million because it combined water, storm water, sanitary sewer, and a road improvement that the transportation and mobility section would cover. He said the 2026 request remained relatively small because larger expenditures would occur after design and when construction contracts began in out years, and he again pointed attendees to the related page ranges in the packet.

Senior Director Schultz described the Parks and Recreation section as broken into four parts, including play features and surfaces, parks renovation projects, trail projects, and pool infrastructure, and said the plan identified 33 projects for 2026-2030 with a projected investment of about \$27 million. He stated the 2026 request totaled just under \$8 million and that Academy Park accounted for a \$6 million ask within the \$7.8 million figure shown for 2026. He reminded Council that staff consolidated several individual Academy Park efforts into a single project, including parking lot, trail head, fencing, and play structure, because the work occurred concurrently and design under a single contract made budgeting and adjustments easier. Schultz identified two large trail projects, the Link to Literacy and the Big Walnut trail, as major drivers of the \$27 million total and noted that LinkUS would provide a substantial portion of funding for the Big Walnut project; he cautioned members not to quote the specific LinkUS number from memory and said he presented both the LinkUS portion and the city portion together to arrive at the \$27 million total.

Councilmember Schnetzer asked whether the Academy Park project expanded. He said he remembered a sum of about \$3-3.5 million when adding the individual projects, noted the parking lot re-pavement/expansion at roughly \$800,000, the trail head, fencing of about \$70,000 to \$80,000, and inclusion of a shelter, asking whether the scope changed or whether costs increased. Director Schultz replied that the scope remained largely the same. He explained that the parking lot expansion increased the total, and that staff began accounting for delivery costs, expenses to deliver and construct the project, that previously did not appear in the project totals. He said underestimates for the shelter facility (including restrooms and storage) and the trail head also raised the total. Schultz stated those factors and the delivery costs produced the approximately \$6 million figure shown, and he clarified that the \$6 million represented the 2026 request and did not reflect other monies already appropriated for design. Schnetzer asked whether the conceptual drawings provided in October 2024 remained valid. Schultz answered yes.

Councilmember Padova thanked staff and asked about the aquatics assessment and facilities plan. She noted the master plan appeared as "completed" in the status but did not appear elsewhere in the CIP, and she asked where the next action would go. Director Schultz said staff completed the master plan. He proposed adding a visionary project to the CIP to reflect the master plan components, explained that a visionary entry would lack

scope and detail, and said the master plan identified community wants but had not tied those wants to specific resources. Schultz noted other documents, such as the Clark State Road multi-use trail study, remained unincorporated until they moved through the planning process, and he said the city must organize, rank, prioritize, and resource projects identified in broader plans. He offered to add a visionary project for the aquatics master plan or, if Council preferred, to identify it more specifically. Padova said the plan layout (actionable, assessment, identified, visionary) felt odd because the aquatics assessment already seemed complete; she worried staff would move the item from assessment back to visionary and that the work might get lost. She said the community invested money in the assessment and that pools likely needed substantial upgrades; she wanted the aquatics work to remain on Council's radar for planning rather than disappear into the CIP document. Schultz replied that Council could classify the aquatics master plan as "identified" if they preferred. He explained that an assessment normally included specific feasibility tasks such as geotechnical work, whereas a master plan provided only conceptual information and cost estimates that depended on consultant assumptions. Schultz recalled the master plan's high-level cost estimate (which he believed had been about \$30 million), and Padova said she remembered a figure closer to \$20 million. Padova reiterated her concern that the city should not let the aquatics work get lost and that the department should keep it visible for future planning.

Councilmember McGregor asked about the pool lighting, noting it was expected to last ten years; she asked whether the lighting continued to hold up. Director Schultz replied that, to his knowledge, the lighting continued to hold. Mayor Jadwin said she believed the installation was in its eighth year. Schultz clarified that the lighting was in its eighth year, though the original expectation was six years, and he reiterated the installation year as 2018. Mayor Jadwin stated she thought the lifespan was ten years. McGregor acknowledged the correction, said she thought the expected life was longer, and noted her ongoing concern.

President Bowers asked about the Creekside Flood Mitigation and Plaza Redevelopment. Director Schultz asked to address facilities first and then respond to her question; President Bowers agreed. Schultz then reported that the city facilities category for 2026-2030 included three identified projects totaling \$26 million. He noted an asterisk because the administration would not include the \$24 million Creekside Flood Mitigation and Plaza Improvements in the 2026 capital budget request to be presented in October 2025. Schultz explained that he included the project on the plan because it qualified as an actionable project that remained in design and relatively far along; he said staff would confirm budgets and planned much deeper conversations about the project and its funding mechanism, similar to the approach used for 825 Tech Center Drive. He added that the plan still included investigatory funds for a parks and service maintenance complex and \$300,000 for strategic land acquisition related to CIC endeavors.

President Bowers pointed out an apparent discrepancy between figures for the project. She said the summary on page 29 identified \$25 million, while the appendix showed about \$10 million, and she asked whether those

amounts reflected five-year and ten-year projections. Schultz replied that staff likely plugged in some projected debt service numbers and that those figures should be adjusted; he said he would review the discrepancy. President Bowers asked for confirmation that the administration had not made a final decision regarding the Creekside project. Schultz answered, "100 percent." President Bowers said the city still needed to evaluate whether the project represented a necessity, a recommended action, or a desirable project. Schultz concluded that staff would continue the conversation and stated that the administration anticipated funding for a plaza project; he added, as presented, "it's not quite a \$24 million project, but a \$24 million project as it relates to the plaza."

Councilmember Padova noted a clerical error on the Creekside Flood Mitigation page. The project overview contained the description for the services complex rather than the Creekside project.

President Bowers asked for clarification about the 2026 requests by project category. She observed that the city facilities category showed a \$400,000 request on the insert, while the back of the book showed Creekside as zero, and she asked whether the \$400,000 request covered other projects. Director Schultz confirmed that the 2026 budget request sheet the councilmembers held was accurate. He explained that staff would return with a separate budget request for Creekside later and that the administration would not include Creekside funding in the October 2026 budget presentation because they did not yet have finalized numbers. Schultz compared the forthcoming process to the approach used for 825 Tech Center Drive, noting that the Creekside figure remained preliminary and that staff anticipated requesting appropriation in early 2026. President Bowers asked whether staff would update the asterisked Creekside entry before Council approved the 2026 budget. Schultz answered that staff would not update it before the budget and that the Creekside appropriation would come later as a supplemental request. He added that the other sheets contained an erroneous projection of debt service for 2026-2028 and apologized for that error.

Vice President Weaver asked whether Director Schultz had additional slides. He noted the Council allotted the opportunity for the item to return to Committee and asked how Councilmembers should submit questions for vetting. He said, given the late hour, he encouraged Director Schultz to finish his presentation that evening and asked whether Councilmembers should email questions to Director Schultz, Clerk VanMeter, or himself.

Director Schultz replied that Councilmembers could send questions directly to him. He summarized the final two slides as equipment (including public safety, fleet vehicles, and mechanical equipment) and fiber/IT infrastructure. He reported a 2026 request of \$250,000 for fiber optic work and stated that the presentation would proceed to First Reading on October 6, 2025, return to Committee on October 13, 2025, for further conversation, proceed to Second Reading and adoption on October 20, 2025, and that the budget

workshop would begin October 23, 2025, with the capital budget presentation on October 27, 2025.

Vice President Weaver reiterated that Council would bring the item back to Committee on October 13, 2025, and asked Councilmembers to submit questions to Director Schultz. He noted Director Schultz requested questions by October 9, 2025, and indicated Director Vollmer confirmed that timeline.

**Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 10/6/2025;
Further Discussion in Committee of the Whole scheduled 10/13/2025;
Anticipated Second Reading/Adoption on Regular Agenda on 10/20/2025.**

G. ITEMS FROM COUNCILMEMBERS:

Councilmember Bowers:

RES-0042-2025

A JOINT RESOLUTION AND PROCLAMATION HONORING THE VIETNAM TRAVELING MEMORIAL WALL IN GAHANNA, OHIO

President Bowers reported that she worked with Council Office staff on two joint resolution proclamations regarding the traveling Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall and said those documents might undergo further edits. She added that staff reached out to the American Legion Post to discuss the memorial.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 10/6/2025.

RES-0043-2025

A JOINT RESOLUTION AND PROCLAMATION TO HONOR AND RECOGNIZE KILLIAN SULLIVAN, 2025 YOUNG BIRDER OF THE YEAR, IN CELEBRATION OF WORLD ANIMAL DAY AND WORLD HABITAT MONTH

President Bowers stated that the Sullivan family planned to join the Council on October 6, 2025, for Resolution 0043-2025, thanked Mayor Jadwin for supporting the joint resolution proclamation to recognize Mr. Sullivan, and said the proclamation would celebrate Gahanna's biodiversity.

Vice President Weaver asked for discussion, then thanked President Bowers, the administration, and the Council Office for their work and placed the resolutions on the consent agenda for October 6, 2025.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 10/6/2025.

H. ITEMS FROM COUNCIL OFFICE:

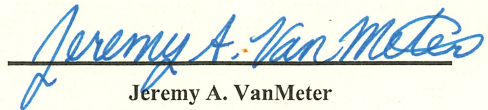
2025-0186

Ohio Division of Liquor Control for transfer permit TRFO 06523067-1 FROM LOCAL CANTINA GAHANNA LLC TO OHIO UNITED GROUP LLC, 101 MILL STREET, GAHANNA, OH

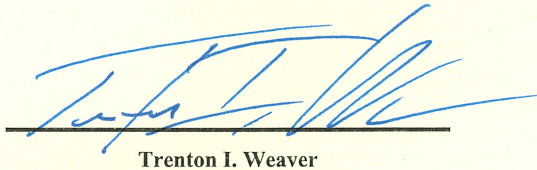
Clerk VanMeter reported a liquor control permit application regarding transfer of ownership from Local Cantina Gahanna LLC to Ohio United Group LLC for 101 Milll Street. He stated that the Division of Police noted no objections and that, if Council raised no objections, he would return the notice indicating that they did not request a hearing. Vice President Weaver noted no objections. He also thanked all those in attendance, including staff, for their time in what was a long Committee meeting.

I. **ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further business before the Committee of the Whole, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:57 p.m.


Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

APPROVED by the Committee of the Whole, this
6th day of *Oct.* 2025.


Trenton I. Weaver