



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, October 13, 2025

6:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

*****Please note the 6:00 PM Start Time*****

A. CALL TO ORDER:

Gahanna City Council met for Committee of the Whole on Monday, October 13, 2025, in Council Chambers. Vice President of Council Trenton I. Weaver, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. The agenda was published on October 10, 2025. All members were present for the meeting. There were no additions or corrections to the agenda.

B. ITEMS FROM THE SENIOR DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES:

[RES-0046-2025](#)

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE "OUR GAHANNA" STRATEGIC PLAN AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Miranda Vollmer, Senior Director of Administrative Services, opened the presentation by greeting the attendees and stating that it was her honor to present the Gahanna Strategic Plan and Economic Development Plan. She began by introducing those present who contributed to the project. She acknowledged Bailey Morlan and Sarah Bongiorno from Planning NEXT, the consultants who had assisted with the plan. She also introduced John Heilmann and Ethan Barnhardt, two active members of the steering committee who participated in the evening's presentation. Vollmer explained that, at the conclusion of the presentation, the department would recommend that Council pass a resolution to adopt Gahanna's Strategic Plan and Economic Development Strategy. She described the initiative as a comprehensive and inclusive planning process intended to guide the city's future growth, development, and priorities. Before beginning the presentation, Vollmer expressed her gratitude to Mayor Jadwin for asking her to lead the initiative and to the Council for their participation throughout the planning process. She also recognized members of the project team, including Kelsey Bartholomew, Management Analyst II in the Department of

Administrative Services, and Rachel Zarick, Economic Development Administrator. Vollmer stated that they had helped keep both her and the steering committee organized and that their efforts were vital to the success of the project. She invited everyone to give them a round of applause. Vollmer also extended her thanks to the city directors, city staff, community members, and members of the business community who had engaged and participated in the process. She then outlined the agenda for the evening. The presenters would discuss the planning process, the steering committee's role, the public engagement efforts, and provide an overview of the plan. She stated that a public hearing was requested for the October 20, 2025, followed by a Council vote on November 3, 2025. Vollmer noted that she had emailed Council a link to the plan on Saturday, October 11, 2025. She added that, after the plan's adoption in its final format, professional copies would be printed due to the document's large size. She asked that questions be held until the end of the presentation and said she would return to the microphone to answer any questions. She concluded by turning the presentation over to Planning NEXT.

Sarah Bongiorno, Director of Planning NEXT, thanked the Council for the opportunity to speak and stated that she and her team would begin with a brief review before presenting an overview of the strategic plan. She explained that a strategic plan served as a long-term framework outlining a roadmap for the future. It often required collaboration beyond the city and acted as a guide for decision-makers. Bongiorno emphasized that this particular plan had been based on extensive community input. She stated that the team placed significant intentionality and effort into ensuring that everyone in Gahanna had the opportunity to participate and have their voices heard. She explained that the scope of work at the beginning of the process consisted of three main components: preparation for a robust process, three rounds of community engagement, and plan development. She referred to a process timeline slide that illustrated the three rounds of engagement and how each phase informed plan development. Each round of engagement was iterative; the team gathered community input, tested what they heard in the next round, and refined the plan accordingly. Bongiorno noted that this approach was essential to developing a plan that genuinely reflected the community's vision. She stated that the upcoming sections of the presentation would show how the plan framework and recommendations came together for final adoption and implementation. She concluded by introducing Ethan Barnhardt and John Heilmann, two members of the steering committee, who would speak in more detail about the committee's role and contributions to the process.

Ethan Barnhardt, a member of the *Our Gahanna* Steering Committee, addressed Council and stated that it had been a pleasure and an honor to

serve on the committee over the past year. He explained that the committee's primary goal was to champion the strategic planning process by using personal networks to engage residents and encourage participation in *Our Gahanna*. Barnhardt stated that the committee members also served as the public faces of the initiative at community engagement events. They helped facilitate discussions, encouraged community members to share input, and ensured that all voices across Gahanna were represented. He explained that the committee worked to distribute information by dropping off pamphlets and flyers at public locations, posting on social media, and reaching out to residents through emails, text messages, and phone calls to raise awareness and participation. He added that the committee focused on engaging underrepresented areas of the community to ensure that feedback accurately reflected Gahanna's diversity and character.

John Heilmann, also a Steering Committee member, stated that he had lived in Gahanna for more than forty-two years. After retiring, he viewed participation on the committee as an opportunity to become more involved in the local community. He explained that the committee held several meetings with Planning NEXT before engaging with the public in order to determine responsibilities and establish a process for community involvement. Heilmann described how committee members then reached out through personal and professional networks, including friends, neighbors, church groups, and other community contacts. He shared that he had previously worked for Casto and used those connections to reach out to property managers at Vista Apartments and local shopping centers. Through those contacts, he asked property managers to send emails to tenants encouraging them to participate in the process. He noted that committee members devoted significant time to outreach and small roundtable meetings, which later evolved into larger community engagement events.

Mr. Barnhardt then reviewed a series of photos of the committee's early training sessions, where members learned how to conduct and facilitate conversations during "table talks." He explained that these small group sessions invited residents to discuss what they liked, disliked, and envisioned for Gahanna's future. He thanked Planning NEXT for their preparation and guidance throughout the entire process, noting that the firm had been excellent to work with. He shared additional photos of steering committee events that demonstrated how the group prepared to engage directly with the community.

Mr. Heilmann added that after the initial public engagement phase, the steering committee met with directors of various city departments to review the first draft of the plan and provide comments before releasing it to the community.

Ms. Bongiorno commended the steering committee members and emphasized that their commitment had been instrumental to the project's success. She stated that, based on her experience working across the country, dedicated steering committee members made planning processes stronger and more representative of the community. Bongiorno reviewed the engagement process, which spanned approximately one year and consisted of three rounds. The first round included eighty-six "table talk" sessions, six in-person events, and several community pop-ups that engaged groups such as high school students, YMCA members, and Senior Center participants. She added that the team also held business focus group meetings for the economic development strategy and conducted three online surveys, one for each round of engagement. Bongiorno explained that the process also included staff engagement with department directors, early surveys, and a joint meeting where the steering committee and department directors reviewed the initial draft recommendations. The team also engaged with City Council through presentations, one-on-one interviews at the beginning and end of the process, and outreach to city boards and commissions to ensure they had opportunities to participate. She concluded by turning the presentation back over to Barnhardt and Heilmann, who would share additional stories about their community outreach efforts in greater detail.

Mr. Barnhardt presented photos showing various community engagement activities and table talks. He noted that one photo included a session he hosted with parents from Goddard Preschool. He explained that he had used his daughter's daycare network to reach out to young parents, recognizing the difficulty they often faced in participating in community planning efforts. He stated that it was important to him to ensure that parents of young children had an opportunity to share their perspectives on the community and its future. He added that this effort served as one example of how the committee had worked to engage different segments of Gahanna's population so that all voices could be heard. Mr. Heilmann shared that his table talks at Stoneridge Plaza, Vista Plaza, and Vista Apartments did not draw the participation he had hoped for. However, he noted that during later rounds of engagement, several attendees recognized his name from the emails he had sent and mentioned that they lived or worked in those areas. Although they had not attended his table talks, he stated that they had still engaged in the process through other events, which demonstrated the reach of the committee's outreach efforts. Barnhardt continued by sharing a story about the "Taco Tuesday" event held during the Vision Festival. He described the weather as cold, wet, and dreary and said he had initially expected low turnout. However, he credited the city's strong advertising and communication efforts for attracting a large crowd. He said it had been exciting to see members of the community sharing feedback, enjoying food,

and even children playing on inflatables in the rain. He identified the event as one of the highlights of the entire engagement process. He commended city staff for their consistent efforts to promote participation and offered special recognition to Rachel Zarick and Kelsey Bartholomew for their hands-on support throughout the process. Heilmann agreed and added that staff members kept the committee on task and motivated, often following up to ensure responsibilities were met. Barnhardt then described the final round of engagement, known as the "Sweet Treat" event. He said that turnout had been strong and that community members shared their thoughts and reflections on the plan, expressing pride in Gahanna and appreciation for the opportunity to participate. Heilmann estimated that while official records showed more than 200 responses from the Sweet Treat event, the actual number was likely higher because many families filled out single cards representing multiple participants. Barnhardt added that at events such as the Sweet Treat and Taco Tuesday, many parents attended with their children. He noted that children also participated by sharing their own ideas about what they wanted to see in Gahanna. He commented that, with some explanation, the children were eager to contribute their input. Heilmann concluded by mentioning the "Touch a Truck" event. He said that although attendees there did not complete surveys because many had young children with them, committee members informed them about the online survey and reminded them of its closing date. He expressed confidence that this outreach helped generate additional responses following that event.

Bailey Morlan, Senior Planner with Planning NEXT, stated that the planning process included a very robust engagement effort. She said that both she and Sarah Bongiorno had greatly enjoyed hearing from residents and found it encouraging that Gahanna had such an involved community. She mentioned that they had received many thoughtful ideas, including creative suggestions from children, which she found particularly enjoyable. Morlan reported that the process included more than 1,800 participants and generated over 9,000 pieces of input. She explained that the Planning NEXT team carefully reviewed every comment and organized the feedback into spreadsheets for analysis. She assured Council that all input had been read multiple times. She noted that participants also provided demographic information, which confirmed that input came from residents across all areas of the city and from a variety of backgrounds. Morlan highlighted the extensive outreach conducted by the City, emphasizing its importance in ensuring that residents knew about the process and had the opportunity to participate. She stated that at the beginning of the planning process, the team created ourgahanna.com, a website that served as the central hub for project updates, engagement information, and all three survey rounds. The site also allowed residents to sign up for project email updates. She explained that the team printed 10,000 project business cards to distribute at

community events and through steering committee members to help spread awareness. Morlan then presented data on outreach specifically conducted by the City, noting that these figures did not include additional efforts by individual committee members or residents. She stated that the City issued more than 29 email blasts to subscribers and produced more than 77 social media posts, several of which were shared multiple times. She reported that postcards were mailed to every residence for each round of engagement, providing a personal invitation to participate. Promotion also appeared in local businesses and on community gateway signs. Morlan acknowledged Rachel Zarick's personal outreach to businesses, which included delivering flyers and posters. She added that engagement tables and QR code boards were placed at partner locations such as the YMCA, the library, Creekside, and Hunter's Ridge Pool to drive participation in online surveys. She stated that gahanna.gov's events calendar and news flashes featured all engagement opportunities and that the project received coverage in *Uniquely Gahanna*, the *Explore Guide*, and newsletters distributed by the City, the Senior Center, schools, and through utility billing. Morlan noted that the City also conducted outreach to all boards and commissions during each of the three engagement rounds. She concluded by emphasizing that the City's strong calendar of community events provided excellent opportunities for visibility. She credited Zarick, Bongiorno, and Vollmer for ensuring that *Our Gahanna* had a presence at nearly every event, helping the team meet residents where they already were and increasing community awareness throughout the process.

Ms. Bongiorno explained that intentionality and effort had guided the entire process. She stated that city staff worked diligently to ensure community members had a clear choice to participate. She expressed satisfaction with the strong turnout and the high level of commitment and engagement from the community. She noted that this work led to the development of the plan, which the team would review at a high level. Before doing so, she described the plan's structure, explaining that it had been divided into two parts. The first part focused on the strategic plan, and the second provided a deeper exploration of economic development to form an economic development strategy. Ms. Bongiorno said each part included an introduction and a section describing the process, allowing readers to understand the effort involved. She outlined that the plan framework contained the vision, values, and four main goal chapters of the strategic plan, followed by a separate section on economic development and an implementation component. She emphasized that the four goal chapters had emerged organically from community input rather than being predetermined topics. She explained that they reflected what participants expressed throughout the process. Ms. Bongiorno then turned the presentation over to Ms. Morlan to provide brief highlights from each chapter.

Ms. Morlan explained that each chapter of the strategic plan began with a goal, which was guided by a set of outcomes and strategies. She noted that each chapter included many strategies, but she would provide a summary rather than listing them all. She stated that the first goal focused on elevating the city's unique places. The outcomes centered on advancing the Creekside District as a vibrant area, fostering inclusive, accessible, and well-maintained parks, and building strong and engaged neighborhoods. The strategies included improving access, walkability, and visibility within the Creekside District; supporting businesses and creating vibrant spaces for dining and entertainment; aligning planning efforts among the district, parks, and neighborhoods; enhancing park infrastructure; and strengthening neighborhood infrastructure. Ms. Morlan said that the second goal focused internally on serving the community. The outcomes included enhancing internal operations and maintaining a high level of stewardship and safety. The strategies involved embedding the strategic plan into daily routines such as budgeting, project evaluation, and departmental accountability; improving internal communication and collaboration; modernizing policies, procedures, and technology; and strengthening safety, sustainability, and emergency preparedness. She stated that the third goal addressed connecting the community, both through transportation and personal connections among residents. The outcomes included advancing a comprehensive mobility network and fostering an engaged and inclusive community. The strategies included implementing existing and developing mobility and trails plans, exploring inclusive rideshare solutions for groups with limited transportation access, promoting community engagement, continuing and expanding existing engagement efforts, and advancing age-friendly initiatives to support healthy aging and inclusivity. Ms. Morlan continued by describing the fourth goal, which focused on celebrating the city's identity. This goal aimed to elevate Gahanna's regional identity within Central Ohio, strengthen placemaking efforts, and enhance citywide communication and promotion. The related strategies included aligning city branding and marketing with the strategic goals outlined in the plan, enhancing placemaking at gateways through wayfinding and public art, transforming underutilized areas, and improving citywide communication through coordinated marketing and public reporting.

Ms. Morlan concluded by discussing the economic development strategy, which included three goals that were integrated because their outcomes supported all of them. The goals were to strengthen existing industry sectors to ensure a robust ecosystem; use regional and local market conditions and trends to identify opportunities for nurturing new and emerging sectors; and collaborate with local stakeholders to advance a workforce development model focused on existing and emerging economic drivers. Ms. Morlan

stated that five outcomes supported these goals: advancing development and redevelopment in strategic areas; cultivating a thriving small and local business community; aligning economic development tools to attract key businesses; strengthening collaboration and communication with business and community partners; and implementing a sector-based approach to economic development. She summarized the strategies as identifying and planning redevelopment in strategic areas; aligning with regional partners and transportation agencies to support job centers; supporting small business growth; streamlining development processes and updating land use and infrastructure plans; promoting sustainable development; enhancing coordination with the Community Improvement Corporation; collaborating with schools and workforce partners; and strengthening business engagement through multiple approaches.

Ms. Bongiorno concluded the presentation by thanking the Council for trusting her team with the process. She expressed appreciation for the opportunity to get to know the Councilmembers and the community. She then turned the discussion back to Director Vollmer and invited any questions.

Questions from Council

President Bowers thanked the presenters and expressed appreciation for their work. She stated that the presentations by Mr. Barnhardt and Mr. Heilmann had shown that the process not only created events and engagement sessions but also fostered meaningful community connections. She shared that the table talk sessions she hosted had strengthened relationships and encouraged reflection on what the community values and hopes to achieve. She described the process as very positive for the entire community and commended Planning NEXT for their direction and support, noting that their work benefitted the community as a whole. President Bowers then raised two follow-up questions. She first requested that the Council receive the related documents, noting prior and ongoing community requests for an appendix aggregating data points. She asked if such an appendix could be attached to the report. Ms. Bongiorno responded that the appendix typically included all community engagement input, along with the raw data and summary presentations, and confirmed that her team could provide that information. President Bowers thanked her and posed a second question. She asked for a summary of the total cost of the strategic plan, including the consulting fee, out-of-pocket expenditures, mailers, and other related expenses. She explained that the information would be helpful not only for Gahanna's current and future councils but also as a useful reference for other communities considering similar efforts. She remarked that the process represented a "Cadillac level" of planning, which she viewed as an

excellent benchmark. She concluded by again expressing her thanks.

Councilmember Schnetzer stated that he had no specific questions but expressed his gratitude to everyone involved in the project, particularly the members of the steering committee. He noted that he had sat with Mr. Heilmann and Mr. Barnhardt several times during meetings and was not surprised that they had become the faces of the committee. He thanked everyone for their efforts and contributions.

Councilmember Renner echoed the appreciation shared by his colleagues and thanked all parties involved in planning. He commended Planning NEXT for doing a superior job hosting and organizing the process and thanked everyone for their service to the city. He mentioned that he intended to focus on some of the strategic items and remarked that he was impressed with the inclusion of outcome-based plans. He appreciated that the plan included predicted outcomes and measurable metrics, which he believed were essential to its effectiveness.

Councilmember Jones also expressed appreciation to everyone who contributed to the project and for producing a document that was accessible and easy to follow. She noted that it was helpful for all residents, regardless of background, to be able to understand it. She added that, in reference to President Bowers' earlier comments about the appendix, it would be interesting to see the percentages of respondents who were residents or business owners among the 9,000 pieces of feedback or 1,500 people surveyed. She asked if that data was available.

Vice President Weaver joined his colleagues in expressing gratitude to Planning NEXT and the steering committee members. He also acknowledged the many staff, board, and commission members present, thanking them for their efforts. He noted that the project represented a significant undertaking by the city's administration, staff, and volunteers. Weaver stated that he often received questions from residents about how the plan would be used and whether it would simply "sit on a shelf." He referenced a helpful section in the plan that listed all other city plans and asked how the new strategic plan would incorporate and connect those existing plans and initiatives to create a functional, usable framework. Ms. Bongiorno responded that the strategic plan functioned as a guiding document that sat at the top of the city's planning structure. She explained that other plans should align with the strategic plan's vision, values, and goals. She emphasized that the plan included specific outcomes and strategies but allowed flexibility for staff and elected officials to determine how best to implement them. She described the plan as a "road map" that guided decision-making and encouraged Councilmembers, boards, and

commissions to reference it regularly when evaluating projects or programs. She advised that even when new opportunities arose outside the plan's framework, decisions should be made intentionally and with an understanding of how they fit within the broader strategic vision. She added that the plan should serve as a constant reference point and noted that it would be printed in a convenient format for use during city work and discussions. Vice President Weaver thanked Ms. Bongiorno for her explanation and confirmed that her response made sense. He then noted that, as Director Vollmer had stated earlier, the public hearing for this item would take place on October 20, 2025, with a vote scheduled for November 3, 2025. He added that the item would return to Committee of the Whole on October 27, 2025, for any final questions or wrap-up discussions. Weaver observed that a later item on the agenda related directly to one of the plan's goals (improving mobility for older adults and individuals with disabilities) and commented that the city was already beginning to put the plan into action. He closed by thanking everyone for their hard work and contributions.

Recommendation: Public Hearing Scheduled on 10/20/2025; Further Discussion in Committee of the Whole Scheduled 10/27/2025; Introduction/Adoption on Regular Agenda on 11/3/2025.

C. 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

Jeff Gottke, Director of Economic Development, returned to discuss the development agreement for the Creekside Expansion Project with Connect Real Estate and Benson Capital. He explained that his presentation addressed questions and requests previously raised by Council and the public. Mr. Gottke reviewed the project details, which included 263 apartments, two restaurants, a parking structure, a hotel, and townhouses in the second phase. He clarified that the project was a privately funded and constructed development, not a city partnership with the developer. He emphasized that the city's role differed significantly from the original Creekside project, noting that this agreement represented a traditional development process. The city's involvement would consist of reviewing and approving the development agreement, which would outline the scope, accountability measures, and overall framework of the project. He stated that the project aimed to increase foot traffic in Creekside through the addition of residential units and a hotel. The goal was to enhance Creekside as a destination for residents and visitors. He noted that the development was not intended as a "silver bullet" to solve every issue in the area but as a strategic

addition supported by market data and the Our Gahanna Strategic Plan. That plan, completed after the project began, validated the development team's theory that more apartments and visitors would strengthen Creekside.

Downtown Development Principles and Project Milestones

Director Gottke reviewed downtown development principles, explaining that a vibrant downtown should serve as the civic and cultural center of the community. He stated that concentrated residential and visitor populations create economic and social activity, as retail tends to follow housing growth. He emphasized that Creekside needed more residents and visitors to complement its existing commercial base. He added that mixed-use developments optimize land use and are often more cost-effective to serve than suburban-style projects. He said downtowns thrive when they offer diverse economic opportunities, including housing, offices, and visitor attractions, all within a walkable area. He then discussed the role of Council in evaluating the development agreement, which defined the city's responsibilities, project scope, and oversight measures. He encouraged Council to continue submitting questions early to allow staff and the developers to prepare complete answers before the vote. Mr. Gottke displayed a project timeline showing completed milestones and the current stage of review. He noted that the development agreement must be finalized before related actions, such as purchase and sale agreements, tax increment financing (TIF) creation, and New Community Authority (NCA) establishment, could proceed. He added that discussions about internships or sponsorship opportunities would occur later, once the development agreement confirmed the project's viability.

Public Engagement

Next, Director Gottke reviewed the public engagement process, noting that outreach had occurred at several community events, including the Mill Street Market, the farmers market, and Touch a Truck. He reported that approximately 200 people had participated in person across four public events. Additional input came through email, social media, and a city webpage. He said the city planned to launch a dedicated "Creekside Reimagined" webpage to provide ongoing project information. He also referenced public engagement boards from a recent open plaza event, where attendees shared encouraging feedback about both the public and private components of the project.

Parking Utilization Assessment

Director Gottke then addressed questions about the 50-space city-owned parking lot on High Street, which was part of the development agreement. He reported early findings from a parking utilization study conducted over two weeks, with counts taken three times daily and on weekends. The study found 667 marked surface parking spaces in the downtown area, excluding garages and unmarked spots, with an average utilization rate of 28%. The High Street lot averaged 27% use, ranging from 13.5% to 27% depending on the time of day. Evening usage reached 43%, while weekend usage varied.

Project Timelines

Director Gottke then reviewed project timelines outlined in the development agreement. After Council approved the agreement, the developer would begin a six-month inspection period, extendable by two months. Thirty days after that period ended, the phase one closing and conveyance would occur. The developer would then submit detailed plans for city review and coordinate with the Army Corps of Engineers and other regulatory bodies. He noted that the timeline allowed six months to create the NCA, 18 months to submit phase two plans, and 36 months to achieve substantial completion after phase one approvals. The city would retain ownership of the High Street parking lot to monitor ongoing needs before its eventual redevelopment.

Accountability Measures

Finally, Director Gottke outlined accountability measures designed to prevent problems experienced during the original Creekside project. The agreement required semiannual progress reports from the developers, a completion guarantee, a reconveyance clause for non-performance, and loan step-in rights for the city in case of default. He reiterated that the city would not guarantee project financing and that the development involved no public-private partnership. Mr. Gottke concluded by inviting additional questions from Council, acknowledging that his presentation might have generated further discussion.

Questions from Council

Councilmember McGregor asked who had written the development agreement. Director of Gottke explained that it was a joint effort among all parties, with different versions and comments being exchanged. Councilmember McGregor asked which attorney represented the city. Mayor Jadwin stated that the city worked with Frost Brown Todd, specifically Emmett Kelly, and that Nate Green from the Montrose Group also contributed significantly to drafting the agreement. Councilmember

McGregor acknowledged the information and thanked them. Director Gottke added that Frost Brown Todd drafted the agreement, and the city attorney was reviewing it in coordination with counsel from Benson Capital and Connect Real Estate.

Councilmember McGregor then asked whether the parking lot parcels would be transferred at this time under the development agreement. Director Gottke responded that the transfer would be delayed. Councilmember McGregor noted that one of the parking lot parcels appeared on the list of parcels to be transferred, but the other did not. Director Gottke confirmed that the parking lot consisted of two separate parcels and stated that it was the city's intent for both parcels to be included in the project. He said staff would verify that before Council voted. Councilmember McGregor questioned why the parcels were listed if they would not be transferred. Director Gottke explained that the parcels were included because the agreement covered the entire project scope. The delayed transfer allowed the city time to better understand the long-term parking needs before conveying the property. He confirmed that the delayed transfer language was included in the agreement.

Councilmember McGregor asked if phase one could proceed without phase two. Director Gottke deferred the question to Connect Real Estate and Benson Capital. Bob Lamb, representing Connect Real Estate, stated that the development was one project with two phases. He explained that the agreement encompassed both phases within a single document, but the city would retain ownership of the phase two area until 18 months after the phase one plan approval. He said that arrangement gave the city sufficient time to assess any parking concerns related to the project. Mr. Lamb commended Mr. Gottke and his team for compiling the parking data, noting that the study's findings, showing 43% utilization at peak times, demonstrated that Creekside had adequate parking capacity to support the proposed development. Councilmember McGregor asked whether the parking data included private lots and whether those lots would allow public parking during events. She noted that the existence of spaces did not necessarily mean they were available to the public. Director Gottke replied that he was not presenting parking solutions that evening but was providing early data to help guide future planning. He stated that the information would help determine how many parking spaces might be needed and whether the city should pursue shared-use agreements with private lot owners. He concluded that it was too early in the process to discuss specific parking arrangements.

Councilmember Renner asked Director Gottke to clarify the parking arrangement for the Creekside Expansion Project. He said he understood

that the proposed parking garage would replace the existing 50 surface spaces and that the public would have access to the new garage. Mr. Lamb responded that the developer planned to “self-park” the project, meaning the garage would fully accommodate parking for the apartments, hotel, and retail spaces. He said that additional parking spaces would be available for public use, primarily on the first level of the garage. Mr. Lamb stated that the development team did not intend to charge for retail-related parking but would reserve specific spaces for tenants and restaurants. Councilmember Renner restated his understanding that while some spaces would be reserved for the project’s uses, the remaining spaces would be open for the public visiting the Creekside District. Mr. Lamb confirmed that was correct but noted that the exact number of available public spaces would depend on final engineering and design. He emphasized that the project would provide sufficient parking for all its uses while still allowing for public parking. Councilmember Renner thanked Mr. Lamb for the clarification but expressed some uncertainty since final parking numbers were not yet available. He then commended Director Gottke for his earlier presentation summarizing the development agreement and stated that his forthcoming questions were intended to ensure that the processes and expectations were clearly documented in the agreement.

Councilmember Renner said he had been a vocal supporter of the project and would continue to be unless a critical flaw emerged. He referenced Article Two of the development agreement, noting that although Director Gottke had said the project was not a public-private partnership, the agreement itself used that term. He said he understood the intent but wanted clarification about how the milestones in the agreement aligned with that structure. Mr. Lamb asked to address the public-private partnership question. Councilmember Renner agreed. Mr. Lamb explained that the distinction lay in the financing structure. He stated that unlike the 2007-2008 Creekside project, this development did not involve the city backing any private bond issuances. He said that when discussions with the city began, officials made clear that such a financial structure would not be considered, and the development team respected that decision. Mr. Lamb said the current agreement established a partnership in planning and coordination, not in financial risk. He referred to Article Twelve of the agreement, which detailed the project’s incentive structure, including support mechanisms such as the Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) and other tools necessary to make the project financially viable. He reiterated that the development team bore full financial responsibility for the project. Councilmember Renner thanked Mr. Lamb for the clarification and stated that the explanation was helpful. He then asked Director Gottke to define “plan approval.” Director Gottke explained that plan approval referred to the point at which construction permits were issued, meaning all plans had been submitted,

reviewed, and stamped by the appropriate entities. Mayor Jadwin added that plan approval encompassed the entire internal review process, including evaluations by the planning department, engineering, public safety, and parks and recreation, followed by consideration by the Planning Commission. Councilmember Renner asked whether that process could realistically occur within six months. Director Gottke said no, explaining that the six-month period referred only to an inspection and due diligence phase, not to full plan approval. Councilmember Renner said he understood and noted that the language in the timeline had caused some confusion. He then asked when plan approval would actually occur in relation to the other milestones, particularly the reference to “18 months to substantial completion.” Mayor Jadwin explained that the timeline reflected maximum timeframes and not a strict sequence of deadlines. She said the phase one plan approval process alone could take six to twelve months due to review, submission, and possible variance considerations. She clarified that the 36-month substantial completion timeline did not begin until the building permit was issued. Mr. Lamb confirmed that explanation. He said the development team would first engage engineers, architects, and environmental professionals to create and submit plans for approval by the city and state agencies. Once the building permit was issued, the 36-month clock for substantial completion would begin.

Councilmember Renner noted his understanding that Director Gottke’s office would manage the development process. He asked Director Gottke if the city planned to publicize updates on milestone progress. Director Gottke said he had not yet considered publishing milestone updates but anticipated significant public engagement related to construction timing, phasing, and mitigation of public impacts. Councilmember Renner stated that regular updates would help manage public expectations, noting that public responses to the project had been mixed. Mayor Jadwin explained that the city was building a project webpage expected to launch by the end of the week. She said the city would continue to expand that page as more information became available. She stated that, similar to the “Facilities for the Future” webpage, the city intended to provide ongoing updates, post links to public discussions, and share project information as it progressed. She emphasized the importance of keeping residents and businesses in the Creekside District informed about the project’s status and timing. Mayor Jadwin said the purpose of the webpage was to create a continuous and accessible means of communication and engagement with the community throughout the project’s development. Councilmember Renner thanked her and asked whether the development agreement required quarterly financial statements for the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, the New Community Authority (NCA), or similar financial reporting mechanisms. He said he wanted to ensure transparency and public access to financial

information. Director Gottke asked for clarification, confirming that Councilmember Renner was referring to quarterly financial statements for the NCA and TIF. Councilmember Renner confirmed that he was. Director Gottke explained that the law required those financial reports to be issued annually, the TIF reports to the county auditor through the Tax Incentive Review Council (TIRC) and the NCA reports to its governing board. Councilmember Renner asked if it would be possible to provide the reports more frequently, such as quarterly or semiannually. Director Gottke replied that the Finance Department would need to determine whether it had the capacity to produce such reports. He added that it would take some time before either entity generated meaningful financial activity because of the construction and development timelines. Councilmember Renner acknowledged the response and said he understood that it was an issue for the future. He then asked about the project renderings, noting that the developers had shared images that generated public interest. He asked whether those renderings would remain accurate, whether they might change significantly, and whether the proposed skybridge was a confirmed element of the project. Mr. Lamb stated that the developers had been asked to provide renderings but had raised concerns about doing so before the Planning Commission's review. He said the development team believed the renderings accurately represented the proposed project and fit well with the area. He confirmed that the team intended to stay as close to the renderings as the Planning Commission process would allow. Mr. Lamb said the developers would work with the Planning Commission to determine the best final design for the community and confirmed that the proposal included the bridge feature.

Councilmember Renner stated that a constituent had emailed him questions about the Creekside Expansion Project. He first asked about the demolition grant funding, specifically who would pay the remaining costs if the grant did not fully cover demolition expenses. Mayor Jadwin explained that the timing of the agreement determined how demolition would proceed. She said the intent was for the developer to handle demolition so that the developer could control the existing infrastructure and plan appropriately for future construction. She stated that the developer had requested to perform the demolition, would absorb the costs, and would later be reimbursed with the grant funds. She clarified that if the development agreement did not pass and the city had to complete the demolition independently to use the grant, the city's responsibilities would differ. She noted that this issue related to the next item on the meeting agenda. Councilmember Renner thanked the mayor for the clarification and asked the second question, regarding the property's valuation. He asked if the project would remain viable if the developer paid the full market value of approximately \$5 million for the land, or if it was only feasible with the proposed \$100 transfer. Mr. Lamb stated

that the project would not be viable if the developer paid \$5 million for the land. He added that the property's market value was not actually \$5 million under current market conditions. Councilmember Renner asked Mr. Lamb to elaborate. Mr. Lamb explained that market value depended on what a buyer would be willing to pay to develop the site. He stated that, based on the site's development challenges and market realities, no developer would pay \$5 million for the property. He said that his team also could not afford that cost and still finance the project successfully.

Councilmember Schnetzer addressed Mr. Gottke regarding the need for clarity on what would make the Council comfortable moving forward with the proposed project. He stated that a full review by the City Attorney's Office was necessary before advancing the project. He emphasized that the review should thoroughly evaluate all potential risks to the City, including how unforeseen issues, such as the discovery of unaccounted-for underground infrastructure after construction begins, would be handled. Councilmember Schnetzer expressed concern about ensuring that the City's financial risk would be capped, noting that although the arrangement was not a financial partnership, it still involved shared responsibilities as outlined in the development agreement. He stated that before a vote could reasonably occur, the City Attorney's Office needed to complete a comprehensive review of all legal and financial risks. Councilmember Schnetzer continued by sharing several questions he had received from members of the public. He explained that these questions came from a broad range of residents and that clear answers would help the public better understand what to expect from the project. He first raised a question related to the separation of Phase One and Phase Two of the project, referencing a similar inquiry from Councilmember McGregor. He asked whether it was possible to separate the two phases. Mr. Lamb responded that, from a development agreement standpoint, separation was not possible because the developers needed to understand the full scope of the project, especially regarding financing. Councilmember Schnetzer thanked Mr. Lamb for the clarification and then asked about a specific parcel within Phase Two that was not under the developer's control. He inquired about the plan or vision for resolving the issue, including the potential cost and who would bear it. Mr. Lamb explained that the parcel in question was privately owned and that he could not speak to the ability to acquire it. He stated that outreach efforts had been made to the property owner, but no response had been received. Councilmember Schnetzer acknowledged the response and reiterated that the matter should be reviewed in the context of the development agreement. He noted that if acquiring the parcel represented another contingency or potential cost to the City, that information needed to be clearly understood. He then turned to the topic of parking, noting that it had been a recurring concern from the public. He asked whether the development team had considered adding on-street

parking around the Phase Two parcels to offset the loss of 50 spaces from the surface lot. He cited angled on-street parking, such as that found on North High Street, as an example and asked whether such an option might be feasible within the scope of the project. Mr. Lamb responded that the development team was open to working with the City to explore parking options but explained that without final engineering plans, he could not provide a specific answer. Councilmember Schnetzer thanked him for the response and moved to his final question concerning demolition. He noted his understanding that the existing grant would not cover demolition for all parcels and asked whether the remaining demolition costs would fall to the City or the developer. Mr. Lamb replied that, during discussions with the City and throughout the structuring of the development agreement, the developers had treated the grant funds as the sole financial contribution toward demolition. He stated that the developers did not expect the City to cover additional demolition costs. He added that this plan depended on the project receiving approval within the necessary timeframe to allow demolition to occur under the grant's terms. Councilmember Schnetzer thanked Mr. Lamb and concluded his remarks.

President Bowers thanked everyone for their time and for the additional information presented, particularly regarding parking. She clarified that the document before Council was a draft development agreement and confirmed with Director Gottke that redlined versions were still being exchanged. Director Gottke confirmed this. President Bowers then asked whether Council had received a final version of the development agreement, and Mr. Lamb confirmed that it had not. President Bowers stated that she previously noted a request for clarification on what additional materials were needed for Council's review. She acknowledged that Mr. Gottke was preparing a fiscal impact analysis and clear returns on investment for Council to evaluate. She expressed appreciation for that work and noted that those items remained necessary for her review. She added that she and Mr. Lamb had recently held a productive conversation about breaking down Phase One into two subphases, Phase 1A and Phase 1B, and asked him to share more details with the Council. Mr. Lamb explained that Phase One consisted of two main components located on Mill Street, one on the west side and one on the east side. Construction would begin first on the west side building while simultaneously starting the parking garage on the east side. The garage would provide on-site parking to support the Phase One apartment building on the west side once it became available. Upon completion of the garage, the development team would begin the west side apartment, retail, and hotel project, which would connect to the existing garage to supply parking for those uses. Mr. Lamb stated that construction on both sides would begin at roughly the same time to support each other from a development standpoint, with the west side creek-side building coming online first and the east side

continuing after the garage was completed. President Bowers recalled that, during earlier discussions, there had been mention of using the city lot for construction traffic during Phase One. She asked whether that would still be necessary based on the updated timeline and phasing. Mr. Lamb confirmed that the development team intended to use the lot behind the east side Phase One property, accessible from the alleyway, as a laydown and construction staging area. He explained that the team had initially discussed acquiring the lot as part of the development agreement but later agreed that permanent ownership was not essential. However, temporary use during construction would still be required. He stated that the team planned to vacate the site as soon as possible after construction. President Bowers asked for clarification regarding which lot Director Gottke had been referencing on the map. Director Gottke confirmed that his cursor was positioned over the lot directly east of Phase One, not the city-owned lot identified in Phase Two. He explained that the lot in question was owned by the Community Improvement Corporation (CIC), not the City. President Bowers asked who currently used the CIC-owned lot. Mr. Gottke responded that no one was currently using it.

Councilmember McGregor stated that, to her understanding, the lot was included among the parcels to be transferred in the development agreement. Director Gottke disagreed, and Mayor Jadwin noted that everyone would need to verify which parcels were included. Councilmember McGregor stated that she had reviewed the parcels and believed the lot was indeed included. Mr. Lamb clarified that the lot had originally been part of the development agreement draft but that updates were being made to reflect parcel adjustments. He explained that one parcel had been swapped for another on the Phase Two site, and the next round of draft agreements would reflect those changes. Councilmember McGregor thanked him for the clarification.

President Bowers reiterated her understanding that the city-owned lot directly north of The Sanctuary would be used for some construction-related activity. Mr. Lamb responded that the development team did not intend to place heavy equipment on that lot. He said it might serve as overflow parking for construction workers but would not be closed off during the construction period. He added that the team would use the lot only as general public parking, consistent with normal public use. President Bowers agreed and suggested that, if the City planned to maintain control over the lot during the 18-month construction period, construction use should be limited to no more than 20 to 25 spaces. She emphasized the importance of setting accurate expectations for the community so that residents would continue to have access to the lot during construction. Mayor Jadwin added that the nearby CIC lot, which contained about 20 spaces, and the spaces along the Kumon building could help accommodate parking needs during the construction

period without issue.

President Bowers thanked Mayor Jadwin for her comments and referred back to her notes. She stated that, in general, she felt excited about the project overall. She expressed enthusiasm about the partnership with Connect and Benson Capital and said the project would, as Director Gottke had explained in previous presentations, help fill several gaps and address certain needs within the district. She acknowledged that while the project would not serve as a complete solution to all issues, it represented meaningful progress. President Bowers said she looked forward to completing the review of the development agreement and emphasized the importance of conducting thorough due diligence to ensure that what was being presented was fully vetted. She stated that expectations needed to align with what would occur to the best of everyone's ability. She referenced a recent phrase used by Director Gottke about "building confidence within the public," noting that this reflected the Council's and administration's shared goal of ensuring transparency and accountability. She said the City aimed to deliver a great product and a positive outcome, and she recognized the administration's diligent work toward that effort. She also stated that the Council had its own obligation to do the same and expressed trust that Connect and Benson Capital were equally committed to that process. Before concluding her remarks, President Bowers stated that she had not yet had an opportunity to review the development agreement or the fiscal impact analysis. While she appreciated the extensive effort that went into the evening's presentation, she said she would not feel prepared to move forward with a vote on October 20. She explained that she would need additional time to thoroughly review and vet the development agreement and wanted to ensure that the City Attorney also had adequate time to review the revised drafts and redlines. President Bowers concluded by expressing her expectation that the vote be postponed. She suggested that Council could reassess progress and discuss a new date for consideration at the next meeting, reiterating that she would not be ready to vote the following week.

Councilmember Padova stated that some of her questions had already been answered but that she wished to ask for additional clarification. She confirmed her understanding that the Community Improvement Corporation (CIC)-owned parking spaces, not public spaces, would not be conveyed and that the number of spaces in question was approximately twenty. Mayor Jadwin confirmed that there were about twenty spaces in the CIC lot. Councilmember Padova asked whether the CIC would continue to hold ownership of those spaces or if they might eventually return to City ownership. Mayor Jadwin referred to earlier comments from Director Gottke about the parking utilization assessment. She explained that the City was focused on determining current parking needs, availability, and usage before identifying solutions. She stated that one potential solution could involve transferring the lot to the City or retaining CIC ownership, but that no decision had been made. She reiterated that the City first needed to understand the extent of the parking impact before considering any recommended solutions. Councilmember Padova agreed that the

explanation made sense based on the information presented. She said that once the project progressed further, the City could better determine how to use that space. She noted that she shared her colleagues' parking concerns but added that the proposed boutique hotel could help balance parking demand, as guests attending nearby events, such as weddings at The Sanctuary, might choose to stay overnight. She said that this could reduce competition for public parking during events. Councilmember Padova expressed a particular concern about parking availability for Marlow's, noting that the restaurant relied heavily on carryout orders. She stated that customers likely would not want to park in a garage and walk around the block to pick up food. She asked whether the parking spots located on the corner near Marlow's were public or privately owned. Mayor Jadwin responded that the spaces were public street parking and confirmed that they would remain as such. Councilmember Padova asked whether the City could designate a few of those public spaces for Marlow's carryout customers. Mayor Jadwin expressed uncertainty as to whether the City could permanently reserve public parking spaces for individual businesses. She noted that several businesses along High Street had requested reserved spaces in the past, but doing so could create issues. She added that temporary accommodations might be possible for special events but that any permanent designation would require further legal review. Councilmember Padova said she understood and only wanted to explore what options might exist to help Marlow's maintain business. She praised the restaurant for building a strong clientele and contributing positively to the community. She then asked to return to the presentation slide outlining the project's sequence of events. She said she had been under the impression that the land would be conveyed after the developer received all necessary approvals from the Planning Commission but observed that the agreement appeared to convey land earlier in the process. Director Gottke clarified that the conveyance of the Phase One parcels would occur within thirty days after the end of the inspection period. Councilmember Padova asked what would happen if the Planning Commission did not approve the design after the land was conveyed. Mr. Lamb stated that the developer would be obligated to transfer the land back to the City if the project did not proceed. Councilmember Padova said that was her understanding and thanked him for confirming it. She then asked whether the results from public engagement events, such as the Creekside event where residents used mobile devices to answer questions, would be shared with Council beyond the information presented on the display boards that evening. Mayor Jadwin said the City had not yet received that data but would share it once available. She stated that Director Vollmer had been coordinating with Planning NEXT on the matter and invited her to speak to the timeline. Director Vollmer explained that the engagement event had taken place the previous Thursday and that Planning NEXT had not yet aggregated the results. She confirmed

that the data points collected through the Mentimeter survey and display boards were identical and said the City would provide Council with the compiled information once finalized. Councilmember Padova asked whether the data would be available before Council voted on the development agreement. Vollmer said she was unsure when the vote would occur but stated that she could work with Planning NEXT to provide the results within a week or so. Councilmember Padova thanked her and moved to her final question regarding traffic. She said that the public continued to express concern about traffic impacts. She noted that a previous traffic study had informed the Creekside redevelopment plan and asked whether the City or the developer would be responsible for any new infrastructure, such as a roundabout, if future traffic studies recommended substantial changes. Mayor Jadwin said it was too early to determine potential traffic impacts or necessary mitigation measures. She reminded Council that U.S. Route 62 ran through the area and that any traffic changes would require coordination among multiple jurisdictions. She noted that former County Engineer Cornell Robertson was present and could attest to the complexities of such efforts. She stated that any future traffic solutions would involve long-term discussions among several entities. Councilmember Padova thanked everyone for their time and responses. She stated that she supported the project and agreed with her colleagues that it represented the right combination of elements for the community. She said the current Creekside District remained incomplete, and while this project would not fully complete it, it would enhance the area and open new opportunities for future growth once completed. She concluded by thanking everyone involved.

Councilmember Jones thanked everyone involved in the project, noting that it represented an important moment for the community. She expressed appreciation for the continued work and collaboration among all parties. Councilmember Jones asked for clarification regarding the demolition of the CIC-owned properties. She inquired whether the transfer or sale of the land would need to occur before Connect could proceed with demolition. Mr. Lamb explained that Connect would not need to complete the property transfer before beginning demolition but would require the development agreement to be approved first. He stated that Connect was a vertically integrated company with its own general contracting arm, Connect Construction, which would enter into an agreement with the CIC to carry out the demolition work on the designated buildings. Councilmember Jones confirmed her understanding that the CIC would retain ownership of the property until its official transfer and asked whether the CIC would remain responsible for any carrying costs during that period. Mr. Lamb confirmed that the CIC would remain responsible for such costs because Connect would not yet own the property. Councilmember Jones then asked whether the land would be reassessed after the buildings were demolished so the

CIC would not continue paying taxes on structures that no longer existed. Director Gottke explained that a form would be filed with the county auditor notifying them of the demolition, which would trigger a reassessment of the property. Councilmember Jones thanked him and raised one final question. She expressed appreciation for Connect's investment in the community and for the provisions in the development agreement outlining commitments such as student internships and event support over ten years. However, she said that after reviewing the agreement, she did not see clear contingencies or accountability measures to ensure that those commitments would occur. She asked how the City could ensure that the developer would follow through on those obligations. Mr. Lamb explained that Connect could not begin detailed discussions with the school district or other entities until the development agreement was formally authorized. He said that if Connect failed to fulfill the commitments outlined in the agreement, it would constitute a breach of contract with the City, which would provide an enforcement mechanism. He added that similar terms had been included in Connect's agreement with the City of Marysville, where the company had met multiple times with the local school district to launch its internship program. He stated that Connect planned to begin construction on that project early next year, with internships starting shortly thereafter or by the following school year, depending on the district's preference. He noted that, at one of the community events in the current project area, he had met several school representatives who would oversee the internship program and said he looked forward to developing that partnership further. Councilmember Jones thanked Mr. Lamb for the clarification and said she had no further questions.

Councilmember McGregor stated that she had two follow-up questions after reviewing the development agreement. She referred to section 6.1.1 and expressed concern about the language granting the developer the right to sell or lease the property. She asked for clarification on that provision. Mr. Lamb explained that once the property transferred to the developer and construction began, Connect would need to retain the right to sell or lease the property in order to establish separate legal entities for ownership and development purposes. He said the developer was contractually obligated to proceed with the general development as outlined in the agreement. He further clarified that the agreement before Council involved two separate development firms, each of which would create specific entities to hold and develop the property in accordance with the development agreement. He said that retaining the ability to transfer the property into those entities was a necessary part of the process. Mayor Jadwin asked whether that was standard business practice. Mr. Lamb confirmed that it was. He said Connect currently operated between 97 and 102 limited liability companies (LLCs) under its development umbrella, and such structuring was typical in large-scale real estate projects. Councilmember McGregor acknowledged

the response and indicated the provision had initially caused some concern. She then asked about the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) arrangement. She questioned whether the City could include Mifflin Township in the TIF distribution because the taller buildings in the project might require the township to purchase special fire equipment to serve them. She asked if Mifflin could be exempted from having its tax revenue diverted into the TIF, similar to the way schools had been excluded in the Creekside TIF. Director Gottke responded that if Mifflin Township believed it was entitled to a portion of the TIF revenue, it could make that request to the City. He said the City would not proactively allocate funds without such a request. Councilmember McGregor stated that she was making the request herself. Director Gottke explained that TIF funds function best when concentrated rather than divided among multiple entities. He reminded Council that the \$5 million loan the City had agreed to pay off for the Community Improvement Corporation would be repaid using these same revenue sources. He said that spreading TIF funds too thinly would slow repayment to the City. He reiterated that if Mifflin Township wanted funds, it could formally request them.

President Bowers clarified that Councilmember McGregor's question related to whether the City could choose to exclude Mifflin Township's portion of property taxes from being redirected into the TIF, just as school property taxes were not included. She said Council would need to know both the value of the property taxes that would have gone to Mifflin Township and whether exclusion was legally possible. She asked that staff return with that information. Director Gottke noted that the City had a separate compensation agreement with the schools in exchange for expedited processes and their cooperation on incentive programs, including TIFs. He stated that no such compensation agreement existed with Mifflin Township. Councilmember McGregor recalled that during the Creekside TIF process, Mifflin Township had been excluded because the department needed to purchase specialized fire equipment to reach four-story buildings. She said the current project would include a seven-story building, creating similar needs. She added that if Mifflin Township had to make the formal request for consideration, she would contact them directly to encourage them to do so. Mayor Jadwin acknowledged her concern and said the City would need to understand what such an arrangement might look like and whether it could be implemented.

Vice President Weaver said that, from his perspective, it might be simpler to establish a separate standalone agreement with Mifflin Township rather than attempting to divert a portion of the TIF revenue stream on an ongoing basis. He noted that this approach would be more practical from an administrative standpoint.

City Attorney Tamilarasan addressed the Council to clarify several legal points discussed during the meeting. She began by referencing Councilmember McGregor's earlier question about Section 6.1.1 of the development agreement, which concerned the developer's right to sell, lease, or market the property. Attorney Tamilarasan explained that Section 6.2 of the agreement contained a restriction on assignment or transferability. She stated that the developer could not assign or transfer the agreement to anyone other than an affiliate entity created for development purposes without the City's express approval. She noted that while the creation of special-purpose entities was standard practice in development projects, this provision provided an additional safeguard for the City by prohibiting the sale to unrelated third parties without consent. Attorney Tamilarasan then addressed Councilmember Schnetzer's earlier comments regarding contingency planning and the City's potential exposure. She explained that her role included ensuring that proper procedures were followed and that all components of the agreement aligned legally and procedurally. She stated that, for example, the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) legislation would be handled separately from the development agreement. She clarified that while the current draft of the agreement referenced the TIF as a non-school TIF, any additional details or decisions about what would be included or excluded from the TIF would occur later, during the legislative process establishing it. She also addressed Councilmember McGregor's earlier question about the two city-owned lots mentioned in the development agreement. Attorney Tamilarasan stated that those properties would need to be conveyed to the Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) in order for them to be included in the development deal. She noted that although discussions and revisions to the agreement were ongoing, the current draft listed those parcels as CIC-controlled, which they were not at that time. She explained that legislation would need to come before Council authorizing the transfer of those parcels to the CIC before they could be conveyed to the developer. Whether that transfer occurred before or after the finalization of the development agreement would depend on how the language was negotiated in the final version. Councilmember McGregor sought to confirm her understanding on whether the City would have to transfer the lots to the CIC before those parcels could be included in the development agreement. Attorney Tamilarasan noted that while the specific timing remained under negotiation, the conveyance would be required at some point to effectuate the agreement. Councilmember McGregor thanked Attorney Tamilarasan and thanked the developers for their work on the project. She stated that she supported Phase One of the development but did not support Phase Two and had no further comments.

Vice President Weaver stated that he looked forward to continued engagement and outreach with the community regarding the project.

noted that the development would likely be one of the largest projects undertaken during many Councilmembers' tenures and emphasized the importance of proactive public communication. He acknowledged that outreach efforts had already begun and encouraged maintaining transparency and consistent updates to the community. Vice President Weaver said he looked forward to reviewing the consultant's findings and launching the project website to provide residents with access to information and updates. He then asked Mr. Lamb to discuss the measures Connect had used in other projects to mitigate construction impacts on surrounding businesses, noting concerns raised by current Creekside business owners.

Mr. Lamb explained that Connect had multiple projects underway in urban areas, including downtown Springfield and near the Trolley site off Broad Street. He said the company had engaged surrounding property owners before construction began, provided contact information, and established communication channels so nearby business owners could reach the construction team if issues arose. He stated that Connect's use of industrialized building units reduced the number of on-site workers compared to traditional construction, which minimized parking congestion, noise, and waste. He noted that industrialized units also allowed Connect to complete construction more quickly, reducing the time heavy equipment remained in the area. He added that Connect would apply the same proactive communication and mitigation strategies in this project to minimize impacts on nearby property owners and businesses.

Councilmember Jones asked whether an estimated timeline existed for receiving the revised development agreement, particularly if the initial goal had been to hold a vote the following Monday. Mayor Jadwin responded that, based on President Bowers' earlier comments, Council would not hold a vote on Monday. She asked when Council could expect to receive the redlined version of the development agreement from all parties and requested that it be provided by the end of the week so Council could review it in preparation for discussion at the Committee of the Whole meeting on October 27, 2025. She further asked Council to establish a timeline for when it anticipated taking a vote, noting that another agenda item scheduled to follow this discussion would also be affected by that decision.

President Bowers acknowledged the sensitive timeline the Council faced and stated that she understood the preference to use Connect for the demolition work. She said she was willing to advance the process at a reasonable pace but emphasized that, without a final development agreement, it was difficult to determine whether a vote could occur on November 3, November 10, or November 17. Mayor Jadwin noted that November 10 would not be possible because it coincided with the Committee of the Whole meeting. President

Bowers stated that, procedurally, Council could call a special meeting and designate November 10 as the date for the ordinance to move forward, though she was uncertain whether that would be feasible. Mayor Jadwin asked if it was realistic to have a finalized redlined version of the development agreement by the end of the week, addressing the question to the City Attorney, the development team, Director Gottke, and Mr. Lamb. Mr. Lamb confirmed that it was possible from the developers' side. City Attorney Tamilarasan and Director Gottke also agreed. Mayor Jadwin stated that if all parties could provide the redlined agreement, it should be shared with Council in anticipation of the next Committee meeting and distributed early enough for members to review in advance. President Bowers agreed.

Mayor Jadwin said that, regarding timelines, she wanted to ensure that feedback from community conversations and roundtable discussions, particularly those President Bowers had held, was incorporated into the overall process. She suggested combining all feedback to ensure that community input was fully captured and shared. President Bowers agreed and thanked her.

Councilmember Padova asked Connect whether the project remained on a timeline that required Council approval in order for demolition to be completed by the end of the year. Mr. Lamb responded that he would need to consult with Connect's construction and engineering teams. He said that the loss of even a week was significant given the short timeframe and potential weather impacts at this time of year. He requested permission to return by Wednesday morning to provide an update to the administration.

Vice President Weaver stated that Council would plan to bring the item back to the Committee on October 27, 2025 for further review.

Recommendation: Postponement of Second Reading to a Date Certain on Regular Agenda on 10/20/2025; Further Discussion in Committee of the Whole Scheduled 10/27/2025.

[ORD-0046-2025](#)

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS; AND WAIVING SECOND READING - General Fund Development Contract Services for the Gahanna Community Improvement Corporation

Vice President Weaver announced a brief recess. The Committee stood in recess at 8:05 PM.

The Committee reconvened from recess at 8:10 PM and proceeded with the remaining items of business.

Director of Economic Development Jeff Gottke stated that, following the earlier discussion, the administration sought to expedite the process by

implementing a contingency plan to ensure the demolition occurred in a timely manner. He explained that Plan A involved completing the development agreement so that demolition could begin and finish by December 31, 2025. Plan B, which he described as a longshot, involved requesting a short-term extension from the Department of Development into February or March of 2026. Plan C, the current proposal, served as a protective measure to ensure the project could proceed and the grant funds could be utilized. He noted that if Plan C became necessary and the appropriation were used, the Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) would not retain the grant funds, and the money would return to the City, leaving the City held harmless in the transaction.

President Bowers asked whether an agreement would be executed between the City and the CIC to transfer the money and ensure its reimbursement to the City. She asked when that agreement could be presented. Mayor Jadwin stated that the timing would depend on Council's schedule for voting on the development agreement and determining whether the funds were necessary. She said the administration would bring the agreement forward if needed. President Bowers asked whether the ordinance needed to advance to first reading the following week. Mayor Jadwin confirmed that it did. She said the item was presented as a precaution to ensure funds were appropriated in case they became necessary, explaining that waiting until after a vote on the development agreement would be too late. President Bowers asked how the City could accomplish the appropriation efficiently, with the understanding that the funds would be reimbursed. Senior Director of Operations Kevin Schultz stated that, similar to the City's annual \$5 million allocation to the CIC, this expenditure would qualify under the existing annual agreement. He said the City would need to coordinate the reimbursement details with the Finance Department but did not foresee an issue. He explained that the City might need a legal mechanism to hold the CIC accountable for repayment, though the supplemental appropriation itself would be covered under the existing agreement. He noted that the timing would not allow for a new ordinance establishing a separate agreement unless Council introduced it at the table on Monday for passage with an emergency and waiver, which would be the only way to meet the required timeline. Mayor Jadwin agreed. President Bowers clarified that the City typically provided a \$300,000 annual allocation to the CIC and asked if the proposed transfer would align with that agreement. Mayor Jadwin confirmed that it would, explaining that this would serve as another appropriation under the existing agreement. She added that if the City transferred the funds and the CIC later received grant dollars, those funds would need to return to the City. She said the administration could bring a separate reimbursement agreement on Monday if needed. President Bowers agreed that the proposal addressed her concern. Director Schultz noted that multiple parties would need to approve the arrangement,

including the City Attorney and CIC attorneys, but confirmed that the mechanism could proceed concurrently with the supplemental appropriation. President Bowers suggested including language in the ordinance to specify that the transfer would be reimbursable. Director Schultz clarified that the item was a resolution for supplemental appropriations, which required only one reading. Mayor Jadwin stated that the suggested reimbursement language should be added to the resolution. President Bowers noted that the legislation appeared before Council as an ordinance with a waiver. Mayor Jadwin stated she believed it was a resolution for authorizing supplemental appropriations. Vice President Weaver confirmed that it was listed as an ordinance with a waiver requested. Director Schultz acknowledged the clarification and explained that, because it was a supplemental appropriation, it required only one reading and did not carry a 30-day waiting period. Mayor Jadwin asked if the amendment language could be added. President Bowers confirmed that the language could be amended before the ordinance came forward for first reading. Vice President Weaver stated that the ordinance would appear on the regular agenda for a vote with the waiver requested. City Attorney Tamilarasan noted that the existing contract with the CIC would expire on December 31, 2025, and stated that any reimbursement obligations extending beyond that date should be addressed separately. Mayor Jadwin stated that the new CIC agreement would come forward before the end of the year. City Attorney Tamilarasan confirmed that the reimbursement provision could be included in either the new agreement or a separate one. Vice President Weaver concluded that the ordinance would appear on the regular agenda for the following week and thanked everyone for their input.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading with Waiver of Second Reading and Adoption on Regular Agenda on 10/20/2025.

D. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING:

[MT-0013-2025](#)

A MOTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF GAHANNA BIDDING FOR THE CLOTTS ROAD (SA-1105) AND SERRAN DRIVE (SA-1099) SANITARY SEWER IMPROVEMENTS

Director of Engineering Tom Komlanc stated that he had seven items for Council's consideration. He explained that the first six items were grouped in pairs, which he would present two at a time. He said the first two items related to sanitary sewer improvements at Serran Drive and on Clotts Road near Middle School East and Riva Ridge. He requested permission to bid and acceptance of an access easement to the sewer located at the rear lot of 135 Serran Drive. He then paused to invite questions.

Vice President Weaver, seeing no questions, stated that Council would place the item on the consent agenda.

Recommendation: Adoption on Consent Agenda on 10/20/2025.

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

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 10/20/2025; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 11/3/2025.

[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

Director of Engineering Tom Komlanc stated that the next two items concerned the Crescent development located off Tech Center Drive, just north of the new Sheetz fueling station. He explained that a sanitary sewer had been installed as part of the development and had passed all inspections. The project had entered its punch list warranty period. He added that the items included the conveyance of a sanitary sewer easement that required Council approval for recording.

Vice President Weaver asked if there were any questions regarding the items. Seeing none, he stated that Council would place them on the consent agenda.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 10/20/2025; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 11/3/2025.

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

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 10/20/2025; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 11/3/2025.

[RES-0048-2025](#) A RESOLUTION TO AMEND RES-0013-2025, THE 2026 SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE PROGRAM AREA RESOLUTION OF NECESSITY, TO REVISE THE 2026 SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE PROGRAM AREA FOR THE CITY OF GAHANNA

Director of Engineering Tom Komlanc stated that items five and six related to the City's sidewalk program. He explained that the administration proposed an amendment to the program area for the 2026 sidewalk program. He said the amendment was necessary because the City anticipated coordinating with the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) on an urban paving project in 2027. In preparation for that project, the City needed to advance work on Hamilton Road and Granville Street, including curb, gutter, ADA, and sidewalk improvements. He noted that funds would be reallocated from other program areas to cover the work not included in the ODOT paving project. He said the City would later revisit the streets originally scheduled for

2027 or 2028 once funding allowed.

Vice President Weaver asked whether the amendment would affect the sidewalk program timeline for the areas being deferred. Director Komlanc confirmed that it would. He said the streets removed from the 2026 program would shift to the 2027 or 2028 schedule. He explained that residents on those streets would receive notice when the work was rescheduled.

President Bowers clarified that the 2026 sidewalk maintenance program, which Council had approved in March, identified approximately 115 affected parcels. Director Komlanc stated that the City also maintained a lookback program that tracked maintenance needs on previously improved streets. He said the City planned to include work on Hamilton Road and Granville Street and to replace a longer section of Hines Road, which shared similar pavement conditions. He explained that the adjustment aligned with budget expectations and the City's historic spending patterns for the sidewalk program. President Bowers asked whether about 30 parcels had been identified on Hines Road and confirmed that the lookback program would remain unchanged. She also asked whether the urban paving program included a cost share from ODOT. Director Komlanc confirmed that the City would receive cost-sharing assistance from ODOT for paving activities on Hamilton Road and Granville Street, including pavement markings. President Bowers asked what percentage ODOT would contribute and whether it represented a significant portion of the total cost. Director Komlanc stated that ODOT's contribution was significant, although he did not recall the exact cost per lane mile at which the reimbursement was capped. He noted that the partnership provided substantial savings compared to fully funding the project locally. President Bowers stated that she wanted to ensure the City continued to serve as many residents and homeowners as possible through the sidewalk program, noting its benefits compared to code enforcement. She said she appreciated the inclusion of Hamilton Road and Granville Street in the revised plan. Director Komlanc stated that, through the City's Capital Improvement Plan, staff continued to address street maintenance and reconstruction needs. He said the City aimed to make steady progress on corrective actions and ADA compliance through planned investments in 2027, 2028, 2029, and 2030.

Councilmember Jones stated that the 2026 sidewalk homeowners had not yet been notified. Director Komlanc confirmed this. Councilmember Jones then asked when the notifications would take place. Director Komlanc explained that the department was finalizing the program so they could notify homeowners and give them the opportunity to perform the work themselves if they chose to opt out. He noted that as time progressed toward the winter months, the department risked bidding the project without allowing as much

time as desired for homeowners in the program area.

Councilmember Schnetzer clarified that two different programs were running concurrently, the lookback program and the annual sidewalk maintenance program. He stated that it appeared funds from the annual sidewalk maintenance program were being redirected to take advantage of an unexpected opportunity and asked if that was correct. Director Komlanc confirmed that it was. Councilmember Schnetzer referred to Vice President Weaver's earlier comments about the sidewalk program following the street maintenance program and asked what would happen to Caroway Boulevard, Crystal Cay, Moorfield Drive, Pond Hollow Lane, and Woodside Meadow Place. He asked how the city would catch up on those areas. Director Komlanc responded that the department would look at programming for years 2027 and 2028, reviewing pavement condition ratings and available capital appropriations for 2027 through 2029. Based on those ratings, the department would allocate which streets would receive maintenance. Councilmember Schnetzer stated that he assumed the city anticipated a set amount of funding each year for street maintenance, street rebuilds, and sidewalk maintenance. He questioned how the city would adjust if a year of work were skipped. Director Komlanc explained that by advancing the work in 2026, the city might otherwise have used that funding in 2027 to complete work on Hamilton Road, Granville Street, and Hines Road. He described it as essentially a switch in scheduling, with Hamilton Road being advanced to ensure right-of-way clearance and compliance with ODOT requirements. Councilmember Schnetzer stated that the clarification made sense and noted that the city was simply switching the timing of the work.

Councilmember Padova asked for confirmation that under the Urban Paving Program, the city would still pay 50% of the cost for residential properties. Director Komlanc confirmed that this was correct.

Vice President Weaver asked if there was any further discussion on the two items. Hearing none, he stated that the items would be placed on the consent agenda.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 10/20/2025.

[RES-0049-2025](#)

A RESOLUTION DETERMINING THE NECESSITY TO REPAIR AND/OR REPLACE SIDEWALKS IN THE 2026 URBAN PAVING SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE PROGRAM AREA FOR THE CITY OF GAHANNA

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 10/20/2025.

[MT-0014-2025](#)

A MOTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF GAHANNA BIDDING FOR THE WHITE SWAN COURT & EMBASSY COURT STREET REBUILD AND WATERLINE REPLACEMENT (ST-1120)

Director Komlanc stated that the final item was a request for permission to bid the White Swan and Embassy project, which included waterline replacement, street reconstruction, and related sidewalk work.

Vice President Weaver asked if there was any discussion on the item. Hearing none, he requested consent agenda for this item as well.

Recommendation: Adoption on Consent Agenda on 10/20/2025.

E. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION:

[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

Stephania Ferrell, Director of Parks and Recreation, introduced the first item related to a request for an easement from Columbia Gas of Ohio. She explained that the easement would provide service to an emergency generator at an existing cell tower located at Lower McCorkle Park. Ferrell stated that the easement would align with the existing service road currently in place. She requested an ordinance authorizing the mayor to enter into an easement agreement with Columbia Gas of Ohio.

Councilmember Schnetzer asked whether the proposed easement would affect the city's ability to repurpose the land in the future, as the area had previously been identified for possible redevelopment. Ferrell responded that it would not. She noted that an existing AEP easement already aligned within the same parcel and that the proposed easement would not disqualify any future use.

Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 10/20/2025; Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 11/3/2025.

[RES-0045-2025](#)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO THE MID-OHIO REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MORPC) FOR FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA) SECTION 5310 FUNDING UNDER THE ENHANCED MOBILITY FOR OLDER ADULTS AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES PROGRAM

Director Ferrell presented the second item, a resolution of authority to apply for funding hosted through MORPC. She explained that the funding opportunity was offered under the Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 program, which supports enhanced mobility for older adults and individuals with disabilities. Ferrell stated that, if awarded, the funds would be used to host a pilot program to supplement transportation for Senior Center members. She noted that the application required a resolution of authority for

submission and requested Council's approval of that resolution.

Vice President Weaver expressed his enthusiasm for the proposal, stating that he was excited to see the initiative moving forward and thanked Ferrell for bringing it to Council.

Councilmember McGregor asked whether the pilot program would provide transportation beyond trips to and from the Senior Center. Ferrell replied that the program would serve only transportation to and from the Senior Center.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 10/20/2025.

F. ITEMS FROM THE SENIOR DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS:

[RES-0050-2025](#)

A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE CITY'S APPLICATION FOR STATE CAPITAL GRANT FUNDING FOR THE CREEKSIDE PLAZA AND FLOOD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Kevin Schultz, Senior Director of Operations, reported that the administration was preparing an application to state legislators for the 2026-2027 State Capital Budget. He explained that the city planned to submit the Creekside Plaza and Flood Mitigation Project for potential funding consideration. Schultz stated that state officials had indicated a resolution of support from City Council would strengthen the application. He requested that Council approve a resolution to accompany the submission.

Councilmember Padova asked how the request aligned with prior approvals, noting that Council had not yet approved the remainder of the project for FEMA-related improvements. Schultz clarified that the application did not obligate the city in any way.

Councilmember McGregor asked how much funding the city planned to request. Schultz responded that the exact amount was still to be determined. He said the city did not intend to request full project funding but would likely seek up to six million dollars, noting that any award would likely be a fraction of that amount.

Mayor Jadwin added context regarding the capital budget process. She stated that she had attended a MORPC luncheon the previous week where Representative Jarrells discussed strategies for state capital budget requests. She explained that applicants often either request more funding and expect less or request only what they need. The mayor noted that, consistent with Schultz's comments, even if the city requested six million dollars, it would be pleased to receive one million. She said the Montrose Group was assisting with the application and that the city planned to take a strategic approach to maximize appeal and funding potential.

Councilmember McGregor suggested that the city emphasize the flood mitigation aspects of the project over the plaza improvements. Schultz explained that, in practice, legislators tended to favor visible downtown revitalization projects over infrastructure work such as flood mitigation, which was difficult to visualize. He compared it to underground utilities, noting that while people expected them, they rarely recognized their presence or value. Mayor Jadwin concluded by noting that the city had previously submitted the same project as a flood mitigation request two years earlier.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 10/20/2025.

G. ITEMS FROM COUNCILMEMBERS:

Councilmember Weaver:

[RES-0047-2025](#)

A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING OCTOBER AS NATIONAL ARTS & HUMANITIES MONTH

Vice President Weaver stated that he had a resolution recognizing October as National Arts and Humanities Month in Gahanna. He noted that the resolution had been provided to Councilmembers and offered to answer any questions. Weaver mentioned that he expected several guests to attend the following week for a ceremonial presentation. As no questions were raised, he requested that the item be placed on the consent agenda.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 10/20/2025.

H. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Committee of the Whole, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:34 p.m.

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

Trenton I. Weaver

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council