



City of Gahanna

200 South Hamilton Road
Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Meeting Minutes Committee of the Whole

Trenton I. Weaver, Chair
Karen J. Angelou
Merisa K. Bowers
Nancy R. McGregor
Kaylee Padova
Stephen A. Renner
Michael Schnetzer

Jeremy A. VanMeter, Clerk of Council

Monday, August 14, 2023

7:00 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers

A. CALL TO ORDER:

Vice President of Council Trenton I. Weaver, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The agenda was published on August 11, 2023. President Renner was absent from the meeting. All other members were present. There were no additions or corrections to the agenda.

B. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING:

[ORD-0062-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO PROVIDE CONSENT AND ENTER A PARTICIPATORY AGREEMENT WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR JOINT PLANS FOR REHABILITATION OF THE HAMILTON ROAD BRIDGE OVER INTERSTATE 270

Director of Engineering Tom Komlanc presented the first item on the agenda. He informed the attendees that ODOT had planned maintenance work for the Hamilton Road Bridge over I-270. This presented an opportunity to enhance the community gateway. He mentioned that the enhancements included adding decorative ornamental rail fencing along the bridge, installing lighting fixtures, and making provisions for the extension of the Big Walnut Trail, including a multi-use path on the bridge. As part of this initiative, they sought authorization for an ordinance that would allow the mayor to enter into a participation agreement with ODOT. The local share required for the enhancements, which encompassed Gahanna's contribution to the rail, multi-use path section, and lighting, was estimated to be in the range of \$750,000 to \$1 million (present value).

Councilmember Angelou expressed her interest in exploring funding opportunities for the enhancement project. She suggested attempting to secure funding through the MORPC (Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission) due to the scale of the project. She highlighted the potential benefits for both Gahanna and Whitehall, as the enhancements would not only improve connectivity but also positively impact the overall aesthetic appeal.

Mayor Jadwin asked if Councilmember Angelou was asking about funding opportunities for the trail itself.

Councilmember Angelou responded to the mayor's question, explaining that the intention was to seek funding to comprehensively enhance various aspects, not limited to the trail alone. She emphasized that the enhancements would enable residents to easily use bicycles and other modes of transportation. Additionally, she highlighted that such improvements had been hindered in the past due to certain limitations, making the current initiative all the more valuable.

Mayor Jadwin recalled that the city had applied for attributable funds in the previous year, but unfortunately, the application was denied.

Councilmember Angelou suggested attending MORPC's "Money Mondays" sessions for insights into the funding opportunities.

Mayor Jadwin said she thought the City had a good shot at the funds, given that it is a regional project which is what MORPC tends to like to prioritize.

Director Komlanc indicated that staff will continue to explore opportunities for the project.

Vice President Weaver asked if the cost sharing estimates were in line with previous projections. Director Komlanc confirmed that they were.

**Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 8/21/23;
Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 9/5/23.**

[ORD-0063-2023](#)

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE TECH CENTER DRIVE EXTENSION (ST-1086)

Director Komlanc introduced the next item on the agenda, which concerned the acceptance of public infrastructure related to the extension of Tech Center Drive. He explained that the extension took place in collaboration with the private development undertaken by ADB Safegate. The extension, located east of Science Boulevard, had reached a stage of substantial completion and had successfully passed all required engineering inspections. Consequently, he presented a request for the acceptance of the project.

Councilmember Bowers raised a concern with acceptance before the punch list associated with the project had been completely addressed. She inquired about the rationale behind not waiting until all punch list items were cleared before moving forward with the acceptance.

Director Komlanc responded to Councilmember Bowers' question, elaborating on the remaining work involved in the project. He mentioned that the project was at its final stages, where the focus primarily shifted to aspects like achieving proper ground cover, such as growing grass.

Councilmember Bowers concluded that the punch list was not ongoing work the City would be expecting from the contractor. Director Komlanc confirmed.

Mayor Jadwin clarified that this was acceptance of the infrastructure improvement and anything left to be addressed was very minor and not related to the actual infrastructure.

**Recommendation: Introduction/First Reading on Regular Agenda on 8/21/23;
Second Reading/Adoption on Consent Agenda on 9/5/23.**

[RES-0028-2023](#)

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE 2024 SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE PROGRAM AREA

Director Komlanc initiated the discussion by introducing the next two interconnected agenda items (RES-0028-2023 and RES-0029-2023). He informed the attendees that these items pertained to the upcoming 2024 sidewalk program. The staff had successfully identified several streets for inclusion in the program, namely Beaverbrook, Challis Springs, Cherrystone Drive North and South, Lang Drive, Mistletoe, Sandburr, and a proposed addition, Spirea. Director Komlanc explained that Spirea's proximity to Mistletoe justified its inclusion due to pavement conditions warranting mill and overlay. The cumulative maintenance area would encompass 178 parcels. He conveyed that the city was preparing to present the 2024 Street Program. This program would not only involve street rebuilds but also encompass crack sealing, slurry sealing, and other traditional pavement maintenance activities. The director mentioned that additional sidewalk work would also be integrated into the rebuilds. He clarified that the streets Rocky Fork Drive North, Laura, and Heil were still in the design phase. These streets were identified for the 2025 reconstruction activity. This forthcoming project would likely include water line work, and the plan was to present it to the City Council in the fourth quarter of 2024 for bidding. This timeline would enable the water line work to commence before the roadways were rebuilt in 2025.

Councilmember Bowers asked if she understood it to be correct that the sidewalk program areas also coincide with the street program.

Director Komlanc said this was correct. The body of work illustrated in these items are anticipated mill and overlay streets for 2024.

Councilmember Bowers acknowledged Councilmember Schnetzer's concerns regarding ADA compliance. She referred to prior conversations and expressed her understanding that the proposed sidewalk and street work would align with efforts to ensure ADA compliance.

Director Komlanc clarified Councilmember Bowers' statement. He acknowledged that Councilmember Schnetzer had indeed brought up the matter of ADA compliance, but he wanted to provide more context. He explained that Councilmember Schnetzer's request was related to previous programs in the years 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. The aim was to compile

the scope of work and bring it forward in a structured manner, possibly in the years 2025 and 2026. The intention was to address ADA compliance issues retrospectively on streets that had been worked on during those years. Director Komlanc estimated the effort required to be around \$2.6 million and emphasized that they would need to plan the implementation over a couple years within the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Vice President Weaver sought clarification on the process used to identify the program area for the proposed project. He acknowledged the use of Segway technology but requested Director Komlanc to elaborate on this process.

Director Komlanc addressed Vice President Weaver's request by explaining the approach to program area identification. He stated that the process began with a focus on pavement rating, which played a pivotal role in determining the sidewalk activity within a given area. He clarified that the pavement rating information informed decisions about which streets required mill and overlay maintenance or full reconstruction. This criterion guided the selection of streets for the program. Director Komlanc added that the city had incorporated the Cole ultra-light inertial profiler (ULIP) data. This additional data source was integrated with the information about streets identified for mill and overlay or reconstruction and formed the foundation for the program's scope.

Vice President Weaver asked whether Council's recent programming code changes were reflected with the new program area. Director Komlanc confirmed that the code changes were accounted for in the new program area.

Councilmember Padova inquired about the current status of the data collection and evaluation process. She mentioned the new Cole data and the utilization of Segways, and she sought an update on the availability and progress of this data.

Director Komlanc addressed Councilmember Padova's question by confirming the availability of the collected data. He clarified that while the data had been obtained, the city was still in the process of Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) procedures. He explained that the team was actively acclimating to the new data. Director Komlanc further elaborated on the ongoing evaluation process. He mentioned that the team was also focusing on evaluating ADA ramps at specific intersections. Director Komlanc noted that the city was covering the cost of these ADA ramp improvements.

Councilmember Padova inquired about the assessment of the collected sidewalk condition data. She asked if the observed condition of the city's sidewalks was in line with expectations, wondering if the overall condition was as expected, better, or worse.

Director Komlanc shared that the assessment covered approximately 200 miles of sidewalks city-wide. He mentioned that the total estimated cost for

maintenance amounted to around \$17.5 million and indicated that the condition of sidewalks varied across different areas of the city. Some sections required higher levels of maintenance, while others needed comparatively less.

Councilmember Padova inquired about the possibility of providing residents with advance notice regarding their inclusion in the sidewalk program. She asked if it would be feasible to plan the program in a way that residents could anticipate being part of it within a specific timeframe, such as three years.

Director Komlanc explained that the city was taking an integrated approach to planning the sidewalk program. He shared that the sidewalk data was being overlaid with street pavement data and underground utility information. Director Komlanc mentioned that the aim was to ensure that all aspects informed one another, minimizing the chances of disrupting streets due to subsequent utility work. He clarified that the coordination involved water line replacements and other underground utilities, preventing situations where a street would need to be addressed multiple times in a short span. Additionally, the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) would be prepared with this integrated data, allowing for more informed decision-making.

Councilmember Padova concluded there appeared to be lots of moving parts with this and thanked Komlanc for his work.

Councilmember McGregor expressed concerns about the volume of the sidewalk program. She pointed out that with 174 parcels slated for the next year, the annual count amounted to 1,710 years. She suggested that this figure might not be sufficient given the workload and program scope.

Director Komlanc addressed Councilmember McGregor's concerns by providing additional context. He noted that the sidewalk program was just one aspect of the city's comprehensive approach. Director Komlanc mentioned that alongside street maintenance, the city was also focusing on street reconstruction projects. He explained that the street reconstruction efforts would also involve additional sidewalk work. The scope of sidewalk work would extend to the streets scheduled for reconstruction.

Vice President Weaver asked if Komlanc could repeat the response to Councilmember McGregor's concern.

Director Komlanc provided an overview of the city's street program. He clarified that the program encompassed a range of activities, including street reconstructions, crack sealing, slurry sealing, and mill and overlay. He highlighted that the discussion here centered specifically on the mill and overlay streets that would also require sidewalk maintenance. Director Komlanc explained that the selection of sidewalks to be addressed was informed by the Cole data, resulting in targeted panel repairs based on data insights. Furthermore, Komlanc mentioned the recent updates to the city's code were set to go into effect on August 23rd. He discussed that for roadways undergoing reconstruction, the city would bear the cost of

replacing sidewalks up to Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) standards. Once the reconstruction project concluded, the responsibility for ongoing sidewalk maintenance would transition to the residents.

Councilmember Bowers raised a follow-up question regarding the retroactive sidewalk maintenance activity for the years 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. She inquired about the approach for streets that had extensive street maintenance but had not received sidewalk maintenance. Bowers asked how the city planned to address these streets, especially if they had excellent pavement condition rating (PCR) scores.

Director Komlanc addressed Councilmember Bowers' question by explaining that for the years 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023, there was a cumulative need for approximately \$2.6 million worth of work. He shared that the plan was to incorporate this backlog of work into the 2025 and 2026 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) budget rounds. Director Komlanc provided the following example: the work that was due in 2020 and 2021 might be scheduled for 2025, and the work from 2022 and 2023 could be slated for 2026. He indicated that the intention was to package and allocate these projects within the appropriate budget years.

Vice President Weaver expressed his desire to place both resolutions on the regular agenda. There were no objections.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Regular Agenda on 8/21/23.

[RES-0029-2023](#)

A RESOLUTION DETERMINING THE NECESSITY TO REPAIR AND/OR REPLACE SIDEWALKS IN THE 2024 SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE PROGRAM AREA FOR THE CITY OF GAHANNA

See discussion under RES-0028-2023.

Recommendation: Introduction/Adoption on Regular Agenda on 8/21/23.

C. ITEMS FROM THE COUNCIL OFFICE:

[MT-0016-2023](#)

A MOTION TO WAIVE FEES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$912.07, PURSUANT TO SECTION 135.11 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA, FOR GAHANNA RESIDENTS IN NEED (GRIN) RELATED TO THEIR RELOCATION AND RENOVATION

Vice President Weaver said his understanding was this item had been requested previously to come back to the Committee for further evaluation. He noted Director Schultz provided some additional information which was included in Council packets.

Councilmember Padova expressed her gratitude to Director Schultz for providing the updated financial information. She presented the revised total for the project expenses, mentioning that the original amount had been \$1,682.59. After deducting the third-party inspection fees, the new total had been calculated to be \$912.07. Councilmember Padova noted that this

clarification addressed the inquiries that had arisen during the previous meeting held two weeks prior.

Recommendation: Adoption on Consent Agenda on 8/21/23.

D. ITEMS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION:

[ORD-0059-2023](#) AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE CITY OF GAHANNA PARKS & RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

Stephania Ferrell, Director of Parks & Recreation provided an overview of the Parks Master Plan project initiated in 2022. She mentioned that the city had engaged Pros Consultants to create a comprehensive plan. The administration, based on a recommendation from the Parks and Recreation Board, introduced an ordinance at a previous Committee of the Whole meeting to adopt the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Director Ferrell introduced Mr. Leon Younger from Pros Consultants, who would be presenting comments and answering questions related to the plan.

Mr. Younger, Pros Consultants, expressed gratitude for the opportunity to address questions and thoughts about the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. He reiterated the key purposes of the plan, including obtaining public input through stakeholder interviews, focus group meetings, and a community-wide survey. Mr. Younger highlighted that the plan aimed to identify the community's perceived needs regarding the Parks and Recreation Department. He mentioned that the plan encompassed the evaluation of various data sources, program services, operational aspects, and capital improvement requirements for parks, trails, sports fields, and aquatic facilities. The Master Plan was described as a dynamic action plan for the park system's future, prioritizing the public's desires and steering the system's growth. Mr. Younger noted the positive public participation throughout the process and was available to address questions from the Committee.

Vice President Weaver expressed his gratitude for the effort invested in developing the plan and thanked Mr. Younger for returning and addressing inquiries. Weaver inquired about the next steps and utilization of the plan assuming its adoption by the Council, specifically seeking clarification on how the plan's goals would be aligned with the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and how progress would be tracked.

Director Ferrell explained that the plan included an action plan segment with designated milestones for each section. She stated that the Parks Board would take responsibility for overseeing the achievement of these milestones, clarifying that the Parks Board would receive monthly reports on progress toward the action plan's milestones. Additionally, Ferrell said these monthly reports would contribute to an annual report presented back to the Council. Director Ferrell emphasized that the set milestones and regular reporting would serve as accountability tools to keep the plan's goals on track, noting the understanding that the plan's goals spanned a period of five to ten years, and achieving them would be a gradual process.

Vice President Weaver raised a question regarding the plan's emphasis on forming partnerships and seeking external funding. He connected the question to a previous comment made by Councilmember Angelou about exploring outside funding avenues. Weaver requested further elaboration on the concept of partnerships and how other communities optimize such opportunities.

Mr. Younger discussed the dynamics of partnerships and funding optimization. He emphasized the importance of assessing facility usage, distinguishing between city residents and non-residents, to gauge external use of facilities. He defined partnerships as collaborative endeavors involving public agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and private entities. Mr. Younger referenced the existing partnerships with the school system, which provides much of the indoor space required for programming and noted that the YMCA contributes to programming but highlighted that it doesn't cover the full spectrum of offerings. He explained that partnerships are fostered by identifying opportunities, shared interests, and available funding resources. Mr. Younger highlighted shared usage of sports fields and indoor spaces as prime avenues for partnerships, acknowledging the city's extensive outdoor spaces and its popularity among the public. He concluded that the goal is to explore ways to combine programs and indoor facilities through strategic partnerships.

Vice President Weaver brought up a question regarding the research in the Parks Master Plan. He noted that there were sections comparing Gahanna to neighboring communities like New Albany and Upper Arlington. Weaver mentioned that there were also statistics included throughout, and he wanted to confirm their sources, particularly the basis for side-by-side comparisons and national statistics.

Mr. Younger provided clarification on the sources of comparison data and statistics. He explained that the research incorporated information from both regional and national perspectives. National statistics were utilized to understand general trends and per capita aspects. While national numbers were considered, they also leaned heavily on regional benchmarks due to the variability of participation in national benchmarking. Mr. Younger indicated that the regional context provided a more relevant and reliable benchmark for Gahanna's performance compared to other cities in the area.

Councilmember Schnetzer posed a question regarding a specific section of the plan related to maintenance of facilities. He highlighted that the survey responses indicated a significant interest in this category, which seemed broad and catch-all. Schnetzer inquired whether respondents were given additional context about specific maintenance items or if they provided feedback on what maintenance practically meant, given the wide range of possibilities.

Mr. Younger explained that the plan integrated a well-defined Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that already existed. He mentioned that life cycle maintenance played a key role in this process, focusing on the replacement

and repair schedules for various facilities and amenities. Mr. Younger noted that the maintenance cycles ranged from 15 to 18 years for grounds, level replacement for trails, and considerations for items like pools. He shared that the analysis included evaluating not only the replacement cycle but also identifying areas needing repair or updates to enhance the overall user experience. Mr. Younger recognized the efforts of Alan Little and his team in aligning the plan with existing needs and community preferences. Maintenance was not solely about operational standards but also encompassed capital investments to maintain and improve community assets. Mr. Younger highlighted the positive impact of maintenance on the community's perception and comfort within the park system.

Councilmember Bowers requested clarification on the utilization of tech assets, particularly focusing on the website and RecTrac.

Director Ferrell described RecTrac as a versatile software tool for various functions such as programming sign-ups, golf course tee time reservations, and shelter reservations. She acknowledged that RecTrac effectively covers the diverse range of tasks required by the department. Director Ferrell recognized the gap in user-friendliness with online tools and acknowledged the potential for user error during the registration process. She mentioned the department's intention to address these issues by improving the user experience and offering clear instructions for online registration. Director Ferrell noted the positive impact of the city's website enhancements in improving user understanding of the online registration process. While improvements were needed, RecTrac serves its purpose efficiently and accomplishes the required tasks effectively.

Councilmember Bowers noted that Director Ferrell had mentioned, and it was also included in the report, the overall website redesign. She would like to ask more about this but offered that it might be better addressed in the Finance Committee following the meeting. Director Ferrell said this could be addressed during the CIP conversation in the Finance Committee.

Vice President Weaver acknowledged the presence of representatives from the Parks & Rec Foundation, Parks & Rec board, and the department's staff in the audience. He expressed gratitude for their contributions and efforts. Weaver informed attendees about the upcoming second public hearing on the item during the next Council meeting. He encouraged residents to participate in the public hearing by attending in person or submitting comments via video online.

Councilmember Bowers asked about the process for making amendments to the master plan and how Council would be briefed on these changes. Bowers mentioned residents' engagement with the Parks & Rec board and department. She sought clarification on how changes might be communicated to Council and incorporated, whether through the budget process or other briefings.

Director Ferrell stressed that changes to policy, management, or operation standards would be communicated to Council, especially if they impact the

budget. She assured Council that any substantial changes or shifts in direction would be thoroughly communicated. Director Ferrell emphasized that the communication with the Parks Board, which is open to the public and documents meeting minutes, would aid in transparency and the review process. She highlighted the gradual nature of implementing the plan and that the communication channels would facilitate gradual adjustments over the plan's timeline.

Councilmember Bowers raised a specific question regarding the ongoing discussions about the skate park, particularly the action park and its proposed relocation. She referred to a prior Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) conversation, noting that there had been talks about re-envisioning the skate park without necessarily relocating it. She sought updates on the current status of these discussions and whether any decisions had been made by the department.

Director Ferrell addressed Councilmember Bowers' question, clarifying the department's stance on the matter. She indicated that the intention had always been to relocate and re-envision the skate park, rather than redesigning it in its current location. She emphasized that the existing location was not ideal for continued investment and expansion. The primary goal is to establish an action park with updated amenities, including modern skate elements. This strategic shift aligns with the department's vision for enhancing the overall recreational experience.

Recommendation: Second Public Hearing Scheduled 8/21/23; Second Reading/Adoption on Regular Agenda on 8/21/23.

E. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Committee of the Whole, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

Jeremy A. VanMeter
Clerk of Council

*APPROVED by the Committee of the Whole, this
day of 2023.*

Trenton I. Weaver
Chair