



WARD 1 NEWSLETTER
Fall, 2019
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Please Vote on November 5

Important issues on this Fall's ballot are elections for council representatives for Wards 1, 3, 5 and 7 along with the following issues:

- Issue 63 Would amend the City's Charter to improve the clarity of its language regarding initiatives. This is in response to the recent rejection of the City's process by the Ohio Supreme Court relative to the Kerem Lake Winery proposal (Issue 110). The amendment was recommended by an outside expert hired to assist in preparing an amendment that would assure our Charter more clearly reflects the needs of the Initiative Petition process while protecting the ward veto.
- Issue 64 Would amend the City's Zoning Code to change the property between Sedlak Interiors and nVent on Solon Road from C-3 (Commercial) to I-2 (Manufacturing). This is at the request of the property owner who believes the property can be used more effectively for light manufacturing.
- Issue 65 Would create a new Mixed Use Planning District-A (MPD-A) and change the current C-3 and C-4 Zoning Classification of the former Liberty Ford property and the properties bounded by Solon Road, Station Street, Melbury Avenue and Aurora Road to the new "MPD-A" Zoning Classification. The former Liberty Ford property is under contract to be acquired by Industrial Commercial Properties, Inc.

The current C-4 classification allows hotels, car dealerships, auto repairs and gas stations. The new Mixed Use classification would allow restaurants, retail, offices and up to 200 residential apartment units (no more than 30% of the property).

Existing businesses could choose to develop a project under the new MPD-A "Mixed Use Zoning" or proceed to develop under the C-3

Commercial Zoning, which is one of the broadest commercial classifications in the downtown area. The entire area subject to the zoning proposal is 21.7 acres, while the Liberty Ford property itself is just less than 6 acres. To date, the developer is proposing several free-standing buildings for potential restaurants along Aurora Road, a hotel and an apartment building. As currently envisioned, the apartments would be mostly 1 bedroom units available for \$1500 to \$2500 per month.

Please remember to vote on November 5th. Ward 1 will vote at Grantwood.

Current and Planned Projects

Miles Road Culvert

This project will replace an existing culvert on Miles Road west of Cheswick Drive. The existing culvert is in the City of Solon and the Village of Orange. The Village of Orange is the lead agent on the project and has completed design work and a preliminary plan review with the City of Solon. The City has budgeted \$65,715 for the design and construction of the City's portion of the project. Bids received by Orange Village were too high for the Village to award, therefore, the project is on hold and will be rebid in the spring of 2020.

Cochran Road Resurfacing

This project will resurface Cochran Road from Solon Road to U.S. 422. The Engineering Department is working on funding with the Cuyahoga County Engineer's Office. \$1,750,000 has been budgeted for this project. Funding has been secured and the project is budgeted for 2020.

Briar Hill Culvert

This project will replace the existing two corrugated metal culvert pipes that discharge into Briar Hill Lake. The consultant has submitted plans for the City's review and is in the process of developing Right-of-Entry agreements for affected homeowners. The budget for the

project was originally \$615,000, and it has been increased to \$750,000. It is planned for 2020.

SOM Center Road Resurfacing

The project to resurface SOM Center Road from the railroad bridge south of Bainbridge Road north to U.S. 422 is expected to be complete by the end of October. I know we will all be relieved when this is done.

Solon Road Sidewalks

This project will install sidewalks on the east side of Solon Road from Aurora Road to Davis Industrial Parkway. The City is still in the process of acquiring the last right-of-way needed for the project. \$120,000 has been budgeted for the project, although it is on hold pending the outcome of Issue 65.

Arbordale Avenue Reconstruction

The Arbordale Avenue Reconstruction Project is in process and includes reconstruction of the entire road, replacement of all storm and sanitary sewers, and the replacement of individual house laterals for those storm and sanitary sewers. There was a delay due to utility lines not being in the required easements, and extra time with the contractor has been budgeted to insure this project is completed by the end of the year.

Fairfield Oval Rehab

The Fairfield Oval Rehabilitation Project is in process to remove and replace the existing curb, gutter and drive aprons along with resurfacing the existing roadway. It is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

Derby Downs Reconstruction

The Derby Downs Reconstruction Project is substantially complete. It included the reconstruction of the entire road, sidewalks and driveway aprons. The entire storm sewer and a portion of the sanitary sewer have all been replaced.

Bunker Hill/Independence Court Sewers

This project is in process and will replace the sanitary sewer in an easement between Bunker Hill Drive and Independence Court. This is scheduled for completion by the end of the year.

Valley Forge Stream Restoration

This project will restore a portion of the street between Valley Forge Drive and Independence Court. The City and Chagrin River Watershed Partners are working on the design of the project which is expected to cost \$275,000. The City has received a grant for \$165,000 from the Ohio EPA Clean Water Act 319(H) program and is in the process of preparing Private Property Owner

Agreements to enable conservation easements and construction rights of entry. The project is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2020.

State Route 91/Aurora Road Project

This \$6.5 million project is in process and will add an additional lane along the east side of SOM Center Road from the railroad bridge north of SOM Center Road south to Linden Drive. The sanitary and storm sewers have been replaced, and all underground utility work has also been completed. The entire limits of SOM Center Road from the railroad bridge north of SOM Center Road south to Linden Drive and Aurora Road from Solon Boulevard east to the Solon Shopping Center entrance are now in the process of being resurfaced. Everything is expected to be completed by the end of November.

Fox Hill Drive Storm Sewer

This project will rehabilitate a 100 foot section of storm sewer at the intersection of Solon Boulevard and Arthur Road utilizing trenchless technologies. The plans prepared by the City's design consultant are currently being reviewed and this \$457,000 project is scheduled to be completed in 2020.

SOM Center Road/Pettibone Road Intersection Expansion

The City of Solon has entered into a design contract with GPD to widen Pettibone Road to add individual left turn lanes to the eastbound and westbound portions of Pettibone Road at SOM Center Road. A resident survey has been completed and a preliminary layout design has been submitted to the City for review. This will be presented to the Public Works Committee in the next two months for approval.

Harper Road/U.S. Route 422 Interchange

Due to increased traffic flow, studies are underway to determine how to redesign and expand that intersection to improve traffic management.

Aurora Road Reconstruction Project Phase I

This project is from the Solon Shopping Center entrance to Liberty Road. Preliminary plans have been submitted to ODOT for review and a consultant for right-of-way acquisition has been hired. The City has received \$1,500,000 in grant money. The estimated cost of the project is \$7,091,165. Qualifications for right-of-way services are being prepared and right-of-way acquisition is expected to take place in 2020.

Liberty Road Expansion

A southbound right turn lane on Liberty Road at Aurora Road will be part of the Aurora Road

Reconstruction Project Phase I. I have also requested traffic studies for both Liberty Road south of Aurora Road and for the traffic signal at Liberty Road and Pettibone Road. Traffic from Twinsburg has increased significantly and I believe this section of Liberty Road will need to be modified within the next few years.

Traffic Signal on Bainbridge Road

Construction has begun on this project and the signal pole was delivered in early October. This will enable Nestlé employees to traverse between buildings without dodging traffic on Bainbridge Road. This project will be completed by the end of this year.

Traffic Signal on Aurora Road and Portz Parkway

The temporary traffic signal at the intersection of Aurora Road and Portz Parkway will remain until it is replaced with a permanent traffic signal as part of the Aurora Road Reconstruction Project Phase I. At this time it is not connected to our citywide signal management system so it may seem that it is out of sync with other traffic signals.

No Right Turn from Southbound Liberty Road to Aurora Road Westbound

This modification to traffic flow has been changed to restrict right turns only during weekday high-traffic periods. The long term solution is expected to be part of the Aurora Road Reconstruction Project slated for 2021.

More Traffic Concerns

As you travel eastward along Aurora Road to the City of Aurora, it is clear that there are a number of properties for sale. These properties could be developed to provide additional retail or residential units, which would impact our traffic issues. In addition, the City of Aurora recently approved a number of housing units on the old Geauga Lake property. This will be significant. I have asked for long term traffic plans to be reviewed with our Public Works Committee. At this time the City has had some preliminary discussions with ODOT about the possibility of adding a new interchange on U.S. 422 between State Route 91 and State Route 306. That will require much input and discussion with other communities and will be, at best, a long-term solution.

Water Reclamation Plant Upgrade

I spent some time recently reviewing the \$10.5 million addition of a 1.78 million gallon equalization tank to our Water Reclamation Facility. Other than some minor landscaping

work, the project is complete and a credit to Director Solanics and his team. We reviewed other long-term projects for the facility, including the possibility of an anaerobic digester which could potentially make our entire Water Reclamation Facility totally energy independent. This issue will be discussed in more detail next year.

Follow-Up on Recycling

There have been a number of requests for follow-up information about recycling. Our standards are determined by Cuyahoga County, which processes all of our recyclables. You can read more about their approach at https://cuyahogarecycles.org/how_to_recycle.

China has significantly reduced its purchases of our recyclables along with other countries which are also restricting imports from us. The basic economics of recycling continue to mitigate against growing that business. It is important to make sure we include only the proper items, otherwise it slows the sorting process and can lead to contamination. The recommendation is to only recycle the "Basic 5" items:

CANS: Please empty and rinse before putting them into the recycle bin.

CARTONS: Emptied, rinsed, with caps replaced. This does not include plastic "clamshell" containers which cannot be recycled.

GLASS BOTTLES AND JARS: Please empty and rinse.

PAPER AND BOXES: When possible, please flatten them.

PLASTIC BOTTLES AND JUGS: Also please empty, rinse and replace the cap.

Plastic bags are not recycled and should not be placed in the recycle bin. However, local retailers including Marc's, Giant Eagle, Home Depot and Target will take them.

Leaf Collection

Curbside leaf collection began on Monday, October 14th and will run through Friday, December 20th, depending on the weather. Leaves should be placed three feet from the curb not in the street as that can cause traffic problems and block storm sewers. As our crews work their way through the City following a zone pattern, it may be several days before they get

to your neighborhood but they will cover all of the City several times during the season.

To protect our workers and their equipment, please rake leaves into a row and do not include any brush, small branches or any other material. If possible, it helps to mulch leaves when mowing your lawn. Small piles should be placed into brown yard waste bags and placed out for collection on your normal garbage collection day. Those will be picked up by a separate truck. You can contact the Service Department at (440-248-5834) to determine where collection is currently occurring. However, once the program has finished, please place any remaining leaves into brown yard waste bags and put out on your normal garbage collection day. The Service Department has a wonderful composting program for all leaves that are collected, which is available to Solon residents in the spring.

Finance Update

According to Director Rubino, based on current trends, our General Fund revenue is projected to come in at the end of the year at \$45,528,766, which is 2.8% over 2018 actual, and flat (+.02%) as compared to the 2019 budget estimate.

Our expenditures are forecast to be \$40,028,194 before transfers, leaving us with a surplus of \$1.2 million, which will likely be requested to be applied towards 2020 Capital Projects and Economic Development Incentives.

Our 2019 projected operating expenditures are 3.2% under budget, and 5.8% over 2018 actual. Our budget assumed operating expenditures would increase by 8.4%. The increase was primarily due to employee wage increases, the addition of 3 additional firefighters and the doubling of the price of road salt.

Our investment income is projected to come in at \$1.2 million for 2019. The sharp drop in interest rates has driven our estimate downwards. We are assuming interest income will decline by 20% in 2020. Our current rate of return on our portfolio is 1.9% versus the yield on the 2-year Treasury bond of 1.63%.

Our revenue shortfall is primarily due to reduced income taxes from several of our larger businesses who are not seeing the same level of profit this year.

Our annual Capital Planning process is underway, with the first review by Council having been completed. Capital items are those considered to

cost greater than \$5,000 and have a useful life of greater than 5 years. All facilities' requests are reviewed by a newly-established Capital Planning Group. The process is bottom up with requests originating from within all City departments and reviewed against our prioritization criteria. Some requests will be moved to later years due to funding constraints. Our initial capital requests total \$29.4 million for 2020, including infrastructure, and \$111.8 million for the next five years. Our general capital requests for 2020 (not including infrastructure) are \$6.7 million, with 51.7% of the requests related to our buildings and grounds, and 25.1% being related to our Service Department (mostly equipment replacements). All of our capital needs are internally financed, with the exception of some of our heavy equipment which may be leased due to heavy wear and tear resulting in shorter replacement cycles. We will consider the possibility of some debt financing for some major community development projects which will stretch over several years. This includes Grantwood which would be self-supported. All of our capital planning will be subject to further review once we update our income tax estimates at the end of the year. The final Capital Improvement Plan will be presented to City Council in November.

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)

Vendor selection is in process for the City's proposed municipal ERP system. Out of 40 proposals, eight have been selected for final review by a steering committee of 8 individuals from different departments in the City. This system will integrate all of the financial data necessary for City management and will enable advanced analysis and reporting. It includes Financial Reporting and Accounting, Payroll, Human Resources, Procurement, Budgeting, Forecasting, Asset Management, Inventory, Construction Administration and Online Reporting (internally and for residents). It will also enable standardized business processes for our city departments which includes accurate tracking of responsibilities and deadlines. We will be able to develop key performance indicators for all of our critical functions that will be visible and accurate. Vendor selection will be completed by the end of October, with contract negotiation to be completed by the end of November. Final implementation planning will allow us to begin installation by the start of 2020.

EnerGov

EnerGov is a comprehensive software system to centralize and automate critical civic processes.

We will finally have our Building, Planning and Engineering Departments working on the same system with complete electronic process, versus the 80/20 mix of paperwork to systems today. It will include online permit applications with full GIS (Geographic Information System) Mapping Technology integration throughout, as well as mobile device-based inspections. The definition of how the system will be tailored to our needs has been completed, and the system modifications will begin shortly with implementation planned during the winter.

New Business

Chick-fil-A: The grand opening has been held and the facility is fully operational.

Yours Truly: Construction is complete and the restaurant will encompass 5,000 square feet, including a full bar, and a vehicle order-ahead pick-up window, as well as private party and meeting rooms. There will also be an outdoor patio bar which will have a fire pit. The restaurant is currently hiring staff and the Grand Opening is planned for October 28th.

Omni Senior Living: Construction is underway for a four-story, 105,000 square foot building for 90 independent-living apartments alongside a 3-story, 45,000 square foot facility for 42 assisted-living apartments and 18 memory-care units. Planned opening is scheduled for early May.

Omni Corporate Headquarters: Construction is underway for the approximately 15,148 square foot building. The corporate team is planning to move in by the end of the year.

Swagelok: Early construction has begun for the new Corporate Headquarters on grading and utility placement. The project is expected to be complete by Spring of 2021. Traffic studies have been completed with street and entry plans to be submitted shortly.

Brennan Industries: Construction of the additional offices and warehouse space is in process, while landscaping is to be completed by the end of October. The entire project is expected to be complete by May of 2020.

Hobby Lobby had its Grand Opening on October 7th and its courteous staff is anxious to assist any and all shoppers.

ALDI: Work was completed on the new store and a Grand Opening was held October 17th.

Mobil Gas Station: Construction is underway for the new station on the southwest corner of Aurora Road and Solon Boulevard. There will be a whole new look for the station which is expected to open in early November.

Rita's Salon & Spa is open and serving customers with a very sophisticated and comfortable environment.

Simply Greek has finally opened and serves terrific Greek cuisine.

Blue Heron Preserve

Planning Director Rob Frankland is in discussion with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources relative to the status of the Blue Heron Rookery. The Director will review the property in late October with the intent to have the State of Ohio designate this property as a State Nature Preserve which will enable further protections for the vulnerable Blue Herons when they come to mate. It should also enable investment in better hiking trails and present expanded educational opportunities for not only our local schools but nearby universities as well. This will be a signature project for the City not only as we preserve this important part of nature but also by increasing local recreational opportunities.

City Broadband Initiative

We are in the process of gauging community interest in municipal broadband. After further review with several communities and ongoing discussions with different vendors, it is clear that cost and revenue concerns would not be prohibitive. Based on our desire to be an innovative and forward-thinking city, it is a vision that should be pursued. We have prepared a survey for residents to express their interest. Please go to the following link and let us know what you think:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Solonfiber>.

Retention Basin Notes

Several of our neighborhoods have retention basins. These are an integral part of the city's storm water management strategy and part of our agreements with the EPA. They are part of the original plats used by developers for construction of some of our neighborhoods. Many were titled to the Homeowners Associations that were set up when those neighborhoods were developed. Over time, many HOA's did not remain operational and the retention basins fell into tax arrears. Individuals may then have bought them by paying the back taxes.

However, if those purchasers were hoping they could recoup their investment through development, they are prevented from doing so as none of our retention basins can be developed, although the owners are required by City Ordinance to keep them maintained.

Tree Management

Many neighborhoods had a species of pear tree planted in the their treelawns when they were first developed. Unfortunately, most of those have now become diseased and much more susceptible to damage during severe winds. This condition will worsen over time as the trees lose their vitality, leading to potentially dangerous situations. Rollingbrook Trail is having the last of their ash trees removed while Canterbury Drive recently had all of their pear trees removed. Rollingbrook Trail will have a species of Ornamental Maple trees planted and Canterbury Drive will have Kentucky Coffee trees to replace those that they have lost. The nurseries are preparing those trees for us now and we should begin planting them in early November.

Senior Center Notes

Medicare Open Enrollment for 2020 is held from October 15th through December 7th. During this period people may move from original Medicare plans or choose a different Medicare prescription drug plan. Many people think Medicare is a once-in-a-lifetime event that's timed to coincide with their retirement date and Social Security claiming decisions. This can be a costly mistake because each year insurance companies make changes to Medicare plans that affect out-of-pocket costs for monthly premiums, deductibles, drug costs and health care provider networks and pharmacies. The City of Solon offers its residents the opportunity to review their plans and needs. For more information, please contact the Senior Center at 440-349-6363.

Please remind all of our seniors that we have a Personal Emergency System program that provides personal life alert units to qualifying residents at no charge, as well as substantial discounts for all of our residents. In addition to the life alert units, the Senior Center also provides lock boxes and/or discounts on lock boxes.

Solon Spins

Thanks to a generous donation from our local Rotary Club, we recently launched the Solon Spins Program which will operate out of our Recreation Center and is a joint program with the

Senior Center. The bikes can be rented from the Center for \$2 for 2 hours although that can be alleviated through available scholarship programs.

Community Events

The Solon Philharmonic will have a Halloween Spooktacular concert at 3:00 P.M. on the 27th of October, featuring a new conductor, Laura L. Joss. It will be held at the Solon Center for the Arts and there will be a Halloween Costume Contest and a Trick-or-Treat parade. Tickets for this event are available for purchase online at <https://solonohio.org/257/Solon-Center-for-the-Arts>.

Our annual Holiday Tree Lighting ceremony will be held at City Hall on Wednesday, November 27th at 7:00 P.M.

Our Spotlight Youth Theater will be presenting Disney's *Frozen, Jr.* on December 6th through the 8th.

Remember that cross-country skiing is available at Grantwood during the winter months. Group lessons and clinics are available once the weather turns.

Community Living Proposal

Our Planning Commission is currently holding public hearings on a proposal to re-zone some city-owned property at the southwest corner of Aurora Road and Portz Parkway to enable the construction of between 10 and 12 cluster homes consisting of two bedroom units for special needs residents to enable simultaneous residence of a caregiver if necessary. The community group working on this proposal has also acquired a home on the southeast side of Aurora Road and Portz Parkway to be a residence for a Direct Support Professional who would be on-site full time. This is an important project for the City as it will enable parents with special needs children to have housing options for those children should something happen to the parents.

Emergency Notifications


As we move towards winter and start to consider the potential for inclement weather, we need to insure that everyone knows the City utilizes a Cuyahoga County service called Ready Notify. It will send a text or an email to notify residents when there is an emergency or any other important event that needs to be broadcast. Go to <https://ready.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/ReadyNotify.aspx> to register.

Welcome to Our New Police Chief

Lieutenant Richard A. Tonelli has been promoted to Chief of Police for Solon, succeeding Chris Viland who has taken a position with the City of Cleveland as Inspector General. Chief Tonelli's appointment was unanimously approved by City Council on October 7th. His formal swearing in will take place on October 21st at the Council meeting. It is a hallmark of organizational excellence when visible and important positions can be filled from within and we are proud of the standards that are set by our department. He has been in law enforcement for 32 years after beginning his career with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department before coming to Cleveland and joining the Cleveland Heights Police Department. He became part of the Solon team in 1996, was promoted to Sergeant in 2001 and Lieutenant in 2011. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy. Congratulations to Chief Tonelli – we know he will continue the fine tradition of excellence and professionalism that our Police Department is known for.

Contacting Your Councilman

Thank you for your continuing input on City of Solon issues and for your many questions regarding things of common concern. You can connect with me at 216-536-1564, or DMagill@SolonOhio.org. I am available to meet with residents either individually or in groups.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Magill". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "D" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.