



# Administrative Report Mayor Eddie Moran

**TO:** City Council  
**FROM:** William M. Heim, Managing Director  
**PREPARED BY:** Maritza Loaiza, Special Assistant  
**MEETING DATE:** November 9, 2022  
**AGENDA MEMO DATE:** November 14, 2022

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## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:**

- The Community Development Department assisted Mayor Moran in preparing a federal fund request summary form for use by different agencies to commence and complete projects impacting economic development within the City. The form emphasized the City's need for a substantial infusion of funds and was discussed with Senator Casey during his visit on October 27<sup>th</sup>.
- The Community Development Director met with the developing company for the Gateway West residential development, a 42 2- and 3- bedroom apartment completed project. All units serve low- to moderate-income families.
- The CD Director met with Opportunity House representatives to discuss shelter operations and a possible expansion to accommodate the increase in homelessness, especially during the winter season.
- The CD Department participated in the preparation and review of the TOD (Transient Oriented District) RFP. The RFP was prepared by a City consultant, reviewed by the City, GRCA, Berks Alliance, and the County of Berks, and released on November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## **DOWNTOWN:**

- The Downtown Coordinator is collaborating with Reading-Muhlenberg Career & Technology Center Art Department for possible window art within the Downtown.
- The Downtown Coordinator is contacting property owners of vacant and neglected front window areas to offer assistance in improving the presentation of the space.

- Downtown Ambassadors continue daily cleaning activities with the assistance of the Hope Rescue Mission team. In addition, Ambassadors assist people daily with parking difficulties.
- The Downtown Coordinator is organizing the City's annual Holiday Parade, which is scheduled for November 19<sup>th</sup>. So far, 71 applications have been received for participation in the parade.

## **FINANCE:**

- The Finance Department's Information Technology Division is in the process of establishing a presence at other City buildings. A space is now set up for an IT Administrator at the WWTP facility, and a space is currently being identified at the Public Works facility on North 6<sup>th</sup> Street.
- The Finance Department's Citizens Service Center provided the following updates:
  - The Business Privilege License revenue collected is expected to be higher for 2022 due to the staff's increased efforts in collecting delinquent fees.
  - 2022 Per Capita Tax can be paid by December 31<sup>st</sup> without incurred fees. A link was placed on the City's website regarding this announcement.
  - The CSC is organizing the City's Annual Angel Tree Holiday event for Reading School District elementary school students. Tyson-Schoener Elementary School was chosen this year, and City staff is excited to help make this event a success by purchasing gifts for the students attending.
- The Finance Department's Purchasing Division provided the following updates related to projects:
  - Baer Park Improvements – This project consists of tree removal, tree pruning, understory clearing, and grubbing; provision of earthwork, porous asphalt paving walkways, segmental block piers, landscaping; installation of owner-furnished modular play and swing structures, safety surface mulch; and incidental related work. Bids are currently being accepted. The deadline for submission is December 14<sup>th</sup>.
  - 8<sup>th</sup> & Penn Street Courtyard – This project consists of the removal of brick paving and replacement with stamped concrete. The removal and replacement of the existing ramp with a new ramp. Tree removal and replacement of trees, grates, and guards. Bids are due on November 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- The Finance Department provided the following updates on the AHL Grant activities:
  - Community-Accessible Testing & Education (CATE) vaccine clinic is scheduled for November 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>.

- Health Literacy Questionnaire (HLQ) survey is officially closed, and surveys are being entered into the REDCap platform. The data from the surveys are being analyzed and validated by the Penn State College of Medicine (PSCOM) team, and a student worker from RACC will assist with the Hands Across Reading data analysis.
- The Community Engagement Coordinator continues to do outreach with community organizations. The team is planning on volunteering time a local food drive events ahead of the Thanksgiving holiday.
- The Capital Projects Manager provided the following list of completed projects:
  - Essick Park Asphalt removal
  - Southwest Apron
  - Bernhart's Dam
  - Bernhart's Dam Lead/Creek EPA Safety Approval
  - 11<sup>th</sup> & Pike Phase 1
  - City Park Pavilion

**FIRE:**

- The Reading Fire Department officially placed Tower 1, the new ladder truck, in service on October 25<sup>th</sup>. The tower ladder it replaced is now in reserve and designated Tower 2.
- RFD Chief Stoudt participated on the oral interview panel for 25 entry-level FF/EMT applicants. A list will be finalized at the November 15<sup>th</sup> Civil Service Board meeting, with the hope of hiring 10 recruits in early 2023.
- All RFD members completed a Driver Confidence Training Course, a Department of Health requirement. The Reading Fire Training Lieutenant organized the course.
- The 9<sup>th</sup> & Marion Fire Station construction was scheduled for completion in December 2022; the projected completion date has been pushed back to January 2023 due to supply chain issues.

**LIBRARY:**

- The Reading Public Library was awarded \$22K by the Truist Foundation to support a part-time bilingual paraprofessional staff member to work in the Reference Department and teach bilingual computer classes. We want to take this opportunity to thank Truist for their support in enabling us to create such an important position that will directly help many in our community build very important skills.

**POLICE:**

- The Reading Police Department received their new Harley Davidson Pan-America Police motorcycle and placed it into service on October 28<sup>th</sup>. The motorcycle was purchased with CIP funds.

- The Reading Police Department's Lt. Lance Lillis continues to schedule and attend community outreach activities throughout the city.

In addition, Lt. Lillis and Sgt. Fegley actively responds to numerous calls received weekly regarding homelessness. Their response includes coordinating homeless resources, including referrals and coordinating with Public Works to clear sites of large debris left behind.

## **PUBLIC WORKS:**

- Public Works staff has also completed:
  - 29 sites were cleaned up, primarily illegal dumping sites, which resulted in 379 bags of trash and litter, 123 bulk items, 31 tires, and 7 televisions.
  - 39 graffiti abatement projects from various locations throughout the City
  - 11 dead animals were picked up
  - 54 storm drains were cleaned out
- Public Works Clean City Coordinator reports:
  - 3 cleanup events with 9 volunteers were held, which resulted in the collection of 23 bags of trash and litter, 5 televisions, 8 tires, 4 bulk items.
  - 5 Adopt-A-Block cleanup events were held, which resulted in 36 bags of trash and litter.
  - The Annual Fairview Christian School Cleanup was held on October 19<sup>th</sup>. The cleanup event yielded 4.17 tons of trash and litter, including 30 tires, 35 televisions, and numerous bulk items, with assistance from the Clean City team.
- The Public Works Sewer teams received the Eastern Pennsylvania Water Pollution Control Operators Association's Collection System Excellence Award at the Association's November meeting. Congratulation to our City's Sewer team for their excellent work.
- Public Works Sustainability Manager, with the assistance of Alvernia University's Dr. Jamie Becker's Ecology class and Reading Climate Corps, planted 130 native willow and dogwood species tree saplings at Bernhardt creek to stabilize the stream bank increase ecological quality.