



Public Works Committee of Council Agenda
March 24, 2026 - 5:00 PM
233 South Main Street, Monroe, Ohio

1. Approval of the Public Works Committee Minutes of February 23, 2026
2. Discussion, questions, and requests for future meetings
 - Public Works Building Update
 - GMRT Loop Trail Update
 - GMRT Riverside Trail Update
 - Water Main Improvements Project
 - Roundabout Standardization from the Design and Landscaping Perspective
 - Current Projects out for bid
3. Adjournment



**Public Works Committee of Council
February 23, 2026 – 5:00 p.m.
233 South Main Street, Monroe, Ohio 45050**

The Public Works Committee of Council met at 5:00 p.m. on February 23, 2026 in the Council Library located at 233 South Main Street, Monroe, Ohio.

Present were: Todd Hickman, Council Member; Tom Hagedorn, Council Member; Larry Lester, City Manager; Gary Morton, Director of Public Works; and Beth Combs, Clerk of Council.

Mr. Morton discussed a proposed concrete ordinance to be presented to Council. He identified contractor licensing as a primary change, implemented in response to prior issues in which contractors shifted permit costs and responsibilities to homeowners. Under the proposal, contractors must submit an application, pay a fee, maintain required liability insurance, and provide a \$10,000 bond with the City. Contractors operating without a license will be subject to administrative penalties and will be ineligible to obtain permits until restitution is addressed and proper licensure is obtained. Mr. Morton noted that these requirements are standard among municipalities and that the concrete assessment program is anticipated to resume in 2027.

Mr. Morton further explained that Chapter 1022 of the Monroe Codified Ordinances will establish the licensing process and overall framework, including a contractor handbook. In response to inquiries, he indicated that the anticipated license fee is approximately \$200 for the initial application and \$100 to \$150 for annual renewals, with the intent of keeping fees reasonable to encourage participation. He stated that most contractors already carry liability insurance and that the licensing program is intended to promote accountability. He also noted that an amendment to Section 286 of the Codified Ordinances will be presented to establish associated fees. License fee revenue will be deposited into the General Fund. Mr. Morton advised that a joint licensing program with other jurisdictions would be difficult due to differing ordinances. While the City cannot recommend specific contractors, it will maintain a list of licensed contractors for public reference. Licenses will be valid for one calendar year, with annual updates required for bonding and insurance. Permit fees will remain separate, with \$50 for residential and \$100 for commercial concrete permits.

Regarding the concrete assessment program, Mr. Morton stated that staff has conducted extensive research, including consultation with the City of Kettering and legal counsel. To meet statutory timelines, program planning should begin in May of the preceding year. He outlined the anticipated schedule and explained that, although contracts are typically bid based on quantities, the City will establish total project costs in advance to provide clarity to homeowners. Pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code, the Clerk of Council is responsible for administering the assessment program. In response to Committee questions, Mr. Morton confirmed that Council will have the opportunity to review and provide input on the notification letter to homeowners, which will be issued from the Council office, and that additional public outreach will be supported through enhanced social media communication. Addressing a prior issue involving nondisclosure of an assessment to a homebuyer, he stated that such situations are rare and difficult to prevent when work was completed under a previous property owner.



Discussion also addressed prior program pricing and contractor participation. Mr. Lester indicated that earlier bid solicitation and bundling the full scope of work are expected to achieve more favorable unit pricing through economies of scale. Mr. Morton added that providing actual pricing will allow homeowners to make more informed decisions, noting that prior estimates were elevated due to increased material costs following the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Committee discussed a potential assessment repayment period of five to ten years. Mr. Hagedorn expressed a preference for a ten-year term, which Mr. Hickman supported, citing impacts on residents with fixed incomes. Mr. Morton clarified that homeowners will receive an invoice and may elect to pay the full amount upfront to avoid placement on property taxes. Mr. Hickman expressed concern that licensing fees should not discourage contractor participation, and Mr. Morton reiterated that the proposed fees are intended to remain reasonable while covering administrative costs.

Mr. Morton provided an update on signal upgrades, noting that the Ohio Department of Transportation will fully fund construction, as the project has been deemed necessary. The City will be responsible for approximately \$30,000 in design engineering costs and will serve as the Local Public Agency (LPA) for project management through ODOT. Improvements will include the installation of side-mounted signals and backplates at multiple intersections. Capital Electric was identified as the lowest of two bidders and currently performs signal work for the City. Mr. Morton noted that side signals are included in the City's transportation master plan. In response to Committee inquiry, he confirmed that the project is expected to be completed within the year. Mr. Lester emphasized the importance of maintaining at least two signal indications at all times. Mr. Hickman suggested acquisition of property at the Britton Lane intersection to improve visibility; Mr. Morton confirmed that both corners of Britton Lane are identified in the City's strategic plan.

Mr. Morton also provided an update on the Great Miami River Trail project, which has been divided into two components: the Loop Trail and the Riverside Trail. The Loop Trail design is approximately 95% complete, with final plans and bid documents in preparation. Construction is anticipated this year and will include completion of the paved loop within the park and associated drainage improvements. For the Riverside Trail, the City has secured \$1 million through a safety grant but requires an additional \$1 million to complete the project. The City is coordinating with the Miami Conservancy District and Butler County MetroParks, as well as the Monroe Area CIC, to advance a design-build project addressing erosion concerns. Staff will continue pursuing grant funding. In response to a question regarding drainage, Mr. Morton stated that current work will install necessary outfall infrastructure beneath the trail but will not provide comprehensive drainage for the entire park, serving instead as an initial phase for future improvements.

Mr. Morton updated the Committee on the Community Park drainage project, explaining that original plans were revised due to the inability to secure required easements. The revised approach includes reconfiguring the park entrance by removing the existing drive and paving the current gravel access, allowing for expanded water storage within the existing easement. The project may also accommodate additional parking. Due to cost considerations, the work will be completed in three phases. In response to funding questions, Mr. Lester stated that dispensary tax revenues are deposited into the General Fund and may be used for general purposes. Mr. Hagedorn expressed support for completing the project.



Mr. Morton reviewed planning for the new Municipal Services Building. He stated that the facility will include approximately 22,000 square feet of office space, designed to accommodate future growth. The layout includes offices, mechanical areas, locker rooms, restrooms, and storage. Portions of the development space will remain unfinished to allow for expansion, including potential space for a future Parks and Recreation Department, additional engineering staff, and a second GIS position. Mr. Hickman inquired whether Public Works staff are required to be on-site; Mr. Morton confirmed that on-site presence is required except for administrative staff working remotely. Mr. Hickman referenced the City's investment in space at the South Plaza Shopping Center as a potential alternative; Mr. Morton stated that he could not provide input, as that property is managed by the Community Improvement Corporation (CIC).

Mr. Hagedorn moved to approve the Committee Minutes of October 14, 2025; seconded by Mr. Hickman. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Mr. Hickman asked about the Lemon Township Public Works data that was provided to Council, specifically how the numbers were determined because he was told previously that some of the data points were not tracked. Mr. Lester explained that the Public Works staff worked through averages over the last 1-2 years, keeping in mind that the last 2 winters were hard. Mr. Hickman asked if that included man hours and requested more information for a later time.

Mr. Hagedorn moved to adjourn the Public Works Committee of Council meeting; seconded by Mr. Hickman. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Public Works Committee meeting adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Combs
Clerk of Council