



City Administrator Mid-Year Report
June 17, 2024

Cleveland Heights' Mission

“Our mission is to protect all things that matter most to our residents and visitors. To ensure a safe and desirable community through the delivery of excellent services in a responsive, open, sustainable, and fiscally responsible manner by caring and competent professionals.”

Introduction

Article IV, Section 4 of the Cleveland Heights Charter provides an overview of the duties and responsibilities of the City Administrator. That section states, in part:

“The City Administrator shall assist the Mayor in the operation of the Mayor’s office and, subject to the Mayor’s supervision and control, be responsible for the preparation of the budget for presentation to the Council, and supervise the administration of personnel policies and practices in all departments.... The City Administrator shall, subject to the supervision and control of the Mayor, establish reporting procedures, require the submission of progress reports and operating goals, and generally assist in the coordination of activities of all departments, division (sic), boards, commissions, officers and employees of the city, except for the official activities and responsibilities of the Law Department.

The City Administrator shall make periodic written reports to the Mayor and Council, not less often than semiannually, with such recommendations as the Mayor deems appropriate, concerning the administration of all departments, divisions, boards and commissions of the City, and their needs and requirements for the future.”

This report is submitted to the Mayor and City Council, pursuant to the above-referenced Charter requirement. Because of a transition in the office of City Administrator during 2023, this represents the first semiannual report called for under this section of the Charter.



Departmental Organizational Reporting Update

Following my hiring in September 2023, the Mayor and I implemented a revised organizational reporting arrangement, which called for the Public Works, Parks & Recreation, Information Technology, Finance, and Communications and Public Engagement departments to report directly to the City Administrator, with the Law, Public Safety, and Planning and Development departments reporting directly to the Mayor. The City Administrator and/or the Mayor meet with the directors of these various departments on a weekly basis to address the status of major initiatives and potential new projects and develop strategies for addressing operational barriers, among other matters. A copy of the updated city organizational chart is attached to this report.

Planning and Development Department – Eric Zamft, Director

The Department of Planning and Development is charged with the preservation and improvement of the city's residential neighborhoods, commercial districts, and public areas. The staff is focused on providing information, assistance and advice to the Mayor, City Council, citizens, and business persons in all areas related to architectural and urban design, planning and zoning, economic and community development, and historic preservation.

Among the most significant achievements of the planning and development department during the last two years are the following:

- **Updated C2 -X Zoning** - The City's only mixed-use zoning district needed to be updated to reflect best industry practices. In addition, South Taylor Rd. contained seven different zoning districts, creating an unnecessary barrier to development projects. Following a series of community meetings and discussions and numerous Planning Commission meetings, Council passed the proposed zoning changes that will facilitate redevelopment, including the larger Cain Park Village project.
- **Re-staffing of the Department** - Following City Council's approval of the necessary budget increase, several additional open positions were filled, including the key leadership position of Building Commissioner. These hires will allow the department to streamline and enhance the building services we provide to the public.
- **Purchase of electric vehicles** - In furtherance of our sustainability goals, Council approved the budget necessary to procure those vehicles during 2024. This upgrade in our fleet will not only allow our inspectors to have reliable vehicles available to them but will also present a positive image of the City to residents.
- **Neighborhood planning in North Coventry and along Noble Road** - the department retained a planning consultant to assist the city in developing a template for



neighborhood planning, with North Coventry serving as the first neighborhood to utilize this new approach. That effort, which included a number of public and stakeholder meetings, is nearing completion. Some of the early lessons learned from that effort are being employed to develop a comprehensive neighborhood corridor plan for Noble Road. One significant achievement from these activities was the approval of the Nobility Court project, following necessary design, ABR, and BZA reviews, and the approval of the purchase agreement and development agreement by Council.

In addition to the above-referenced substantially completed initiatives, the following major initiatives and construction/rehab projects are also underway:

- **Cain Park Village** - Taylor-Tudor buildings received all their design review approvals, disposition and financing approvals from counsel, and state financing. City staff is working with the development team (WXZ) on the next phases of the project.
- **Park Synagogue** - Staff is working with the development team (Sustainable Community Associates) on the redevelopment planning for the site, including zoning, conceptual planning, financing and incentives, and protection of natural resources.
- **Noble Road Library** renovations are complete, and the Grand Re-opening was held on June 2, 2024. The **Marquee** (formerly Cedar-Lee-Meadowbrook), **Oak Tree Veterinary Hospital**, and **Hebrew Academy** renovations are all nearing completion. Plans by the new owners to update the apartment units at the **Alcazar** are also under development. Building permits for proposed work at **Coventry PEACE Park** have been applied for.

The following planning initiatives are also underway, which should help guide future development activities.

- An **Accessory Dwelling Unit** (ADU) study for Cleveland Heights, being performed in collaboration with the County Planning Commission, is nearly complete. It may suggest best practice changes to our zoning code to facilitate the construction of ADUs.
- A **Gateway & Wayfinding** signage study is awaiting approval by the County Planning Commission.
- The City's first Parks, Recreation, and **Open-Space Master Plan** is being developed in collaboration with the Parks and Recreation Department.
- Several transportation studies are underway, including the **Comprehensive & Equitable Safety Action** plan and the **Active Transportation** and the **TLCI Bike Boulevards** plans with the cities of South Euclid and University Heights.



THE CITY OF

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

KAHLIL SEREN, MAYOR

Information Technology Department – Ryan Prosser, Director

The City's IT department provides information technology services to all city departments and the Municipal Court by coordinating strategic technological directions and developing common standards, architectures, and business solutions to deliver city services more efficiently and effectively. Among the significant achievements of the department are the following:

- **Surveillance Camera Rollout** - The **City Surveillance System** upgrades are underway, with all new cameras in and around City Hall, the City Jail, and Cumberland Park. The new system provides us with live viewing and recording, using the latest available camera technology. The detective bureau reports that the cameras are helping by providing surveillance in areas that previously had no coverage or recording. Discussions with FirstEnergy and AT&T continue with the goal of attaching cameras and fiber lines to their poles in business districts. Their respective engineering departments are actively working to approve our drawings and designs for the infrastructure that will comprise the surveillance camera network in our business districts and parks. Those areas with no coverage or failing equipment will be prioritized, with all major districts and parks having surveillance installed by year's end.
- **New CRM - SeeClickFix** - The IT department has assisted the Mayor's Office in releasing new reporting and tracking software, SeeClickFix, including a new web page and new Access Cleveland Heights mobile apps for reporting issues and submitting inquiries for various City issues. This project will support the work of the Mayor's Action Center and provide a more welcoming experience for constituents who leverage its services.
- **Cybersecurity Improvements** - In April 2024, the IT Department held a member advisory services meeting with outside cybersecurity professionals. This free program was offered through our membership with the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC). That is the program sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security Cybersecurity Division. From that meeting, a new email structure was implemented that signals to all City employees and board members which emails may be phishing attempts. Each email comes with a banner above with instructions on how to treat the email and whether or not the named person(s) sending the email is a City official being impersonated. A new firewall also provides geographic filters. While city employees and board members are provided the ability to access city resources outside of City Hall, access is restricted to prevent the infiltration of bad actors from foreign entities.

Other security enhancements put into place, or in the planning phase, through MS-ISAC include:



THE CITY OF

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

KAHLIL SEREN, MAYOR

- Network scanning and monitoring with intrusion detection, which identifies threats and provides for an early warning notification through a 24x7 Security Operations Center
- Cloud-based spam blocking with advanced threat protection
- Incident response and remediation services
- Malicious website blocking and reporting
- Desktop security benchmarks
- Multifactor Authentication - By end of 2024
- **New Microsoft Teams Collaboration Software** - To foster greater collaboration among team members and departments, access to collaborative software Microsoft Teams has begun with a pilot group in the Cain Park department. This initial pilot program will set the foundation for collaboration via cloud computing, collective messaging and meetings, and file sharing. This platform also sets the stage for migrating the City to operating in the Cloud using Email and File Sharing services online and introduces new security technology such as multifactor authentication.
- **Future Training and Infrastructure Recommendations** – To minimize our exposure to future cyber-attacks, all-staff training would help users better understand how to avoid the various and evolving cyber threats that certain uses of City IT equipment could expose our system to. In addition, employing a mechanism to test user susceptibility to simulated cyber-attacks would be a valuable testing strategy. Funding for a phased update/replacement of aging IT infrastructure will likely be needed in upcoming IT budgets.



Parks & Recreation Department – Kelly Ledbetter, Director

The mission of the Cleveland Heights Parks & Recreation Department is to enhance the quality of life of our progressive community through diverse cultural arts, leisure, and recreational activities, providing meaningful opportunities for all ages to grow, learn, create, and play. Among the significant achievements and initiatives underway are the following:

- Review and update of departmental safety plans
 - Included the repair of the alarm alert system connected to Police Division staff; this device was inoperable for several years.
- Forest Hill Park court resurfacing project completed by **Industrial Surface Sealer** in May 2024
 - Two tennis courts resurfaced and converted into four permanent pickleball courts
- Renovation of **Cain Park Dressing Rooms** underway
 - Walk-throughs have been completed with the architectural firm **The Heart Design Group**
 - General Scope has been developed
 - Bid Documents are currently being prepared (Estimated publishing date – 7/1/24)
- **Cain Park Roof** repair planning underway (Estimated start date- 9/24)
 - **TEMA Roofing Services** has completed its assessment
 - A Cost estimate is currently being developed
 - We will be using a cooperative purchasing agreement, The Inter-local Purchasing System (TIPS)
 - TIPS are regulations created by the federal government to monitor the procurement processes of federal agencies, pass-through state agencies, and individual local government entities.
- **Denison Park Court Resurface** is underway
 - GPD Group has completed its assessment
 - Bid documents have been prepared and are under review
- **Fire Station 2** renovations are underway



THE CITY OF
CLEVELAND HEIGHTS
KAHLIL SEREN, MAYOR

- We are gathering quotes for kitchen renovations
- Quotes have been received for generator replacement
- **Denison Park Splash Pad**
 - Department staff is working with **Panzica Construction** on pre-installation construction responsibilities needed before installation
- **Cumberland Toddler Pool**
 - A contractor was identified (**Cleveland Brick & Mortar**), and rehab work has been completed
 - Feature re-opened on June 3 for the 2024 season



THE CITY OF

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

KAHLIL SEREN, MAYOR

Finance Department – Tara Schuster, Acting Director

The City's Department of Finance comprises the Accounting, Treasury, and Human Resources Divisions. All financial transactions are monitored for accuracy and compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws. Among the key achievements and initiatives underway are the following:

- **Improved Budgeting Process** – Developed comprehensive 2024 Budget Book, allowing for efficient review of the Administration's budget proposal and a timely approval process
 - A copy of the 1st Quarter Financial statements is available upon request; a 2-page summary of highlights by Acting Finance Director Schuster is attached to this report.
 - **Anticipated positive impact:**
 - Greater clarity regarding departmental goals and priorities
- **ARPA Distribution Process is Underway** – Ensuring that all ARPA allocations approved by Council are encumbered by year-end.
 - We are working through our consultant, **Guidehouse**, to speed the processing of contracts and distributions to awardees.
 - **Anticipated Positive Impact:**
 - Residents will benefit from new infrastructure, modernized City operations, and more community programming and economic development initiatives.
 - Increased business activity, improved urban landscape, and enhanced public spaces.
- **ADP Implementation** – Overhaul payroll processes using up-to-date systems to cut down on manual, time-consuming payroll processing.
 - **Anticipated Positive Impact:**
 - Reduced manual payroll processing
 - SOP that will increase internal controls and improve HR and Payroll operations
 - Reduce time processing payroll for the Finance Department
 - Reduced risk to the City for noncompliance with salary/wage ordinance
 - Improved onboarding process
- **Compensation Study is Underway** – Will ensure pay equity for employees. The study is nearing completion.



THE CITY OF

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

KAHLIL SEREN, MAYOR

- **Anticipated Positive Impact:**
 - Develop criteria for increasing employee salaries that are below market and improve the City's ability to attract and retain employees.
- **Employee Benefits Guide is Underway**– Will provide a cohesive catalog of information available to all employees.
 - **Anticipated Positive Impact:**
 - Strengthen the relationship between HR and employees
 - Decrease wait time for answers from HR by providing the employees with direct access to relevant information
 - Increased awareness of benefit eligibility
- **Wage Ordinance** – Revised and updated the wage ordinance.
 - **Anticipated Positive Impact:**
 - Will provide a standard guide for hiring authorities making job offers
- **Financial Policies Education**– Establish a protocol for standardizing City financial operations.
 - **Anticipated Positive Impact:**
 - Following set standard operating procedures will ensure that the City stays in compliance with local, state, and federal regulations
- **Union Negotiations are Underway** – We are engaged in ongoing negotiations with various employee unions to update contracts and address concerns.
 - **Key Issues:** Salary adjustments, benefits enhancement, and working conditions
 - **Anticipated Positive Impact:**
 - Improved labor relations, reduced conflict, and enhanced employee morale.
- **Employee Performance Management System** - Implementation of a new performance management system to track and enhance employee productivity and development.
 - Anticipated Completion of the pilot is Q3-Q4 2024
 - **Anticipated Positive Impact:** Clear performance metrics, targeted employee development, and improved overall productivity



Public Safety Department – Mayor Kahlil Seren, Director

Police Division (Chris Britton, Chief) - The Cleveland Heights Police Division (CHPD), a component of the Department of Public Safety, in partnership with the community, is dedicated to protecting the lives, property, and rights of all persons while maintaining order, reducing fear, informing the public and enforcing the laws fairly and impartially. Key recent accomplishments include:

- **Staffing Update**

- CHPD hired 11 new officers since 1/1/2023. Two (2) lateral hire police officers, seven (7) newly appointed police officers, and two (2) non-civil service basic patrol officers.
- The seven new civil service police officers and the two basic patrol officers will graduate on June 29, 2024, and begin their four-month field training program. With retirements and other separations, this is a total net five (5) officer increase. The department is still seeking to hire an additional four (4) police officers and four (4) basic patrol officers to reach its full staffing goal.

- **Equipment Update**

- The department purchased 10 used Ford Hybrid Ford Explorers, which vehicles are expected to be delivered in June. It will take several months to complete the upfitting required to make them patrol-ready, at an estimated cost of **\$131,775.60** to Hall Public Safety Upfitters and **\$198,000** to Motorola Solutions. Since 1/1/2024, three cruisers have been taken out of service; therefore, there will only be a net gain of seven new cruisers.
- Police Training Target Range was repaired, and an updated digital Targeting System was installed. These upgrades will significantly improve firearms qualifications and allow for realistic “shoot-no-shoot” scenario-based firearms training for Academy Cadets and current officers.
- New equipment has been ordered for the Police Gym, and the project is projected to be completed by the beginning of September.

- **Training Update** – The following training has been completed or is underway:

- All CHPD Officers completed 24 hours of mandated Continuing Professional Training, including:
 - New Mental Health Co-Responder Team training (Shaker Heights Grant Program)



- Use of Force and Legal updates, De-escalation, and Defensive Tactics training
- Workplace Discriminatory/Harassment Training, Bias-Based Policing policy training
- All CHPD Officers have been certified after completing 40 hours of Crisis Intervention Training (C.I.T.).
- All CHPD officers completed a scenario-based Active Threat Training to simulate the realistic response to an active shooter situation, including school, public building, or other active threat situations.
 - Following this training, “Special Response Vehicles” were requested and funded by City Council. Four cruisers will be outfitted with a ballistic shield, school and business door breaching tools, critical care medical bags, and less-lethal launchers and munitions.
- **Juvenile Initiative** - CHPD is currently in the process of creating and staffing a “Juvenile Programs Initiative Coordinator” position in collaboration with our current Juvenile Diversion Program and CH-UH School District. This program will be called the “Community Youth R.E.A.C.H. Program .”The acronym means Respect, Encourage, Accountability, Community, and Help. The program will service middle school and high school students. The goal is to foster positive interactions and relationships between Law Enforcement and our community youth through programming and activities.

Fire Division (James Harry, Chief) - The Cleveland Heights Fire/EMS Division, a component of the Department of Public Safety, provides fire protection and paramedic service for the residents of Cleveland Heights. It is known for its superior response times and excellent, ongoing training. The Division covers 8.2 square miles and responds yearly to approximately 8,000 runs. Recent achievements and challenges include:

- **Staffing Update**
 - Lost Chief and Assistant Chief to retirement. Held testing process and promoted Chief Harry and Asst. Chief Preuer October 2023.
 - Conducted entry exams and interviews for Fire cadets; 4 started in June 2023.
 - Conducted Promotional exam for Lieutenant positions; Promoted one in January 2024 and one in April 2024.



- **Training Update**

- Completed department-wide downed firefighter survival and rescue training. The training program suffered during the pandemic shutdown and budget restrictions from 2017 through 2020.
- Conducted Fire/EMS-specific health/wellness symposium for department and mutual aid partner personnel as part of a grant. The program identified industry-specific health and wellness issues and tools to benefit firefighter health and longevity.
- Reimagined our Hydrants/Inspections process to save time and fuel. The new process successfully saved approximately \$13,000 in fuel costs and incalculable benefits in time saved.

- **Initiatives Underway**

- Completed specification process and secured financing for two new ambulances.
- Partnered with Cleveland Clinic for thorough health/cancer screening for all Fire personnel. We will be coordinating throughout this summer and fall to complete this task.
- Completely reformed Fire/EMS report/data processing system. Currently migrating NFIRS, payroll, hydrants, occupancy inspection, and training programs over to a one-stop system.
- Currently conducting a new entry examination and interviews for the Civil Service list. The division has one current vacancy and expects 1 to 3 more over the life of the list.

- **Challenges for 2024**

- The Division is having difficulty obtaining a replacement pumper. New EPA restrictions on emissions have changed apparatus design. We are awaiting further information from the manufacturer.
- The Division has had a number of injuries and surgeries to personnel. Moving into vacation season, minimizing overtime with such a personnel shortage will be difficult.



Public Works Department – Collette Clinkscale, Director

Public Works is committed to providing a superior level of public service to the residents of Cleveland Heights and maintaining the City's infrastructure efficiently and cost-effectively.

The Department of Public Works has been working to address consent decree projects listed in the City's Integrated Overflow Master Control Plan "IOMCP" utilizing ARPA funds and MCIP grants. In addition, the department has bid a number of projects for this construction season. We have also received a Suburban Water Main Renewal Program "SWMRP" grant for a project that will proceed next year.

- Significant Departmental Achievements this year include:**

- Antisdale Fairmount SSO "Sanitary Sewer Overflow" Control Project
- Fairmount Coventry SSO Control Project
- Lee Road Rehabilitation Project (Superior to Mayfield)
- Pavement Striping (Yellow lines/turn lanes/crosswalks/bike lanes) on all major connectors and all crosswalks in school zones
- 2023 Catch Basin Project

- 2024 Grants Received:**

- Member Community Infrastructure Program "MCIP" – 2024 Design Only Grant for SSO CH-30 (located at the intersection of Superior and South Taylor) - **\$75,100**
- Member Community Infrastructure Program "MCIP" – 2024 Construction Grant for Hampshire Road Illicit Connection and SSO Control Project - **\$999,625**
- Ohio EPA Division of Environmental & Financial Assistance "DEFA" Loan Forgiveness – SSO CH-9, CH-32, CH-57 & CH-58 Control Project (aka Monmouth/Lee) - **\$2,758,505**
- Cleveland Suburban Water Main Renewal Program (SWMRP) grant to replace the waterline on Altamont (Euclid Heights Blvd to N. Taylor) - **\$801,615**
- Cuyahoga County Preventative Maintenance Reimbursement Program - **\$11,742.03**
- 2024 Community Recycling Awareness Grant - **\$6,000**



THE CITY OF

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

KAHLIL SEREN, MAYOR

- **Major Initiatives Underway:**

- SSO CH-9, CH-32, CH-57 & CH-58 Control Project (aka Monmouth/Lee)
- Major Projects where bidding has been completed
 - 2024 Street Resurfacing Project:
 - ❖ Antisdale (Janette to Staunton)
 - ❖ Cummings (Antisdale to Staunton)
 - ❖ North Park Blvd (Coventry West to Delaware)
 - ❖ Edison (Taylor to Woodridge)
 - ❖ Pennfield (Woodridge to Monticello)
 - ❖ Hampstead (Cedar to Superior)
 - ❖ North Park/Harcourt Intersection
 - ❖ Misc. ADA Ramps throughout the City
 - Surrey Lennox Garage
 - Compton Pocket Park

- **Financial Update:**

- Projects 90% designed for sanitary sewer utilizing ARPA/MCIP funding (Anticipate Committing \$11 million in ARPA funding via the below projects)
 - North Park Blvd Sanitary and Sewer Replacement Project (Coventry East to Arlington)
 - Hampshire Road Illicit Connection and SSO Project Control Project (SSO CH-13 and CH-61)
 - Yellowstone Road Sanitary, Storm, and Waterline Replacement Project (This project will be committed this year for Construction next summer when Monticello Middle School is on summer break)
 - Major Pipe Defect Repair Project
- Anticipated Budget Adjustments:
 - Pavement Striping – We are in the 3rd year of this contract – This was not included in the Capital Project Budget. Estimate is **\$299,000** (will include striping the City Hall Parking lot)
 - City Portion for ODOT match for Lee Road Rehab Project – This project was awarded last year but unable to be performed due to a sanitary sewer project at Lee Rd: Estimate - **\$230,000**



THE CITY OF

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

KAHLIL SEREN, MAYOR

- A future adjustment will have to be done for the Sewer Parking Lot TBD
- Projects 99% designed not related to ARPA – Preparing to Bid
 - Clarendon and Edgerly Watermain Replacement Project
 - Transfer Station Repair Project
- **Significant anticipated challenges during the balance of 2024:**
 - There will be significant logistical challenges when the rehabilitation is done for the Transfer Station. The City will not have access to transfer solid waste for delivery to the Rumpke landfill in Shiloh, Ohio. Shaker Heights also operates a Transfer Station. The Shaker Heights Transfer Station is currently under rehab and scheduled for completion later this summer or in the fall. Once we have more information, we will see if we can coordinate taking our solid waste to Shaker Heights for transfer into our tractor-trailers. This will result in some overtime. The other option is to have the trucks go to Rumpke in Newburgh Heights, which will delay collection and cost the City significantly more to landfill.



THE CITY OF

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

KAHLIL SEREN, MAYOR

Communications & Public Engagement Department – **Mike Thomas, Director**

The Communications and Public Engagement Department produces all City publications, including the FOCUS Magazine, a combined publication of City news and recreation. This department also provides marketing assistance for Cleveland Heights programs and oversees the City's website. In addition, staff provides support for City events and activities. Key achievements include:

- **Updated and expanded the weekly City News Email** - The weekly City News email predated the Seren Administration, and we chose to continue it. We broadened the type of content the City News would offer to include more City activities, additional information about Council meetings, announcements from outside organizations, and links and clips from stories about Cleveland Heights that appear in different media outlets. We redesigned the layout and began integrating more photos and videos. We significantly increased the size of the email and have received consistent positive feedback from recipients. Our email distribution list contains **12,000–13,000 addresses**. Our **open rate** is consistently between **50% and 60%**. We began resending emails to non-openers at 8:00 am on Sunday mornings and added roughly **1,000 additional opens** per email. We've used the City News at times other than the regularly scheduled Friday delivery—to reach people during extreme weather events, power outages, heat emergencies, and air quality events/alerts. We've also used the City News for specific programmatic uses, such as during Air Quality Awareness Week.
- **Media Relations** - Cleveland Heights has significantly expanded its efforts to generate media coverage as a means to communicate with its residents and other stakeholders. While we have good relationships with many local reporters, we have focused, in particular, on relationships with the assignment editors. By being responsive and transparent, we've built a sense of trust with local media outlets, which has resulted in receiving the benefit of the doubt in sensitive, developing stories. We make responding to media inquiries an immediate priority, providing as much current and updated information as possible. While many of our media relations activities are reactive, our primary tools for *proactive* media relations are Council meetings and the weekly City News. Presentations at Council meetings are a useful stand-in for press conferences, and the City News stands in for press releases. We still use press releases for major announcements that fall mid-week.
- **Revamped/Redesigned FOCUS** - With significant direction and effort from the Mayor's office, we have redesigned the FOCUS magazine to be more readable and useful. We are getting the FOCUS on a regular schedule and improving the production process.



THE CITY OF

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

KAHLIL SEREN, MAYOR

- **Refuse and Recycling Communications** - In 2022, in preparation for the roll-out of the City's new refuse and recycling carts, the Communications Department worked with Public Works to develop a guide for their use that was distributed with each set of carts. We subsequently worked with DPW to remind people how to use their carts through the Heights Observer and other channels. During the audit of residents' recycling loads, we used the City News to encourage residents to keep non-recyclables out of their blue carts, which contributed to the city earning a lower recycling cost under its contract with Waste Management.

During fall 2023, Director Clinkscale approached us with the idea of creating a Refuse and Recycling Calendar for all resident households using a grant from the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District. Our department worked with DPW to design, write, layout, produce, and distribute the calendar to every household on the Division of Utilities sewer customer list. All the work—except for printing and mailing—was performed in-house in the Communications Department. The Solid Waste District grant of \$6,000 was well below the final cost of the calendar. The Department of Communications covered the roughly \$18,000 in remaining costs. Next week, our departments are meeting to begin planning the 2025 calendar.

- **Climate Action Communications** - Mayor Seren has made preparing the City for the effects of climate change a focus of his administration, and we have made communicating climate issues a priority from the outset. The development and implementation of a Climate Action and Resiliency Plan (CARP) for the City will require broad engagement and support from residents, but we face challenges in securing that support. While people may believe climate action should be a priority, we can't assume residents believe municipal government is the appropriate vehicle for these actions. They believe the issue of climate change is too big for the government of a city of 45,000 people to tackle.

Our solution to this problem has been to focus our communications on the immediate impacts of climate change- including health risks and extreme weather events - and the City's role in preventing, mitigating, and preparing for them. We have been using each new climate-related initiative and program as an opportunity to communicate these themes - during No Mow May and Grow More May, two Air Quality Awareness Weeks, three lawnmower exchanges, and the air quality advisories and alerts of the last two summers. We've worked with our Sustainability and Resiliency Coordinator Andy Boateng and Nutter Associates to use this strategy to help guide their recent public engagement activities; the first stakeholder workshop in the public engagement phase of the CARP development focused on the impact climate change is having on specific Cleveland Heights demographics.



Mayor's Action Center – Todd Walburn, Coordinator

The Mayor's Action Center began using the new Access Cleveland Heights platform in earnest on May 1, 2024. There are currently **169 residents** utilizing the Access Cleveland Heights app and we are currently rolling out an aggressive program to raise awareness of the purpose and application of the app. Available data from the platform, including information provided by residents via phone, email, and walk-in traffic, indicates a preponderance of questions involving our Housing Division. Data from May 2024 indicates **280 requests** entered into the system. A breakdown of the highest volume requests for May 2024 fell into the following categories:

- “Tall Weeds and Grass/Private Property” - **103**
- General “Private Residential Property” – **37**
- “Potholes” - **27**
- “Tall Grass/Weeds on City Property” – **20**
- “Vacant Private Property” possible code violations - **14**
- “Trees” - **13**
- “Sewer” - **11**
- “Traffic Signs/Signals” – **10**

The Mayor's Action Center Coordinator is currently working with our new Performance Coordinator to establish Service Level Agreements and Due Dates for each line of service to track a myriad of trends, including time to close requests by type, location, and department; the volume of requests received by the MAC office by the Access Cleveland Heights app vs. email, phone and walk-in requests as well as department and staff productivity.



Sustainability Initiatives – Andy Boateng, Coordinator

The City's Climate Action and Resiliency Plan will guide us in reducing our impact on the environment, protecting the health of our residents, and preparing for the impact climate change will have on our city. Key initiatives that have been completed or are underway include:

- **Energy Audit (Completed)** – Provided an assessment of city buildings and facilities, as well as of bills and utility usage data
 - **Anticipated Positive Impact:**
 - Identifying and prioritizing energy efficiency improvement needs of buildings and facilities
 - Savings in cost of operation
 - Enhances productivity
 - Improved environment for city employees and residents
 - **Supporting research:** <https://www.integrityenergy.com/blog/how-a-building-energy-audit-can-reduce-public-sector-costs/> (Accessed on June 3, 2024)
- **Climate Action and Resilience Plan (In Progress)** – Will provide review and analysis of existing policies, plans, and programs and data gathering; review, compilation, and analysis of carbon inventory; and visioning, plan goals setting and commitments
 - **Anticipated Positive Impact:**
 - Economic and social returns: Avoiding climate damage saves money and yields financial returns
 - Ecosystem preservation: Climate action supports biodiversity and improves ecosystems
 - Community development: Building strong communities that can withstand climate challenges.
 - **Supporting research:** Bery, S., & Haddad, M. A. (2023). Walking the Talk: Why Cities Adopt Ambitious Climate Action Plans. *Urban Affairs Review*, 59(5), 1385-1407. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10780874221098951>
- **Carbon Footprint of City Operations (In Progress)** - Will provide gathering of operational data; post-processing of data to address gaps; estimation of carbon emissions from energy use and vehicles



- **Anticipated Positive Impact:**
 - Reduction in operational cost
 - Reduced carbon emissions
 - City demonstrating environmental stewardship
- **Supporting research:**
https://www.sustainablejersey.com/actions/?type=1336777436&tx_sjcert_action%5BactionObject%5D=24&tx_sjcert_action%5Baction%5D=getPDF&tx_sjcert_action%5Bcontroller%5D=Action&cHash=038629cafa193996c4a3da12ff392a54
(Assessed on June 3, 2024)
- **Air Quality Assessment Project (In Progress)** - Will provide monitoring of air sensors to ensure functionality; assess air pollution concentrations in the City; investigate air quality improvement strategies; and evaluate particulate matter data.
 - **Anticipated Positive Impact:**
 - Determine the hot spots of poor air quality
 - Assess the vulnerability of residents to poor air quality
 - Prioritize and plan strategies to address air quality
 - **Supporting research:** <https://www.clarity.io/blog/what-is-air-quality-monitoring-why-is-it-important> (Assessed on June 3, 2024)
- **Expansion of Recycling Program (In Progress)** – Will provide communication materials and signage; survey and public engagement materials; geospatial analysis to determine the location of recycling containers
 - **Anticipated Positive Impact:**
 - Reduction in tonnage of materials that end up in landfills
 - Reduction in carbon emissions from haulage and disposal of waste materials
 - Repurposing of materials
 - **Supporting research:** <https://www.epa.gov/recycle/recycling-basics-and-benefits#:~:text=Benefits%20of%20Recycling,Environment, and%20minerals%20or%20new%20products> (Assessed on June 3, 2024).



THE CITY OF

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

KAHLIL SEREN, MAYOR

- **Upcoming Projects:**

- **Self-funding Energy Efficiency Improvements Project** – Will provide comprehensive design-build construction, retrofits, and building management to reduce energy consumption and operational costs of the City's buildings and facilities.
- **Urban Tree Canopy Master Plan** – Will create a roadmap to foster a sustainable urban forest - tree inventory, recommendations for effective management

Conclusion:

Mayor Seren has made continuous improvement in all our operations a top priority of his administration. In furtherance of that goal, he has recently hired a new Performance Coordinator, Andrea Heim, who will be responsible for advancing that ethos across all departments. We are in the process of identifying priority areas, with the goal of identifying operational improvements that will aid the administration in “the delivery of excellent services in a responsive, open, sustainable, and fiscally responsible manner by caring and competent professionals.”

Respectfully Submitted:

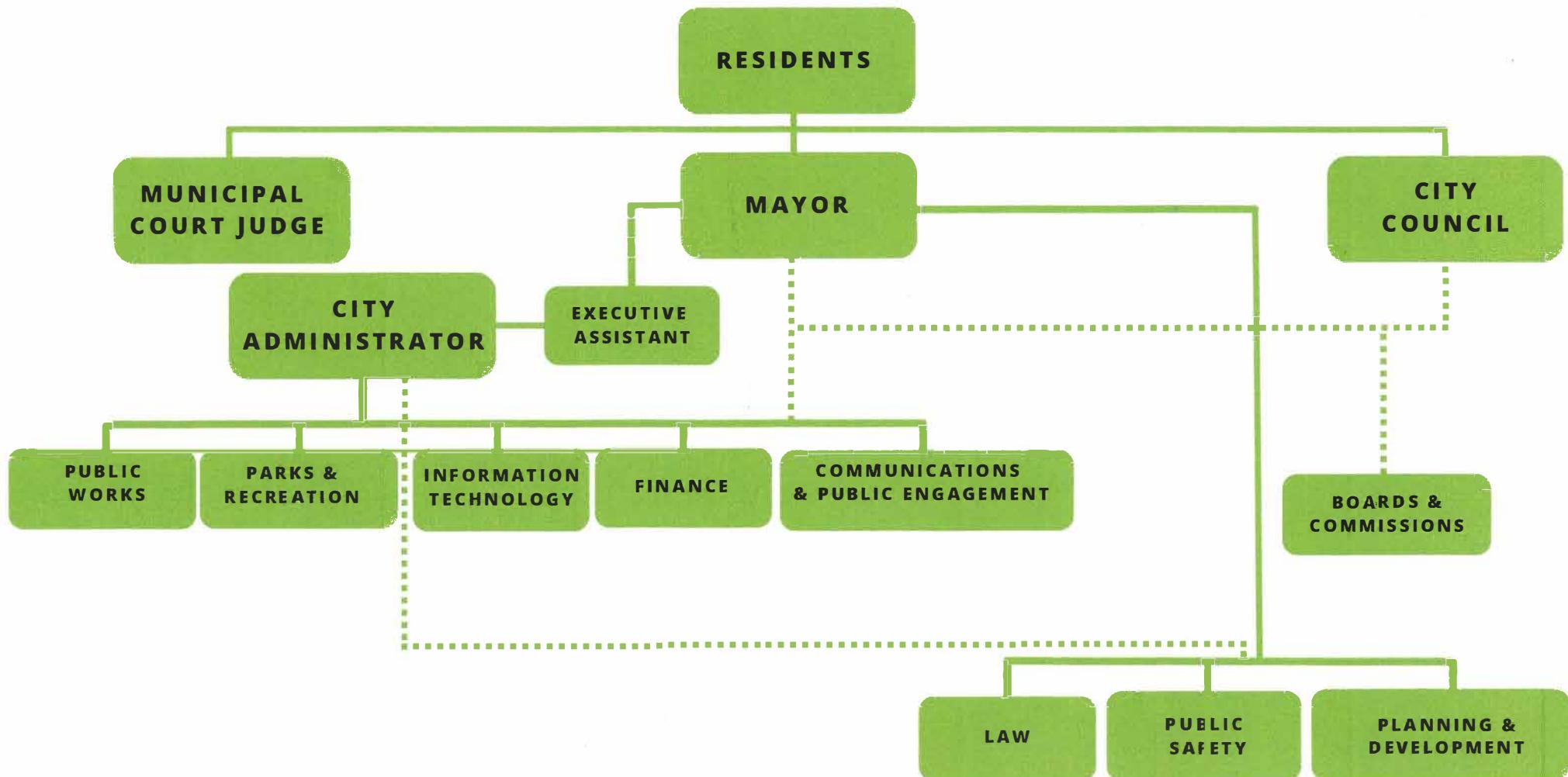
Danny R. Williams
City Administrator
June 17, 2024



CLEVELAND
HEIGHTS

CITY OF CLEVELAND HEIGHTS, OHIO

CITY ORGANIZATIONAL CHART AS OF October 2023





CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

MEMO

To: Mayor Kahil Seren
From: Tara Schuster, Acting Finance Director
Date: May 6, 2024
Subject: 1st Quarter 2024 Financial Statements

The Finance Department would like to present the 1st quarter financial statements for the period ending March 31, 2024. These financial statements provide insight on the City's financial position by comparing revenues, expenditures, and fund balances in the current year to the previous years.

Here are some of the highlights on the City's Financial Statements through March 31, 2024:

ARPA Fund

- Through March 31, 2024 the City has spent and reported over \$6.9 million of ARPA expenditures

Total Revenue – 1st Quarter of 2024

- The 1st quarter 2024 Revenues were \$25,271,859, which is an increase of \$206,787, or less than 1% from the 1st quarter 2023
- Income tax, property tax, and interest revenue collections for the 1st quarter of 2024 increased compared to the 1st quarter of 2023
- Fees, License, Permits and Other Financing Revenue showed a significant decrease due to the Cedar Lee Meadowbrook Development Project in the 1st quarter of 2023

Total Expenditures – 1st Quarter of 2024

- The 1st quarter 2024 expenditures were \$21,956,313, which is an increase of over \$3.8 million, 21.22%, compared to the 1st quarter of 2023
- The 1st quarter 2024 largest expenditure increases include Capital Project and Personal Services

Total Unencumbered Fund Balance – 1st Quarter of 2024

- The 1st quarter 2024 total unencumbered fund balance is \$100,68,348 which is an increase of \$1,738,874, or less than 2% compared to the 1st quarter of 2023



CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

General Fund – 1st Quarter of 2024

- General Fund total revenues were \$16.0 million, a decrease of \$457,234, or less than 3%, from 2023 1st quarter
- General Fund revenue shows a decrease due to Fees, Licenses, Permits and Other Financing Sources collected for Cedar Lee Meadowbrook Development project in the 1st quarter of 2023
- 1st quarter of 2024 General Fund expenditures were \$11.4 million, an increase of \$594,423, or 5.5% from the 1st quarter of 2023
- General fund has an unencumbered fund balance of just under \$23.6 million as of March 31, 2024

The Finance Department continues to strive to provide pertinent financial data so the City can make sound financial decisions.

Thank you,



Tara Schuster
Financial Analyst
City of Cleveland Heights
40 Severance Circle
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118
P: 216-291-3919
TSchuster@clevelandheights.gov
www.ClevelandHeights.gov