

2024 - March

Spring is in the air and with warmer temperatures, our thoughts turn to spring cleaning. Within the City, the maintenance and street department will begin applying cold mix and hot mix to road surfaces and also start painting crosswalks and curbing throughout the town.

I hear so many comments about street paving and am asked what is the City's plan. First, our thanks to the Ohio Department of Transportation for paving Route 7 this past summer as this was much needed and appreciated.

Grants and funding for street paving have changed so much from the time I served as a city commissioner. Community Development grants were the major source of funding and now the program does not pay for paving costs. The City has resubmitted a paving grant for Upper Second Avenue, Sycamore Street, portions of Third Avenue and Fourth Avenue and portions of Chillicothe Road. While the City has not been awarded funding for previously, we are cautiously optimistic this year.

Processes and formulas have changed and it is challenging for a municipality to score enough points to qualify for grant assistance. The City's application has been assessed within the small government program. Our application this year was rated fourth (4) within the district and will now be forwarded for statewide review. Last year the Blue Fountain lift station renovation grant was awarded under this same program and format.

The city has increased our cash match each year and also this year applied for zero percent loan payment. For clarification the cost of this paving project is estimated at \$353,000 and if approved the grant amount would be approximately \$127,000. Yes, the city share required to compete for statewide funding requires considerable city investment.

All paving expenditures are allocated directly from the General Fund. This combination, of general fund balances and changes in street paving grants, has impacted the City's ability and plans for street paving projects. We will continue to adapt, as possible, to the realities of district and statewide paving grants.