

**City of Fairfield Minutes
Regular Meeting of City Council
May 11, 2026**

Council-Manager Briefing

None.

Business Meeting Call to Order

Mayor Miller called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Prayer/Pledge of Allegiance

Councilmember Pennington led in prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Councilmembers present included:

Councilmember, 1st Ward Leslie Besl
Councilmember, 2nd Ward Dale Paullus
Councilmember, 3rd Ward Debbie Pennington
Councilmember, 4th Ward Adam Kraft
Councilmember, At-Large Tim Meyers
Councilmember, At-Large Matt Davidson

Councilmembers excused included:

Councilmember, At-Large Gwen Brill

Councilmember Davidson, seconded by Councilmember Meyers, moved to excuse Councilmember Brill. Motion carried 6-0.

Agenda Modifications

None.

Executive Session Requests

Councilmember Davidson, seconded by Councilmember Besl, moved for Executive Session to discuss the status of collective bargaining with public employees and pending or imminent litigation. Roll call vote. Motion carried, 6-0.

Special Presentations

1. America250 Gift to Fairfield from Mayor and Council

Mayor Miller and Councilmember Meyers presented the America250 Handcrafted Flag to the City as a gift in honor of the 250th birthday of the United States this year.

2. Mayor's Youth Commission - Human Resources Presentation

Members of the Mayor's Youth Commission that worked with the Human Resources Department presented an overview of what they learned over the school year. See attached

slides.

Citizen Comments

Marc Conter, 5772 Gray Road - see attached written comments submitted via email after the Council meeting and distributed to Mayor, Council and staff, as requested.

Council Reports

Councilmember Meyers reported that the solar field is progressing well and Assistant City Manager Sackenheim stated it is scheduled to be online in July.

Councilmember Kraft announced the Memorial Day parade on Monday, May 25 at 10 AM, as well as the start of the summer farmers market this week at the Community Arts Center, aquatic center opening next Saturday, May 23, at noon and that Public Works is working with SwimSafe and Butler Health Dept to prepare for the opening of the splash pad at Harbin Park.

Councilmember Pennington announced that the Ross/Woodridge intersection will be closed through much of the summer for roundabout construction.

Public Hearing(s)

None.

Approval of Minutes

1. Regular Meeting Minutes - April 27, 2026

The Regular Meeting Minutes of April 27, 2026 were approved as written and submitted.

Old Business

1. **Development Services - Councilmember Gwen Brill**

- a. Ordinance to authorize a grant in the amount of \$100,000 to be made to the Fairfield Helping Neighbors Fund at the Fairfield Community Foundation for the purpose of supporting city residents that cannot physically or financially complete necessary exterior home repairs.

Councilmember Meyers presented the second reading of this ordinance.

- b. Ordinance affirming the designation of the Community Improvement Corporation of Fairfield as the City's agency for development in the City and authorizing a grant of \$100,000 to be made to the Community Improvement Corporation of Fairfield for public purposes.

Councilmember Meyers presented the second reading of this ordinance.

2. **Parks & Recreation - Councilmember Adam Kraft**

- a. Ordinance to authorize the City Manager to enter into a professional services contract

with Prus Construction Co. for construction manager-at-risk (CMR) services as related to the advancement of Marsh Park Improvements Project and declaring an emergency.

Councilmember Kraft presented the third reading of this ordinance.

Councilmember Meyers commented that the process works. The ordinance has gone through 3 readings and the project started in 2019 when Marsh Park became part of overall comprehensive plan. He stated that the scope has been worked and scaled down from 30 acres to 5 acres and \$12 million and he is in favor of the plan.

At the request of Councilmember Besl, City Manager Timmer read the following prepared comments:

In response to the correspondence regarding the Marsh Park project received earlier today:

1. First, with respect to conflicts of interest, there are no identified financial or personal interests connected to this project involving Council members, staff, or their families. At this time, no restaurant operator has been selected, and no lease agreements are in place. City officials are subject to Ohio ethics laws and disclosure requirements, and those standards apply fully here.
2. Second, regarding environmental protections, Marsh Park planning has incorporated all known site conditions and applicable restrictions from the outset. There has been no deviation from those standards. Fishing regulations, including any "catch and release" provisions, are established and maintained at the discretion of the Fairfield Parks and Recreation Board.
3. Third, on land acquisition and project scope, there are no actions underway involving eminent domain or undisclosed property acquisition related to this phase of the project. The improvements being discussed are within the framework that has already been publicly presented and adopted.

The estimated total project cost of approximately \$12 million represents the full scope of site and infrastructure improvements. This includes site work, utilities, trails, lakefront features, parking, and other public amenities. The flexible-use building is one component of the overall project and represents a portion of that total, not the entirety.

We continue to welcome public input and appreciate community engagement in this process. We are committed to providing updates and information as the project moves forward.

Councilmember Kraft commented on the positivity of community engagement and stated that he appreciates differences of opinion and dialogue. He recapped the timeline of events leading to this point. See attached notes.

Councilmember Adam Kraft, seconded by Dale Paullus, moved to adoption. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

ORDINANCE NO. 55-26. APPROVED 6-0.

New Business - Motion to Read All New Business by Title Only

Councilmember Besl, seconded by Councilmember Davidson, moved to read all New Business by title only. Motion carried 6-0.

1. Community & Public Relations - Councilmember Matt Davidson

a. Simple Motion: Motion to approve the following nominations to the Marsh Park Ad Hoc Committee:

Scott Willis, 1st Ward (by Councilmember Leslie Besl)
Sheri Sparks, 2nd Ward (by Councilmember Dale Paullus)
Zach Ketring, 3rd Ward (by Councilmember Debbie Pennington)
Tim Jung, 4th Ward (by Councilmember Adam Kraft)
Jeremy Hatfield, At-Large (by Councilmember Tim Meyers)
Justin Janszen, At-Large (by Councilmember Gwen Brill)
Kevin Clark, At-Large (by Councilmember Matt Davidson)
Nathan Gibbs (by City Manager Scott Timmer)

Councilmember Davidson, seconded by Councilmember Pennington, moved to approve the Marsh Park Ad Hoc Committee nominations as listed. Motion carried 6-0.

SIMPLE MOTION NO. 17-26. APPROVED 6-0.

2. Parks & Recreation - Councilmember Adam Kraft

a. Ordinance to authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract with Cincy Entertainment Services for the purchase of Flex Lighting Equipment with appurtenances for use at Parks and Recreation Events, and declaring an emergency.

This project involves the purchase of a Flex Lighting System integrated with new rigging and electrical infrastructure for the Village Green Amphitheater. Currently, the Parks Department subcontracts lighting for Groovin' concerts and fall theater productions. Acquiring this equipment will enable the City to provide professional lighting in-house for all community concerts and performances, improving efficiency and expanding event capabilities.

The equipment is specialized in nature and is available exclusively through Cincy Entertainment Services. Due to the proprietary vendor-distributor relationship, staff were unable to obtain multiple quotes for this purchase. Additionally, this outdoor-rated system is the only equipment fully compatible with the City's existing lighting infrastructure, which was also procured through Cincy Entertainment Services.

Councilmember Kraft presented the first reading of this ordinance. Councilmember Adam Kraft, seconded by Tim Meyers, moved to suspend second and third readings. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0. Councilmember Adam Kraft, seconded by Tim Meyers, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

ORDINANCE NO. 56-26. APPROVED 6-0.

3. Public Safety - Councilmember Dale Paullus

- a. Simple Motion: Motion to not request a hearing regarding a liquor permit application in the name of Chavez Marin Restaurants, Las Cazuelitas Taqueria, 4600 Dixie Highway, Suite B, Fairfield, OH 45014 (Permit Class D1).

Councilmember Paullus, seconded by Councilmember Davidson, moved to not request a hearing regarding this liquor permit application. Motion carried 6-0.

SIMPLE MOTION NO. 18-26. APPROVED 6-0.

- b. Simple Motion: Motion to not request a hearing regarding a liquor permit application in the name of Oaxaquena Mexican Restaurant, LLC, Oaxaquena Mexican Restaurant, 6116 Winton Road, Fairfield, OH 45014 (Permit Class D1 & D3).

Councilmember Paullus, seconded by Councilmember Davidson, moved to not request a hearing regarding this liquor permit application. Motion carried 6-0.

SIMPLE MOTION NO. 19-26. APPROVED 6-0.

- c. Simple Motion: Motion to not request a hearing regarding a liquor permit application in the name of Everyday Stop LLC, Everyday Stop, 3152 Lighthouse Drive, Suite C1, Fairfield, OH 45014 (Permit Class C2).

Councilmember Paullus, seconded by Councilmember Meyers, moved to not request a hearing regarding this liquor permit application. Motion carried 6-0.

SIMPLE MOTION NO. 20-26. APPROVED 6-0.

- d. Simple Motion: Motion to not request a hearing regarding a liquor permit application in the name of Multinicks Inc., Multinicks Inc - Fairfield/River Road, 5000 River Road, Fairfield, OH 45014 (Permit Class C1 & C2).

Councilmember Paullus, seconded by Councilmember Kraft, moved to not request a hearing regarding this liquor permit application. Motion carried 6-0.

SIMPLE MOTION NO. 21-26. APPROVED 6-0.

- e. Simple Motion: Motion to not request a hearing regarding a liquor permit application in the name of Jay Madhusudan Investment LLC, 4613 Dixie Highway, Fairfield, OH 45014 (Permit Class D1 & D2).

Councilmember Paullus, seconded by Councilmember Davidson, moved to not request a hearing regarding this liquor permit application. Motion carried 6-0.

SIMPLE MOTION NO. 22-26. APPROVED 6-0.

4. Public Works - Councilmember Debbie Pennington

- a. Ordinance accepting public improvements and releasing the maintenance and performance bonds for Emerald Lakes Section 4 (High Point Court).

This project to create a public street located on the west side of the Emerald Lakes Subdivision (west of Pleasant Avenue) was developed by K&M Communities, LLC as Emerald Lakes Section 4. This is a thirty (30) lot subdivision with no lots remaining for development.

This project involved the construction of approximately 1300 feet of new road ending in a cul-de-sac at either end and intersecting Edmorr Way. Included in this work was asphalt pavement with an aggregate base, curb and gutter, storm sewer, sanitary sewer, waterline, and sidewalk. This project was inspected by the Public Works Department and the Public Utilities Department to make sure that any previously noted deficiencies have been addressed. The developer has completed all items including sidewalk and street trees. The City will now accept public ownership and maintenance of these assets.

All maintenance and performance bonds will be released upon Council acceptance. The dedication plat for this street was approved and accepted by Planning Commission in 2020.

Councilmember Pennington presented the first reading of this ordinance.

- b. Ordinance to authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract with Atlantic Emergency Solutions Inc., for the purchase of a Horton Ambulance and declaring an emergency

This request is for the purchase of a Horton Ambulance to be used by the Fire Department. This unit will replace Medic #16M89 a 2016 Horton Ambulance due to age and condition. The old unit will be auctioned. This unit is being purchased through the Horton Emergency Vehicles authorized dealer; Atlantic Emergency Solutions Inc., listed under State of Ohio contract STS 026178 and Index STS233 authorizing the use by Municipal Corporations. This purchase also includes a Stryker Power Pro 2 Custom Cot.

Councilmember Pennington presented the first reading of this ordinance. Councilmember Debbie Pennington, seconded by Dale Paullus, moved to suspend second and third readings. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0. Councilmember Debbie Pennington, seconded by Adam Kraft, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

ORDINANCE NO. 57-26. APPROVED 6-0.

- c. Ordinance to authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract with FYDA Freightliner Cincinnati, Inc. for the purchase of a Freightliner I08SD single axle truck cab and chassis for the Street Division of the Public Works Department and declaring an emergency.

This request is for the purchase of a Freightliner I08SD single axle truck cab and chassis to replace the Street Division's Snow Plow Truck #29 (a 2006 International) due to age and condition. Unit #29 will be auctioned. This unit will be outfitted with snow equipment under a separate contract. This truck is listed under O.D.O.T. Bid #023-26A with permission of use granted by The Ohio Revised Code section 5513.01(B).

Councilmember Pennington presented the first reading of this ordinance. Councilmember Debbie Pennington, seconded by Tim Meyers, moved to suspend second and third readings. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0. Councilmember Debbie Pennington, seconded by Tim Meyers, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

ORDINANCE NO. 58-26. APPROVED 6-0.

5. Finance & Budget - Councilmember Leslie Besl

- a. Ordinance to amend Ordinance No. 148-25 entitled "An Ordinance to make estimated appropriations for the expenses and other expenditures of the City of Fairfield, Ohio, during a period beginning January 1, 2026, and ending December 31, 2026."
- Contractual Appropriations: \$823,791 total (\$145,000 for Village Green lighting system (Parks & Recreation); \$133,000 for purchase of Snow Plow Truck (Public Works); \$545,791 for purchase of Horton Ambulance for Fire Dept. (Public Works))

Councilmember Besl presented the first reading of this ordinance.

- b. Ordinance to amend Ordinance No. 148-25 entitled "An Ordinance to make estimated appropriations for the expenses and other expenditures of the City of Fairfield, Ohio, during a period beginning January 1, 2026, and ending December 31, 2026."
- Non-Contractual Appropriations: \$130,108 (see below for description)

Councilmember Besl presented the first reading of this ordinance. Councilmember Leslie Besl, seconded by Matt Davidson, moved to suspend second and third readings. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0. Councilmember Leslie Besl, seconded by Dale Paullus, moved to adopt. Motion carried Yes 6, No 0, Abstained 0.

ORDINANCE NO. 60-26. APPROVED 6-0.

\$7,168 - Golf Course Upgrades (Parks & Recreation)

\$71,000 - Firehouse Repairs and Upgrades (Public Works)

\$51,940 - Public Works Repairs and Upgrades (Public Works)

Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, May 26: Council-Manager Briefing, 6:00 PM; Regular Meeting, 7:00 PM

Monday, June 8: Council-Manager Briefing, 6:00 PM; Regular Meeting, 7:00 PM

Monday, July 13: Council-Manager Briefing, 6:00 PM; Regular Meeting, 7:00 PM

Clerk Wilson read the meeting schedule.

Executive Session of Council (if Needed)

Council recessed to Executive Session at 7:37 PM.

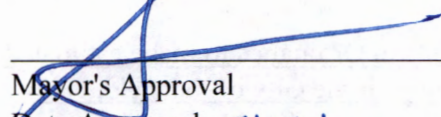
Adjournment

The Regular Meeting adjourned at 7:58 PM.

ATTEST:



Clerk of Council



Mayor's Approval
Date Approved: 5/26/26

Mayor's Youth Commission 2026 Project


Human Resources/Communications Team

Team Members: Amor, Brooklyn, Ellie, and Lena

Date: May 11th

FAIRFIELD
OHIO





Seasonal Priorities in Human Resources (Predictable)

Quarter 1:

- Heavy Reporting Period (OSHA, IRS, ODOT, etc.)
- Annual Evaluation Period
- Prep for Annual Pay Increases

Quarter 2:

- Seasonal Hiring
- Annual Evaluation Period
- Annual Pay Increases for all Employees

Quarter 3:

- Select Health Insurance Options for Summer Open Enrollment and Prep Work
- Open Enrollment (#1)

Quarter 4:

- Prep Work for Fall Open Enrollment
- Open Enrollment (#2)
- Increased Interviewing for Retirements in January and February

An Average Day in Human Resources (Every Day is Different)

There is a lot going on behind the scenes all the time that most people don't think about. Fairfield currently has 319 Full-time and 123 Part-time Employees . Lots of needs!




One of the Biggest Challenges for Human Resources

Hiring Qualified Candidates in a Highly Competitive Job Market

What are the Trends?

- Less Applicants for Jobs
- Job-Seekers with Shorter Attention Spans
- An Abundance of Job Postings
- Higher Wage and Salary Expectations





Our Project

The Fairfield Human Resources Office asked us for Feedback

Recruiting Recent Graduates:

- How can Fairfield better capture the attention of job-seekers who are going to complete high school or college soon?
- What is most important to these individuals at this early stage of their life and career?

Job Postings

First of all, there are a lot of them!

Most companies are in a constant state of hiring.

Questions We Asked Ourselves:

- How do Fairfield Job Postings Compare to Other Organization's?
- Are they Attractive to Recent Graduates and Young Professionals?



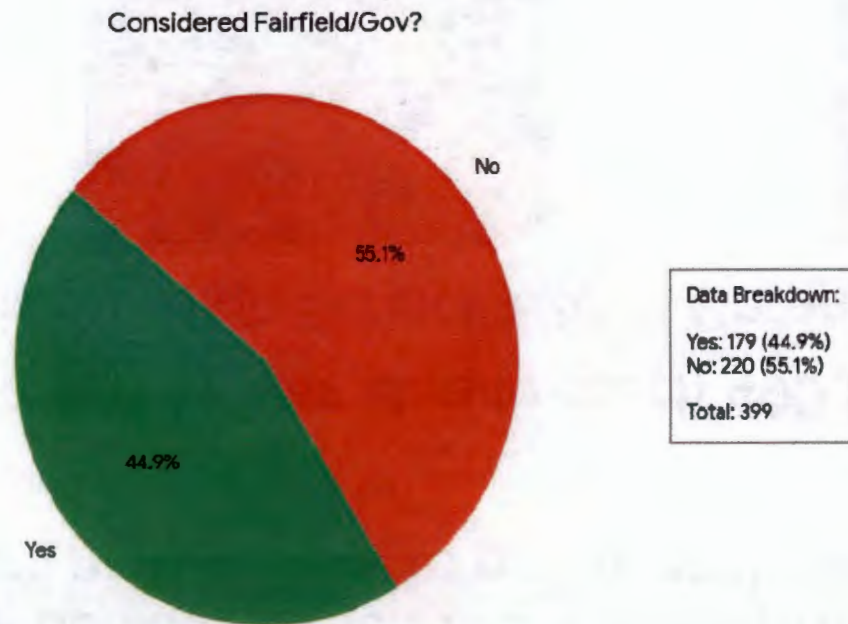
What we did to get answers

We decided to conduct a survey of the student body at our local high school to gather real data.

The survey was able to reach 400 Students at
Fairfield High School's 2026 Careerfest!!



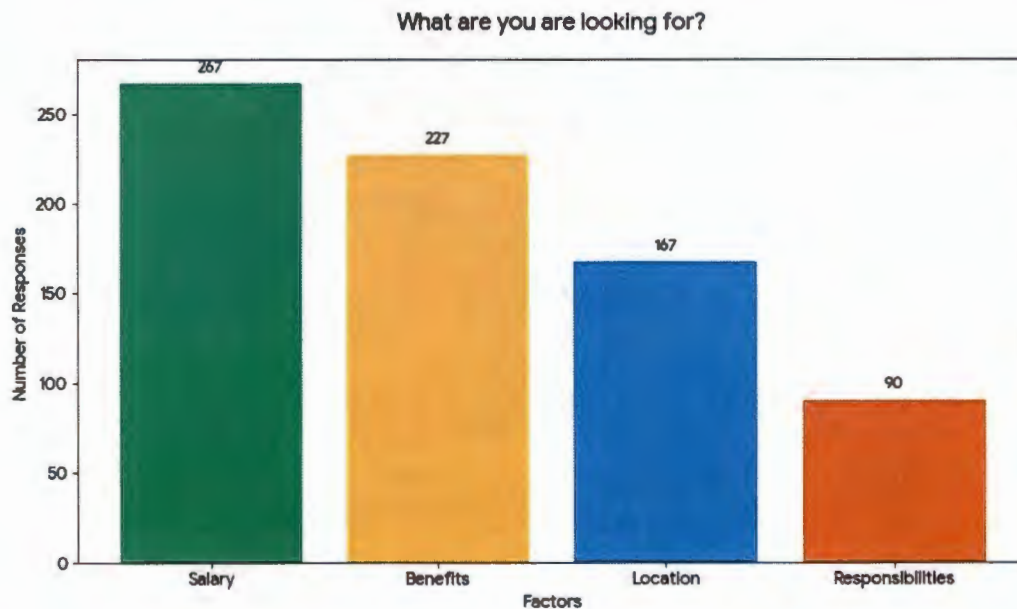
Our Research and What it Revealed



Out of all the responses over half the students have never considered a job in any kind of government.

How can Fairfield recruit young adults if they don't even think to look our way?

Our Research and What it Revealed

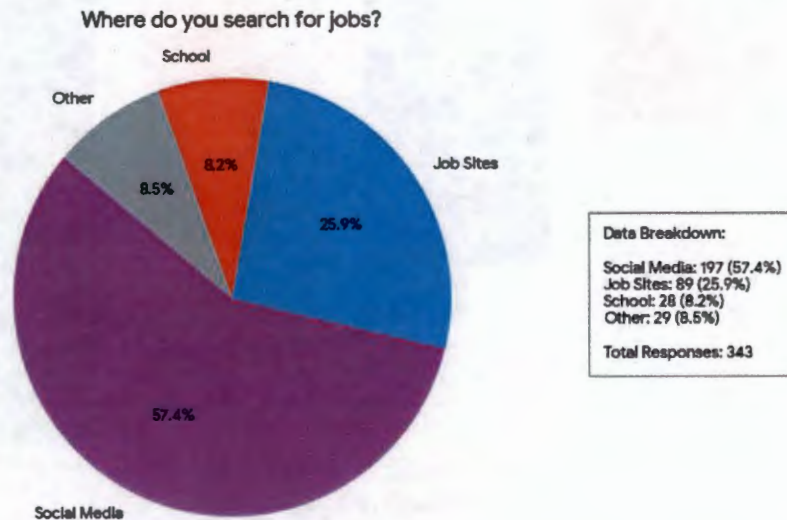


To attract this generation, you have to think like them.

What is it these new workers are looking for?

Well, we found it!

Our Research and What it Revealed



Organizations have to be where this demographic is looking.

If they do not adapt, it will be like fishing in a pond with no fish.



Suggestions

What can Fairfield Do to adapt?

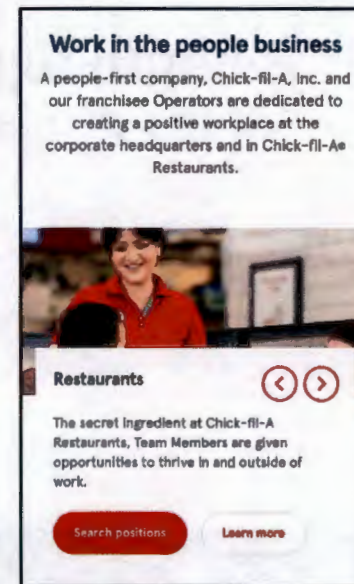
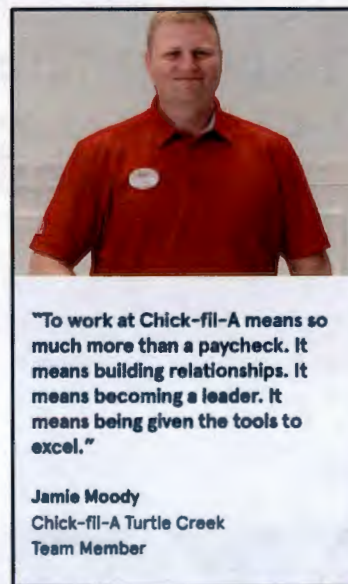
- **More Social Media Presence**
 - Short form video content and more accessible media posts
- **More Attractive Job Listings on sites like Indeed**
 - More use of buzzwords that people look for
- **More Outreach to high schools and trade schools**
 - Reaching out to students before they graduate can create more connections


Examples of New Approaches

Like we previously mentioned, **Social Media** is the way to go. Just look at the stats. (57% of 343 students)

Companies Like **Chick-Fil-A** are dominating the social media scene with most corporate locations having a social media account making things like:

- **Funny posts / skits**
- **Job advertisements**
- **Community Outreach Polls**





Why We Think a New Approach Will Help

Start fishing in a pond with plenty of fish.

Fairfield would need to adapt to attract the younger generation!!

We believe a greater Social Media Presence and more Attention -Grabbing Job Listings are the way to capture this younger audience.

Thank you!



- Why were the residents of the area the ones to find out that the plot of land proposed was in violation of the clean water restriction and thus city council is now having to push the building off of that plot? Shouldn't the city know the restrictions of the areas they are proposing to build in? How much research has actually been put into this? It appears as if things are being blindly approached.
- How are we justifying a \$12M project without an ROI?
- Why is the ordinance authorizing the contract with Prus being proposed as an "emergency measure"?
- The "study" of 800 people at marsh park in support of the lake accounts for roughly 1-2% of the entire Fairfield population. How can the city blanket statement "the people of Fairfield want this" when a slim portion of our population were actually present for the study? Not to mention, were these people asked if they were Fairfield residents? Were these residents of other communities using the park that day? Were children allowed to place stickers to vote? How closely was the study input monitored for the city to confidently say these 800 people are a trusted and accurate representation of the greater area?
- Does the city acknowledge that surveying current park users introduces location-selection bias?
- How many respondents were specifically asked whether they supported alcohol sales in the park? I have seen that this was originally posed as a cafe of sorts rather than a large scale restaurant/bar, are you representing these peoples input true to the way you framed the question?
- Was opposition to the restaurant tracked separately from support for general park improvements? Many of the people I have conferred with are in favor of the bike path, bait house, boat ramp improvements. It is the commercial space that draws a point of contention. Can council clarify why support for unrelated park improvements is being represented as support for a bar/restaurant?
- If a feasibility study exists, will it be released publicly tonight? We asked for this before and were left in silence. If no feasibility study exists, why is the city proceeding with a multimillion-dollar hospitality project without one?
- Was any commercial restaurant operator consulted regarding viability? Has the city produced revenue projections specific to the restaurant? What is the estimated annual subsidy required if revenue targets are missed? What metrics were used to determine this project was financially responsible?
- Does council acknowledge that adding the restaurant later materially changed the nature of the project?
- Why are residents only being offered non-binding "input" after major project decisions have already been made? Why does it appear the decisions for said committee were made prior to public announcement of said committee? How can the residents of Fairfield ensure that these committee members provide an accurate representation of the residents and were not selected due to favor of the council?
- What decisions are still genuinely open to public influence?

- If the city believes the public strongly supports this project, why not place it on the November ballot? What is the city's rationale for avoiding a ballot initiative on a major taxpayer-funded quality-of-life project?
- Would council support an independently administered citywide survey specifically focused on the restaurant/bar proposal?
- What is the projected annual taxpayer cost after construction is complete? Are taxpayers responsible for operational deficits if the restaurant underperforms?
- If the facility fails financially, what is the city's contingency plan?
- I was told by Dale and Adam that this is being funded through a grant. Can council identify the exact grant program funding the restaurant/bar portion of this project? It is not listed on the USA Spending grant website, so are we to assume the city is still applying for the grant? I see Fairfield received \$300,000 Ohio State Capital Budget funding for trails, \$750,000 Transportation Alternatives Grant for the trail extension, but nothing on the commercial space grant.
- How many years would it take for lease revenue to recover construction costs attributable to the commercial component?
- Was parking demand modeled separately for park users, trail users, and restaurant patrons?
- Why was a Construction Manager At Risk (CMAR) procurement model selected for a park project? Does the council anticipate significant design uncertainty, cost escalation risk, or scope changes?
- Has council completed a formal operational business plan for the commercial component? If so, has it been or will it be released publicly?
- Can council clearly define tonight what type of establishment is actually contemplated, including alcohol service, event usage, operating hours, and entertainment allowances?

Marsh Park Design Considerations



Guiding Principles for the Design, Architecture, Site Orientation and Scope of a Restaurant in Marsh Park, Fairfield, Ohio

Our charge is to advise City Council on a design that is community-sized in scope and blends with—and enhances—Marsh Park. The restaurant should support park experiences without competing with the natural setting.

I. CORE DESIGN TENETS



1. SUBORDINATE TO THE LANDSCAPE

The natural setting is primary. Architecture should be visually quiet, low-profile, and integrated into topography and vegetation—not stand above or dominate it.



2. RESPECT ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS

Protect existing trees, vegetation, wildlife habitat, soils, and water. Design with the site's natural hydrology and ecology—not in spite of them.



3. HUMAN SCALE & COMMUNITY FIT

Design for a comfortable, welcoming experience that reflects our community's scale and character. Avoid oversized buildings and excessive hardscape.



4. CONTEXTUAL MATERIALS & COLORS

Use natural, durable materials and a restrained palette that reflect the park's character (e.g., wood, stone, earth tones). Avoid highly reflective or industrial finishes.



5. PRESERVE VIEWS & SENSE OF PLACE

Siting and massing should protect key views to water, trees, and open space. The building should feel like it belongs here—not anywhere.



6. MINIMIZE IMPACT

Reduce impervious surfaces, cut-and-fill, lighting, noise, and disturbance. Design for low maintenance and long-term stewardship.



7. ENHANCE THE PARK EXPERIENCE

Support recreation, relaxation, and social connection. Outdoor spaces, trails, and nature access should be improved—not compromised.

II. CAUTIONS & RABBIT HOLES TO AVOID



DESIGNING FOR A BUILDING, NOT A PARK

Avoid letting the structure drive the site. Start with the land, ecology, and park purpose.



ICONIC ARCHITECTURE

Avoid "statement" designs that seek attention. Timeless and context-sensitive will age better.



SCOPE CREEP

Resist adding "while we're at it" features that increase size, cost, and impact.



PARKING OVER PRIORITY

Parking should be right-sized, discreet, and pervious where possible. People, not cars, come first.



SOLUTIONS FROM ELSEWHERE

What works in another city or setting may not fit Marsh Park. Let the site and our community guide the answer.



SHORT-TERM THINKING

Choose quality, durability, and stewardship over lowest initial cost.



ASSUMING MORE IS BETTER

A smaller, well-designed building that blends in will serve the community—and the park—better than something larger that overwhelms.

III. INDEPENDENT & EVIDENCE-BASED ADVICE



Our role is to advise—not to rubber stamp.

We will:

- Be independent, thoughtful, and candid.
- Base recommendations on facts, not assumptions.
- Ask the hard questions.
- Represent the long-term interests of the entire community and the park—today and for generations to come.

*A great design disappears into the park—
and the experience remains.*



BACKGROUND & PROVENANCE

- "The enjoyment of scenery employs the mind without fatigue... tranquilizes it and yet enlivens it." - Frederick Law Olmsted, *Public Parks and the Enlargement of Towns* (1870)
- "Man must adapt his planning to the forces and processes of nature... not impose himself upon them." - Ian L. McHarg, *Design with Nature* (1969)
- "A building should be located where it helps to complete the structure of the site, not where it destroys it." - Christopher Alexander, *A Pattern Language* (1977)
- "Development in parks should be subordinate to the natural landscape and harmonize with the environment through the use of native materials and careful siting." - National Park Service, *Parkitecture / NPS Design Guidelines*
- "Design should protect, restore, and enhance ecosystem services." - Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES v2 Rating System)

Marsh Park Improvements – Project Highlights: *Updated March 2026*

Marsh Park Master Plan Vision:

“To create a premier recreational destination that provides the community with a meaningful connection to a unique natural environment”

Marsh Park Master Plan Goals:

- Enhance the environment as a natural destination
- Promote connection between users and the park
- Support community through events and programming
- Encourage recreation with thoughtful improvements

Project Highlights and Amenities as included in schematic design plan (March 2026):

- Access and accessibility:
 - o New entrance and parking lot and signage and lighting
 - o New dedicated trailer parking
 - o Improved ADA accessibility in and around park
 - o New paved trails; including full loop trail around lake
 - Planned trail projects will TRIPLE length of existing main paved trail network in the park; from 3800’ currently to around 11,400’
 - Projects will connect several neighborhoods directly to the trail network
- Water connectivity:
 - o New fishing piers (3)
 - o Improved boat launch
 - o New ADA-compliant kayak launch
 - o Expanded kayak rental program
- Site activation:
 - o 5 acres of ~150 acre park to be developed and activated (~3% of site)
 - o New publicly-accessible year-round restrooms
 - o New concession and bait house facility with covered patio / deck area
 - o New commercial lease space building with covered patio / deck area – for future private food service establishment usage
 - o New lakefront lawn terrace area
 - o New nature-based play area
- Ecological awareness:
 - o New tree plantings and landscaping
 - o Shoreline protection and erosion mitigation with native plantings
 - o Continued removal of invasives; continued fish stocking; continued lake habitat development

Project Construction Cost:

Estimated at \$12M

Project Timeline and Community Engagement:

- February 2024: Contract approved to develop Marsh Park Master Plan
 - Spring – summer 2024: Community engagement
 - o In-person engagement session: June 18, 2024
 - Approximately 80 attendees
 - Park elements reviewed:
 - Benches; Fitness equipment; Café / brewery; Specialty features (art); Nature-based play structures
 - 68% positive interest, overall, in proposed elements
 - o Two (2) elements with net-negative interest:
 - Fitness equipment; art
 - Park events reviewed:
 - Concerts; Nature / Education events; Festivals; Pop-up events; Group fitness classes
 - 76% positive interest, overall, in proposed events
 - o Zero events with net-negative interest
 - o On-line survey
 - 832 respondents (~83% City residents)
 - Most-desired amenities, with more than 10% of respondents indicating positive support:
 - Paved and unpaved trails; Fishing piers; Benches: ~40%
 - Restrooms; Overlooks: ~35%
 - Bike Pump Track; Kayak rentals; Boat launch/storage: ~30%
 - Shelters: ~25%
 - Restaurant: ~20%
 - Taproom; Event space; Outdoor workout equipment: ~15%
 - Public Art: ~15%
 - Nature-based play: 10%
 - o NOTE: underlined amenities are included in schematic design park improvement plan set (March 2026)
- Fall 2024 – spring 2025: Plan refinement
- April 2025: Plan adoption by Parks Board and City Council
- August 2025: Contract approved for site engineering and architectural services
- Spring-summer 2026: Select Construction Manager (anticipated) for pre-construction professional services
- Summer-fall 2026: Community Open House (anticipated)
- Q4 2026: Recommendation to proceed for project construction