

Special

October 13, 2026

Ontario City Council met in special session on October 13, 2026, at the Municipal Building with Council President Eddie Gallo presiding. The meeting opened at 5:33 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present during roll call were Council members Rick Pauley, Jason Bilyj, Rose Feagin (5:57), Sherry Branham-Fonner; President Eddie Gallo, Mayor Josh Bradley, Law Director Andrew Medwid, Service-Safety Director Michael Morton, and Clerk of Council Abbey Beaver. Excused: Brennen Finfgeld, Anderson Roll, and Nathan Sunderland.

President Gallo yielded the floor to Mayor Bradley to introduce Reveille LTD, the company that completed the Comprehensive Plan and is assisting with the Zoning Code Update.

Glen Grisdale, representing Reveille LTD, explained the background of the Zoning Code Update.

- He gave an overview of how the Comprehensive Community Action Plan was developed in 2024.
 - During the information gathering the community wanted to be unique, not like other cities that have commercial properties next to residential properties.
 - Ensuring growth was another community vision.
- One of the tools for growth is the Zoning Code.
- The current Zoning Code references the 1971 Comprehensive Plan.
- Zoning Codes get cluttered with items where they do not make sense over time, so they need to be streamlined.
- The Zoning Code Update is overlayed with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Zoning districts were created or changed to allow growth, site plan reviews were changed along with introducing green infrastructure practices, a permissive use table was added, and definitions were updated.
- The City Engineer is updating the Subdivision Rules and Regulations.

Rachel Bach, with Reveille LTD, presented the proposed Zoning Code Update and Zoning District Map.

- A steering committee was formed by the City to review the Zoning Code to make decisions and bring it up to date.
- They tried to simplify the language to make it easier to read and organize it in a way information can be found quickly.
- The focus was on making sure the Zoning Code is legally defensible and there is no ambiguity.
- They created this as a tool to use to implement future policies in the City.
- The steering committee looked at several sites in the City that had specific things that needed to be addressed. The primary problems they noticed were:
 - Landscape and property maintenance.
 - The Richland Mall site for economic development.
 - Subdivision buildout, how to build and connect to other subdivisions.
 - Design and development standards.
- Repealing the old Zoning Code in its entirety and replacing it with the Zoning Code Update is the optimal approach.
- The Administrative Section ties the Zoning Code to the Comprehensive Plan.
- The Definitions were updated to be more modern and in line with the code.
- There is a placeholder in the Zoning Code Update for Data Centers. It has not been addressed due to waiting on the State report.
- She explained the changes with the Zoning Districts.
 - Several residential lots are nonconforming in the existing Zoning Code. R-1a – Single Family Medium Residential was created to have them conform in the new code.
- Applications and Fees that were adopted by Ordinance were pulled out so those can be changed in the future without changing the Zoning Code.
- There are things that will be changed before the final draft of the Zoning Code is produced for the public hearing.
- A copy of the presentation will be provided to members of Council.

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Mr. Bilyj stated he did not see where barriers for above ground pools or where fencing boundaries should be set were addressed.

Ms. Bach said that pool barriers are often building code requirements. The Ohio Building Code can be reference for this matter. Fencing boundaries are usually the property line. Mayor Bradley advised they are looking at other area municipality codes on fencing.

President Gallo asked how many of the current R-1 – Low Density Residential areas are proposed to change to R-1a or R-2 – Medium Density Residential districts.

- The southwest corner of Ontario is an older R-1 area and residents will take issue with a developer being able to build duplexes.
- Most residents only care about a structure being a single-family home, not the square footage or the lot size.
- He would like the Zoning Code to be clear for developers in knowing what they can do without any loopholes.

Ms. Bach explained it could be changed to R-1a but most of the lot sizes and structure sizes will still be nonconforming in the new Zoning Code. The R-1a district could be reviewed and considered for the proposed R-2 neighborhoods.

Mr. Bilyj questioned where the hazmat standards are in the Solar Panel Section and if variances were only for height restrictions on Accessory Buildings.

Ms. Bach said they will review the Solar Panel section again to see if there is anything they can add regarding disposal. The Accessory Buildings section was written to try to alleviate variance requests. Everything can be varied but criteria must be met and proven.

Mr. Pauley wondered if lowering the square foot of a residence in R-2 to 1,000 square feet is the norm.

Mayor Bradley inquired if the new R-2 was dropped to 1,000 square feet to help conform the smaller homes to the new Zoning Code and we zone those areas to R-1a would it matter if we moved the R-2 back to 1,200 square feet.

Ms. Bach stated the 1,000 square feet was implemented because offering a smaller size to a developer would not require as many PUD – Planned Unit Development requests.

President Gallo requested looking into a section for oversaturation of a particular business. He would like to have answers for when the residents ask what the solution is whether it be from the CIC (Community Improvement Corporation) or from the Zoning Code Update.

Ms. Bach suggested separation requirements, for instance no gas station can be within a certain distance of another gas station. There can also be higher performance standards placed on the developer.

Mr. Grisdale said gas stations are a conditional use in the Zoning Code Update so they can be controlled easier along with using supplemental regulations on some performance standards.

Mayor Bradley used the old Cheddar's site for an example.

- The owner of the property removed Cheddar's because there was a gas station who wanted the property. It was not Cheddar's decision to leave.
- The gas station signed a 20-year lease, then it was purchased by a larger company.
- Contact was made with the new owners at the beginning of the year.
- They were not aware of the 20-year lease and are currently working with the property owner to exit the lease.

Mr. Bilyj inquired if the Zoning Code Update makes the City more walkable because there are places where it is difficult.

Ms. Bach explained any new development requires sidewalks for connectivity.

Mr. Grisdale stated safety studies will help. There are safety grants that can be applied for.

Mayor Bradley said Safe Routes for All is one of those grants the City is working on.

Mr. Bilyj asked about the abandoned railroad line and if the Zoning Code references it's use or repurpose.

Mr. Grisdale advised the Comprehensive Plan focuses on this. It will be part of the Olde Ontario site plan process.

Mayor Bradley said they met with the railroad and started the process.

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Craig Hunt, 3680 Park Avenue West, stated he came to the meeting to find out if there are going to be any changes in lighting, fences, driveways, or particulars on standards, but they did not mention any. He wanted clarification that anything existing can remain the same after the Zoning Code Update is adopted.

President Gallo explained this was just an overview of the entire project. There will be drafts available to the public with the changes discussed at this meeting before the public hearing and any changes made after the public hearing before it is voted on.

Ms. Bach explained anything currently existing, legally on the ground, will be grandfathered in unless a change is made to the property. If a property is changed or redeveloped it will have to meet the standards in the Zoning Code Update.

At 6:50 p.m., there being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Mr. Bilyj, second by Mrs. Branham-Fonner.

/s/ Eddie Gallo, President of Council

/s/ Abbey Beaver, Clerk of Council