CITY OF FAIRBORN
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
September 21, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.
Fire Training Room

COUNCIL MEMBERS	Present	Absent
Dan Kirkpatrick, Mayor	☒	☐
Clint Allen, Councilman	☐	☒
Sylvia Chess, Councilwoman	☒	☐
Brian Dodd, Councilman	☒	☐
Rodney McCubbins, Deputy Mayor	☒	☐
Mary Reaster, Councilwoman	☒	☐
Tana Stanton, Councilwoman	☒	☐

Councilwoman Reaster moved to excuse Councilman Allen from the meeting. Councilman Dodd seconded. Voice Vote. Motion carried. Mayor Kirkpatrick excused Councilman Allen from the meeting.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Adkins, Gebhart, Hannon, McDowell, McNamee, Schell, Taylor, and White.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Cherise Schell, Development Director, provided an economic development update covering the following topics:

- Economic Development Strategic Plan
- Current Initiatives – Skyway Plaza
- Current Initiatives – Downtown
- Northern Industrial District
- Calamityville

Matt Halpin, Downtown Revitalization Specialist, discussed the City's initiative with Small Nation. Please see the attached Power Point presentation for details of the presentations.

Jalen White, Economic Development Specialist, stated housing plays a complimentary role in broader economic development efforts. Housing supports the local tax base, supports economic growth and population growth. He believes Fairborn's population is younger than most cities surrounding the area Fairborn is aging as the state is as a whole. A lot of projects they are working on right now supports the population. It supports, lower and higher income, which encompasses what they are focusing on the young population as well. Both the Strategic Plan and the Comprehensive Land Use Plan highlight housing as a priority, no matter where it is in the City. There is not a big priority redevelopment area for housing. He thinks it is the City as a whole. Various projects are going on in the

City to address housing, such as Valle Green Senior Living which is affordable housing including 70 units for the lower income senior population and there is Green Oaks on Exchange Court which is assisted living and then there is the PLK development which is 200 units on Commerce Center and that is market rate plus type housing. They offer elevated amenities, upgraded finishes. This encompasses different populations, including the young professionals and the older population. For single-family there are also infill projects which they have been working on for over two years at this point. Right now, there are about 5 lots in National Homes that they are working on. They are focusing on 8-12 in Wrightview within the next year and a half.

Mayor Kirkpatrick stated Mr. White mentioned National Homes and Wrightview. He asked if Habitat for Humanity was involved in any of those projects. Mr. White responded that they are not at this point. Mayor Kirkpatrick stated there is potential for their involvement. Mrs. Schell stated, yes, staff has had two very meaningful sessions with Habitat for Humanity.

Councilwoman Reaster stated she knows it is very early, but the announcement today about Space Force and Wright Patterson Air Force Base could potentially help move the City forward much quicker than they were originally planning. Mrs. Schell agreed. Councilwoman Reaster stated not only in housing because no one wants to drive an hour to work, but also for DOD contracting spaces. It is a great time to be in Fairborn.

Mayor Kirkpatrick stated when Mr. White mentioned Valle Greene for seniors, he questioned if a lot of the other housing was for any age level? Mr. White responded the Green Oaks and Valle Green are for 55 plus and the rest are for all ages.

Mayor Kirkpatrick asked if they are working with the schools as he knows one of the issues is that the schools are right at their limit now. Mr. White stated aside from the senior apartments and the 55 plus, he does not see a lot of children coming in when they talk with developers. He thinks it is more one or two bedroom focused as they want to hit that young professional population. He does not think developers are focusing on family-oriented units now a days. He thinks there are only 10 or 12 three-bedroom units out of 200, so it is a very small percentage. Mrs. Schell explained they do not do any incentives without discussing it with the schools first. They are included in every conversation.

Councilwoman Stanton stated the City is not going out looking for developers. Mrs. Schell stated that is correct and developers look at trends and the economic drivers such as the Base growing.

Deputy Mayor McCubbins asked if there has been any collaboration with the schools on the Baker site? Mrs. Schell stated she knows Mike Gebhart meets with the Superintendent regularly. Mrs. Schell has not had a lot of conversation about it. She knows they were still trying to finalize the appraisal to get it on the market. Mike Gebhart, City Manager, stated the last time he talked to Mr. Filo and Amy Gayheart, they were hoping to have the appraisal done soon and it will go on the market before the end of the year. There is discussion, but there is nothing concrete. It is roughly 21.5 acres and as soon as he receives mor information he will share what he can. He stated Councilwoman Stanton is correct the City does not go out and look for developers. They come to the City. The best thing to happen was all the new schools, as Fairborn is the one district in this region that can say in a decade, we will all have brand-new schools after next fall.

We are located right next to Wright Patterson and that is a great combination to help us. Staff does not go out actively and seek developers or retailers for the area. Those all come and find the City. We didn't try to attract Wawa or Gray Fox. We did not go out and recruit them. They came to us. They see an area that is void in this market and they want to capitalize on it. Mrs. Schell stated we have tried to get a grocery store, Aldi.

Councilwoman Stanton asked at a high level they were looking at Kauffman to be a hub. We were hoping for some involvement by Wright State, some military and research. Is that still the vision. Mrs. Schell stated given today's announcement she is not sure about the Wright State piece because if they build the huge facility, we may not have a Wright State presence on the Skyway site. It is still intended to be advanced manufacturing, research, and SCIF. It will be whatever businesses can site there, and their business revolves support of the missions at Wright Patterson. That is the goal. Councilwoman Stanton stated it is not going to be some glorified, secure conference room. Mrs. Schell explained there will be physical people at the location. The key feature to that site is the proximity to Wright Patterson Air Force Base and to capitalize on that. Councilwoman Stanton stated for the five-year plan it sounds like it is moving along well.

Councilman Dodd asked if Five Rivers Health was still proceeding. Mr. Gebhart stated, yes, it is moving along. They are still engaged and there is still interest. He spoke with Councilwoman Stanton is it 100 percent firm that they would want to go to Central Park. No, it's no 100 percent firm but it is the area that would allow them to do new market tax credits if they are available. It is also the YMCA's preferred area to stay in. So, there are a lot of things that go into that. It is also hard to carve out a piece of parkland and dedicate it over to that. If things play out and they do go to that site and there is a new YMCA, the current space where the YMCA building is would then be open space. It is not that we are going to lose a significant amount of green space in that area. We control this site and it is one of our 28 parks. We don't want to give up park space, but we see what it could bring to the community for healthcare for low to moderate income people. As well as a potential for the YMCA. He knows there is concern about giving up City owned property for that as well. It is not 100 percent, but Five Rivers is still very interested, and their Board has said they are going to be in Fairborn somewhere. He wants to keep something downtown as everything is going out to the east of the City. This is one key for development in the core part of the City. They will continue to have discussions with Five Rivers and the YMCA. Dale Bruner of the YMCA brought Five Rivers to the City. We were not aware of them prior to Dale. Five Rivers wants to be stand-alone. We are still just crawling on this project. It could benefit the seniors, the LMI population and potentially benefit the City with a new YMCA. Taking on the debt would be the biggest challenge for the YMCA. He does not know how that will look at the end of the day.

Mayor Kirkpatrick thanked Cherise and staff for the update.

Mike Gebhart, City Manager, excused himself from the meeting to greet people for the Council meeting. He knew the Mayor wanted to discuss Sister Cities, so he passed the meeting over to the Mayor.

Mayor Kirkpatrick explained that Fairborn does not have a Sister City. We have talked about this for 6 or 7 years at least. Originally that community met and tried to find a Sister City that was demographically to Fairborn with a University and a Base involved. At that time, they looked at two cities in Spain. They approached both of those cities and got no

response from either one. So unfortunately, that fell through. They looked at Poland. They looked at Hungary and some other options. In the last couple of years, they looked at Japan. There are several bases in Japan. This past Friday he received a phone call from Janet Houston who is the Sister City representative for this part of the United States. She is based out of Cincinnati, and she said they had been approached by Fussa Tokyo, Japan about becoming a sister City. The attached preliminary sister relationship report discusses details of the City. After some discussion Council decided it would be acceptable to investigate the possibility of becoming a Sister City to Fussa.

Terry Adkins, Public Works Director, stated he received information today that National Fuel Gas Company or National Fuel will be taking over Vectren Energy Delivery beginning October 1, 2026. Basically, everything will continue to operate as it does now. It will just be under National Fuel. He just received the information today.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilwoman Reaster moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilwoman Stanton seconded. Yeas, six: Reaster, Stanton, Chess, Dodd, McCubbins and Kirkpatrick. Nays, none. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 5:51 p.m.

MAYOR

CLERK, CITY OF FAIRBORN



Economic Development Update

City Council Work Session
September 21, 2026

Economic Development Strategic Plan

- In 2023, the City began working with Red Tiger Investments, LLC on the creation of its Five-year Economic Development Strategic Plan.
- The plan was finalized in April of 2023 and in it, Four priority redevelopment areas were identified:
- Skyway Plaza
- Downtown
- Northern Industrial District
- Calamityville

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Current Initiatives-Skyway Plaza:

In September 2024, staff was contacted by a local Developer regarding redevelopment of the Skyway site.

Over the next year and a half, work was undertaken to draft a development agreement.

Also during that time, a One-Time Strategic Community Investment grant of $1million was awarded to the FDC. Those funds will be used site-readiness work.

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Current Initiatives-Skyway cont'd.

Ultimately, the developer and the FDC were unable to come to an agreement as it related to the timeline for redevelopment of the site and mutually agreed to terminate discussions related to redevelopment of the site.

Efforts continued readying the site for redevelopment and a contract was awarded to Outdoor Enterprise. Work began on the site to get it "shovel-ready" the week of 9-14.

Efforts to identify a development partner for the site lead to an introduction to Strongbox Commercial, a developer from Zionsville, Indiana.
They have strong connections to and have done work around the biotech, aviation and aerospace and defense industries.

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Current Initiatives- Skyway Cont'd.

A Development Services Agreement was finalized between the FDC and Strongbox Commercial for the redevelopment of the Skyway site.

Strongbox recently presented a timeline for redevelopment and efforts to market the site to an end user to the FDC on 9-17-26. Their goal is to have an end user identified over the next 12 months.

The Development Services Agreement with Strongbox Commercial sets forth a 12-month timeline for identifying and finalizing agreements with end users and creating a timeline for construction.

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Downtown

" A strong and vibrant downtown is essential for the economic future of Fairborn"

As a part of the strategic planning process, opinions of residents and business owners were solicited via a survey to find out what people wanted downtown.

Identified by many was the need to create more live, work and play amenities in the downtown to drive customer traffic needed for new business growth.

Another highlight of the survey feedback was a need for incentive programs to improve downtown storefronts.

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Current Initiatives-Downtown

In 2020, Fairborn City Council allocated ARPA funding to a Façade Improvement Grant program. Two Main Street businesses participated in this program resulting in more than $250,000 investment.

Subsequently, the Fairborn Development Corporation created a Façade Improvement Program and to date, has approved more than $30,000 in funding for façade improvements in the downtown corridor.

The FDC has also been assisting local small businesses through its Small Business Micro-Grant Program. So far in 2026, Four Fairborn businesses have received grant awards to support equipment, technology and customer-facing improvements.

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Current Initiatives-Downtown

To further revitalization efforts in our downtown, the FDC contracted with Small Nation, a real estate development and small-town economic revitalization company based in Bellefontaine, Ohio.

There are many ways Small Nation can assist with the revitalization effort:

- Building Renovation- They buy and remodel old or empty historic buildings in small towns.

- Business Recruitment- They find new entrepreneurs and help them open shops, coffee houses or other retail/service-related businesses.

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Current Initiatives- Downtown

- Equity Partnerships- entrepreneurs often have ideas, but lack funding, so to fill storefronts with quality tenants they become equity partners with their tenants by investing time, money and energy to help small businesses get off the ground.

- Design and Promote- helping owners create strong brands for their businesses, designing welcoming and engaging business interiors with the help of their sister company Comstor, as well as marketing their offerings to the local community via websites and billboards.

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Current Initiatives-Downtown

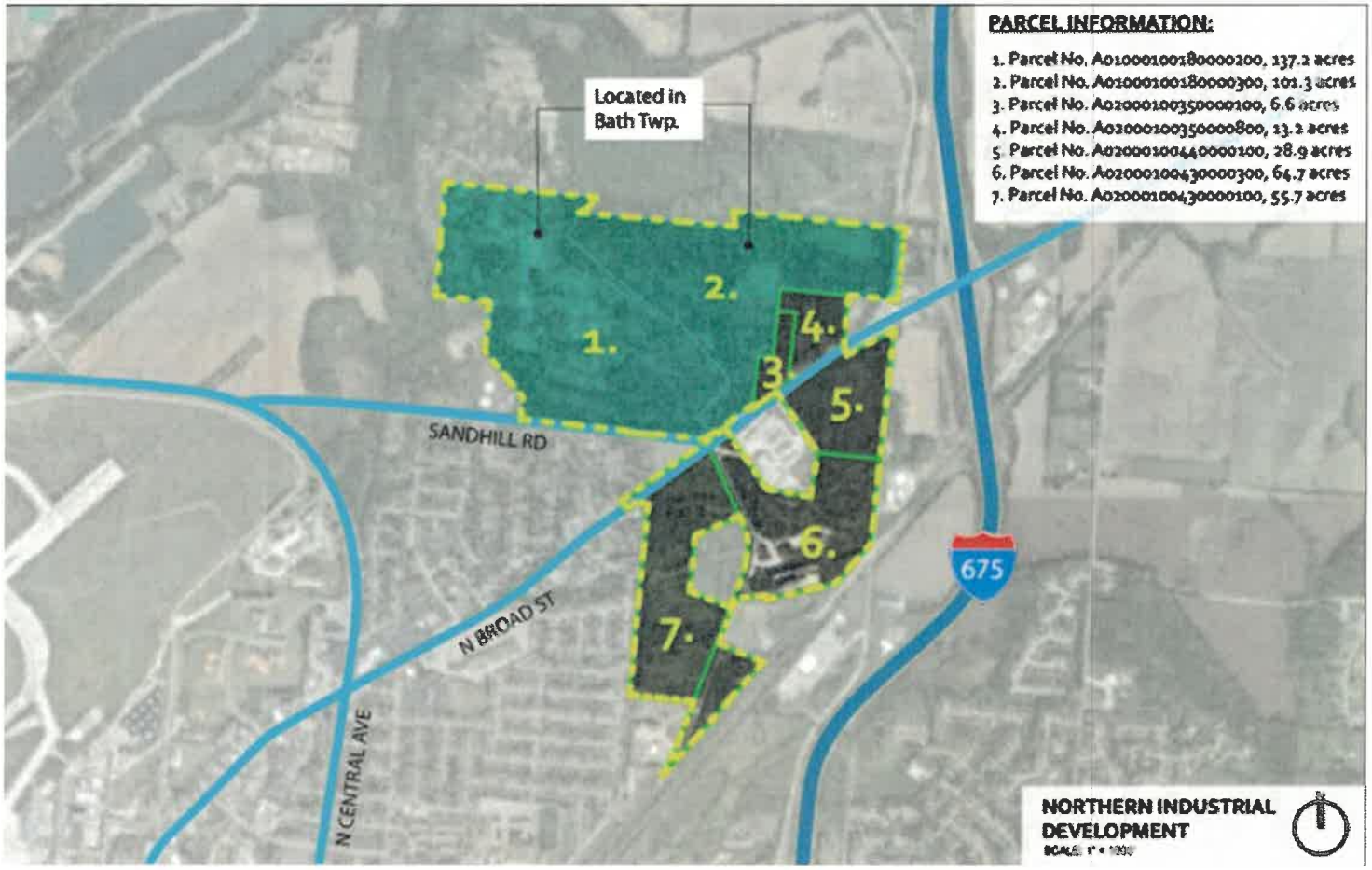
A group of stakeholders and members of the FDC Board toured Downtown Bellefontaine to see first-hand the results of Small Nation's "Hustle Hard" approach to revitalization.

Subsequently, a tour of Downtown Fairborn by the Small Nation team and a group of Fairborn stakeholders as well as members of the FDC Board took place on September 3rd, 2026.

Small Nation, as a part of their agreement with the FDC will create a comprehensive downtown development assessment report that will include analysis of current conditions and tangible recommendations for the enhancement of the community.

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Northern Industrial District



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Northern Industrial District

The Northern Industrial District located on the Northeast corner of WPAFB and east of I-675 can transition well into industrial uses, notably in the distribution and advanced manufacturing sectors.

We have had recent inquiry from a developer interested in the 137 acres located at the corner of N. Broad Street (SR 444) and Sandhill Road. They are in their due diligence phase, specifically researching potential environmental challenges of the site and jurisdictional coordination requirements as portions of the property are in Bath Township and Clark County.

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Northern Industrial District

Staff recently submitted the 55.7 acres owned by the Kegley family (#7 on map) for inclusion in the JobsOhio Site Ohio Program.

Site certification is one of the most effective site marketing tools and can help site owners and communities to gain a competitive advantage in site selection. Companies seeking a site to locate an industrial or manufacturing facility are often on tight timeframes for making a site location decision. Certified sites present a unique advantage that reduces overall site location risk, saves time, and reduces site development costs giving them an attractive differential amongst hundreds or thousands of “greenfield” sites in their search area.

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Calamityville

The City has continued to explore opportunities to support the future development and productive use of the Calamityville site. Staff has evaluated potential development opportunities and remains engaged in efforts to identify uses that are appropriate for the property and consistent with the City's broader economic development goals.

The strategic plan outlines the following steps to encourage development at Calamityville:

1. Explore collaboration with Wright State University
2. Pursue Public-Private Partnerships
3. Explore collaboration with second-stage technology companies
4. Explore an MOU with WSU and other potential stakeholders (AFRL, Clark State, Sinclair or potential end users.

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Questions?



SISTER CITIES INTERNATIONAL

Preliminary Sister City Relationship Report

Fairborn, Ohio, USA • Fussa, Tokyo, Japan

September 2026 | Initial comparison of similarities and exchange opportunities

Purpose. This preliminary report identifies documented similarities between Fairborn and Fussa and outlines practical areas in which a future Sister City relationship could support people-to-people, educational, cultural, youth, civic and professional exchanges. It is a starting point for further due diligence and conversations with both communities.

1. Community Snapshot and Key Similarities

Area	Fairborn, Ohio	Fussa, Japan
Population	35,754 estimated (July 2025)	56,908 (Sept. 1, 2026)
Military connection	Adjacent to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base; strong military-family presence	Host community for Yokota Air Base, a major U.S. military installation
Education	Wright State University; Fairborn City Schools	Fussa High School and an active local education system with international exchange
International environment	Military-connected and internationally diverse families and residents	About 9% foreign residents in Feb. 2026; longstanding multicultural environment
Aviation/defense identity	Wright-Patterson and Dayton-region aerospace/defense ecosystem	Yokota Air Base and its U.S.-Japan defense/community connection

The most distinctive parallel is the role of U.S. military installations in both communities. Fairborn is less than one mile from Wright-Patterson AFB, while Fussa contains a substantial portion of Yokota Air Base. Both therefore have direct experience with international populations, military families, and interaction between civilian community life and a major defense installation.

2. Strong Areas for Exchange and Interaction

- **Youth and student exchanges:** Fairborn schools and youth organizations could connect with Fussa schools through virtual exchanges, classroom projects, cultural presentations, sports/arts exchanges, host-family visits and reciprocal student delegations.
- **Military-community connections:** The communities could exchange approaches to welcoming military families, community relations, youth programs and civilian-military interaction while keeping exchanges community-focused.
- **Aviation, STEM and careers:** Fairborn's Wright-Patterson/Wright State aerospace, engineering and research ecosystem creates opportunities for STEM and career-oriented exchanges with Fussa's Yokota-connected environment.
- **Culture, arts, food and festivals:** Fussa's blend of Japanese and American influences, including its Base Side Street and traditional cultural assets, offers strong material for reciprocal cultural programming with Fairborn.
- **Sports and recreation:** Youth sports, school clubs and community recreation could provide accessible, relationship-building exchanges before larger international delegations.
- **Multicultural and inclusion programs:** Fussa has programs serving children with foreign roots and active multicultural initiatives; Fairborn schools serve military-connected and internationally diverse families. These experiences could support peer learning around inclusion and welcoming communities.

3. Evidence of Readiness for International Exchange

Fussa already demonstrates significant international-exchange experience. Fussa High School reports online and in-person exchanges with students from Korea, the United States, Jordan and other countries, a sister-school relationship with a French high school, and international study programs. Fussa has also operated youth overseas programs involving homestays, language study and cultural activities.

Fairborn offers a complementary platform. It has Wright State University, Fairborn City Schools, Wright-Patterson AFB, a large military-connected population, youth sports and a school/community emphasis on leadership and connection.

4. Potential First-Year Exchange Concepts

Pilot	Possible Format
Virtual Youth Friendship Project	8–12 week student project pairing Fairborn and Fussa students around aviation, community life, music, sports or environmental topics.

Sister-School Exploration	Identify one Fairborn school and one Fussa school for an initial online relationship, followed by teacher-to-teacher planning.
Youth Delegation / Homestay	Small reciprocal delegations with host families, school visits, cultural activities and community service.
Aviation & STEM Exchange	Student presentations or virtual tours connecting Wright-Patterson/Wright State STEM themes with Fussa/Yokota-area interests.
Community Culture Week	Food, music, art, language and local-history activities held in each community, potentially tied to existing festivals.
Military Family & Community Dialogue	Peer exchange among schools/community organizations on supporting internationally connected and military families.

5. Initial Assessment

The documented similarities provide several concrete bases for exploring a Fairborn–Fussa Sister City relationship, particularly in youth engagement, education, aviation/STEM, military-community relations, cultural exchange and sports. The strongest next step would be exploratory rather than immediately formal: identify counterpart organizations in Fussa, engage Fairborn schools/youth leaders and civic representatives, and determine whether there is sufficient volunteer, institutional and financial capacity on both sides for a sustained relationship.

Important qualification: The parallels identified here support further exploration; they do not by themselves establish that a formal affiliation should be created. Municipal and community interest, counterpart leadership and a sustainable program structure should be confirmed.

Selected Sources

- U.S. Census Bureau, Fairborn QuickFacts (2025 population estimate).
- City of Fussa, official website and 2026 population data.
- City of Fussa, overview/history of Yokota Air Base and community relationship.
- U.S. Air Force, Wright-Patterson AFB / Air Force Life Cycle Management Center materials.
- Fairborn City School District, community and military-family information.
- Tokyo Metropolitan Fussa High School, international exchange and school profile materials.
- Japan National Tourism Organization, "Exoticism City Fussa."
- Japan-U.S. Sister City Association (JUSSCA), U.S.-Japan sister-city exchange resources.