



City of Ashtabula

Ashtabula City Council Work Session Agenda
Tuesday, September 8, 2026 at 5:00 PM
4230 Lake Avenue, Ashtabula, OH 44004

Agenda

- 1. Opening of Work Session**
 - a. Call to Order
 - b. Roll Call
 - c. Sunshine Law Certification
- 2. Welcome and Acknowledgement of Visitors**
- 3. Discussion: Proposed Thriving Communities Commission**
 - a. Thriving Communities Commission Draft Ordinance
- 4. Questions/Comments**
- 5. Discussion**
- 6. Public Comment (at Council's discretion)**
- 7. Adjournment**

ORDINANCE NO. 2026 - _____

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE ASHTABULA CITY COMMISSION FOR THRIVING COMMUNITIES

WHEREAS, the City of Ashtabula is committed to **Thriving Communities** that ensure municipal services are high-quality, efficient, and responsive to every neighborhood, fostering a sense of belonging where policy is informed by the **Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)** such as housing stability, economic opportunity, and community safety; and

WHEREAS, the **Ad Hoc Committee on Racism as a Public Health Crisis** has identified that deep links exist between public health and service delivery—specifically regarding racial wealth gaps, employment equity, and environmental conditions—and has determined that a **ward-focused impact review** is a vital tool for ensuring that all parts of the City have the resources necessary to thrive; and

WHEREAS, institutionalizing this framework through a standing Commission will **provide City Council and the Administration with the data-driven analysis** necessary to prioritize inclusive engagement, neighborhood safety, and quality education as pillars of City policy, while simultaneously maximizing the City's **Grant Readiness** by aligning municipal projects with state and federal funding requirements for health equity and infrastructure.

THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the City Council of Ashtabula:

CHAPTER [XXX]: COMMISSION FOR THRIVING COMMUNITIES

.01 ESTABLISHMENT AND COMPOSITION.

There is hereby established the Ashtabula Commission for Thriving Communities as a standing advisory body of the Council consisting of nine (9) members:

- **Two (2) City Council members**, appointed by the Council President.
- **One (1) representative** from the Ashtabula City Health Department.
- **One (1) member of city staff**, appointed by the City Manager.
- **Five (5) Community Representatives**, one from each Ward, appointed by the City Manager with the approval of a majority of Council.

.02 APPOINTMENT AND QUALIFICATIONS.

- **Eligibility:** Commissioners shall be residents of, be employed in, or own or operate a business in the City of Ashtabula.
- **Selection & Expertise:** In appointing community representatives, priority shall be given to individuals with demonstrated interest or experience in the **social determinants of**

health (SDOH), public health, education, social services, neighborhood advocacy, or grant writing.

- **Ethics:** Members shall be governed by the rules and guidance promulgated by the Ohio Ethics Commission regarding conflicts of interest.
- **Diversity:** To the extent practicable, membership shall reflect the geographic (Ward-based) and demographic diversity of the City.

.03 COMPENSATION; TERMS; VACANCIES.

- **Compensation:** Members shall serve without compensation.
- **Terms:** Community representatives shall serve **three (3) year staggered terms**. Council and Departmental Liaison members shall serve for the duration of their respective official capacities.
- **Vacancies:** Any vacancy shall be filled by the office of the original appointer for the remainder of the unexpired term.

.04 OFFICERS; ADMINISTRATIVE CHANNEL.

- **Officers:** The Commission shall annually elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, and **Secretary** from among its members.
- **Secretary Duties:** The Secretary shall be responsible for recording and transcribing the minutes and ensuring they are filed as public records with the Clerk of Council.
- **Administrative Channel:** To respect collective bargaining and operational efficiency, all formal requests for departmental data or reports must be processed through the City Manager.

.05 MEETINGS AND QUORUM.

- **Meetings:** The Commission shall meet at least once per quarter. All meetings shall be public and noticed at least seven (7) days in advance.
- **Quorum:** A **majority of the then-serving membership** shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
- **Attendance:** Absence from three (3) consecutive meetings without excuse shall act as an automatic resignation.

.06 POWERS AND DUTIES (Thriving Communities Framework).

The Commission shall serve in an advisory capacity to identify opportunities for policy and service enhancement:

- **Grant Readiness:** Assist the City in documenting neighborhood-level impacts and service data to ensure municipal policies and infrastructure projects remain highly competitive for state and federal grant funding.
- **Ward Impact & Policy Review:** Advise on the potential impacts of proposed policies or projects across the City's wards to ensure equitable, inclusive representation from wards and balanced distribution of resources.

- **Institutional Alliances:** Facilitate partnerships with local anchor institutions—including the hospital systems, universities, and schools—to align City initiatives with established community wellness data.
- **Public Forums:** Host at least one public forum per year to share progress and engage residents in co-creating solutions.
- **Stewardship:** The Commission shall assume custody of the assets of the Ad Hoc Committee on Racism as a Public Health Crisis; these records shall be formally archived with the City Manager's Office.

.07 ANNUAL REPORT.

On or before **January 31st** of each year, the Commission shall submit a written "Thriving Communities and Belonging Report" to the City Manager and Council detailing departmental strengths, community feedback, and partnership outcomes.

SECTION 2. It is found and determined that all formal actions of this Council concerning and related to the passage of this Ordinance were adopted in an open meeting of this Council in compliance with the Municipal Charter and Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

SECTION 3. For the reasons stated in the preamble, this ordinance, if approved by the votes of five or more members of Council, shall take effect immediately; otherwise, it shall take effect 30 days thereafter.