

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

MARCH
2025





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2024-2025 CITY COUNCIL



Back row: Marty Densch, President Kevin Leavy, Vice President Kevin Day, Markese Terrell

Front Row: Sherry Blakeley, Yusuf Adama, Nancy Forbeck



GOAL 1: CREATE AND SUSTAIN *SAFE AND HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS*

Create and sustain safe and healthy neighborhoods by reducing crime, fear, and disorder through community collaboration, community revitalization, and ensuring public safety and economic security using honorable and progressive methods.

- A. Reduce crime, fear, and disorder.
- B. Engage residents, businesses, and community organizations.
- C. Minimize injury; prevent loss of life, property, and natural resources.
- D. Focus on community revitalization that incorporates people, property and physical security.
- E. Ensure adequate public infrastructure that provides for public safety and economic security.
- F. Provide quality fire inspection and enforcement initiatives to minimize potential hazards.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Reports of crimes in Beloit decreased by 7.3%.
- Clearance rates of crimes increased year over year.
- Tips received through Greater Beloit Area Crimestoppers increased by 3.5% year over year.
- 902 youth participated in programming through CDBG-supported services, an increase of 230%.
- 397 individuals participated in job training and life skills education through CDBG-supported programming, a 111% increase.
- 2 annual neighborhood cleanups held.
- 20 formal community listening sessions held.
- 17% decrease in vehicle crashes involving an injury.
- 7 homes sold to Acts Housing, promoting homeownership.
- Building permits for residential improvements projects totaled \$5.2 million.
- Vacant properties in the city decreased from 272 to 184; some of the houses were sold and turned into occupied units.



GOAL 2: CREATE AND SUSTAIN *A HIGH PERFORMING ORGANIZATION*

A high performing organization is one with a common sense of purpose, constant improvement, taps into employee talent and innovation, recognizes leadership at all levels, and is representative of the community we serve.

A. Foster a diverse and inclusive workplace and build a workforce that reflects the cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity of the community we serve.

B. Establish an organization-wide understanding of what high quality public service means through proper training to sustain current industry trends.

C. Implement schedules, wages, and working conditions that increase motivation, performance, and satisfaction of employees, while maintaining organizational flexibility, oversight, and responsiveness to our community.

D. Partner with other jurisdictions and organizations.

E. Emphasize fiscal responsibility.

F. Identify, create, and implement operational synergies that accentuate service delivery and efficiency across all City departments and divisions.

G. Expand partnerships in order to maintain an efficient and highly trained organization that is capable of providing needed fire and EMS-related services.

H. Modernize emergency operations management.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The City of Beloit completed 86 recruitments in 2024, resulting in 340 hires:
 - **Full-time:** 36 hires; 83.3% male/16.7% female; 72% white/14% Hispanic/11% African American/3% Asian.
 - **Part-Time:** 10 hires; 60% female/30% male/10% non-binary; 90% white/10% Hispanic.
 - **Seasonal/Casual:** 294 hires; 61.57% female/38.43% male; 77.89% white/8.51% Hispanic/8.16% African American/4.42% two or more races/.68% Asian/.34% Native American.
 - The city will take appropriate recruitment and outreach steps to ensure the workforce is reflective of the community we serve while hiring.
- The City's health fund has sustained a solid financial outlook from 2021-2024, reversing the negative trends prior to 2020.
- Number of people subscribed to winter weather emergency notifications grew by 10% with 3,052 people subscribed by the end of 2024.
- Our fire department trained for 8,158 hours with surrounding jurisdictions to create efficiencies when responding to emergencies in the stateline area.



GOAL 3: CREATE AND SUSTAIN *ECONOMIC & RESIDENTIAL* *GROWTH*

Foster investment and job growth thereby improving the quality of life, educational attainment, housing availability and affordability, resulting in prosperity for all.

- A. Retain and expand existing business.
- B. Stimulate business attraction in all sectors.
- C. Connect educators, workforce organizations, and employers to ensure a diverse talent pipeline.
- D. Foster regional partnerships to promote sustainable development.
- E. Increase inclusive housing inventory to serve existing and new residents.
- F. Utilize Tax Increment District (TID) housing funds to create additional affordable housing units in the City of Beloit.
- G. Consider new tax increment financing districts to promote future growth.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Ho-Chunk Nation broke ground on the \$500 million casino and resort project in October 2024.
- \$46 million in capital investment made in the city in 2024.
- 70 new jobs created through economic development efforts.
- 6.5 acres sold in Beloit.
- 14,535 square foot developed, helping to stimulate additional business growth.
- 482 students connected directly to businesses.
- 4 employers newly engaged with workforce organizations.
- Beloit Transit modified 4 routes and added 5 stops to improve connections to major employers.
- Created 8 new residential development contacts.
- New financial incentives in place to promote residential development through TIF Housing Fund:
 - \$6 million for affordable rental housing creation
 - \$363,000 for downtown upper floor housing grants
 - Western Hills subdivision sold to Acadia Homes for single-family home development
 - Roof replacement program introduced
 - \$1 million market rate housing program introduced in February 2025
- 47 parcels under contract for new housing.
- 48 housing units added to inventory or under contract to build.



GOAL 4: CREATE AND SUSTAIN *A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE*

Provide and maintain a vibrant community to work, live, and play within a sustainability framework that creates environmental, economic, and social opportunities to ensure the long-term viability of the community for current and future generations.

- A. Provide clean, safe and well maintained parks and their related facilities.
- B. Provide access to diverse recreational activities for health, well-being, entertainment, character, and social development.
- C. Increase literacy and provide lifelong learning opportunities.
- D. Remove trees that present a risk to the public and grow the urban forest canopy.
- E. Promote sustainability efforts within the organization and throughout the community.
- F. Promote alternative modes of transportation to reduce reliance on motorized vehicles.
- G. Plan for the USS Beloit Commissioning.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Parks & Recreation offered 80 activities for youth in 2024 with 6,905 participants.
- 4 playgrounds replaced - Horace White, Brown-Hatchett, Christilla and U.S. Rev. Pride parks.
- 128 students participated in Welty Environmental Center's adventure camp at Big Hill Park.
- Beloit Public Library expanded its digital collection with 37,691 materials accessed, an increase from previous years.
- BPL's physical materials collections increased with 3,000 more materials accessed in 2024 compared to 2023.
- 12,378 people participated in 791 early literacy initiatives and collaborations in 2024.
- Parks & Recreation offered 20 literacy and learning opportunities with 2,805 people in attendance.
- 1,141 trees were trimmed, an increase of 65%.
- 176 trees were planted, an increase of 31%.
- Removed 34 ash trees as part of the city's strategy to address the emerald ash borer.
- Usage at the city's electric charging station in the Third Street parking lot increased by 29%.
- DPW awarded \$123,000 in grant funding to convert streetlights to LED.
- Added over 1 mile of bike lanes/paths.
- Added 3,410 feet of sidewalk.
- USS Beloit Commissioning Committee formed, raised over \$500,000, and the ship was successfully commissioned on November 23, 2024, in Milwaukee, Wis. The crew visited Beloit several times in 2024, including for a community picnic at ABC Supply Stadium.



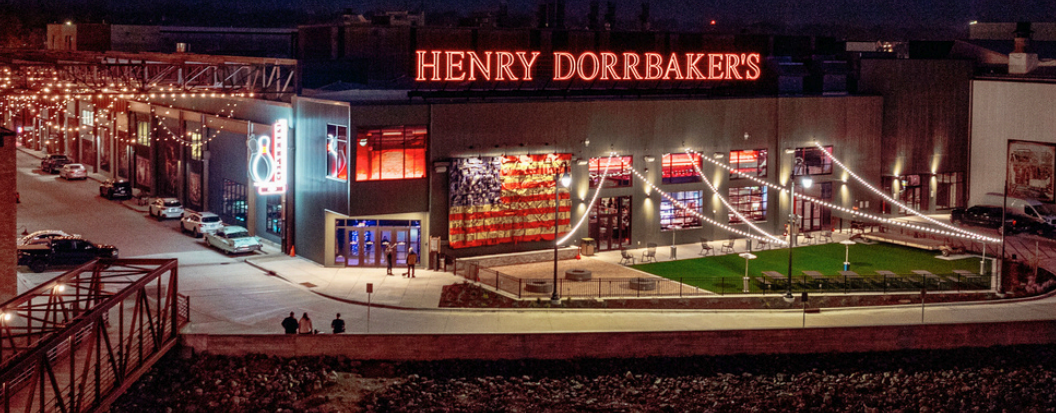
GOAL 5: CREATE AND SUSTAIN *HIGH QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE & CONNECTIVITY*

Provide high quality infrastructure and connectivity; including roads, bridges, streets, sidewalks, bike paths and fiber optics, as well as water, wastewater, storm water and solid waste services. Maintain city facilities and plan for future needs.

- A. Create ongoing funding and planning for extended fiber optic network.
- B. Create citywide facility maintenance program, incorporating buildings and fleet.
- C. Manage CIP program and adequately plan for future needs.
- D. Continue to promote public transportation and explore new routes to serve future development and existing areas that are underserved.
- E. Develop long-range plan for future water and wastewater needs.
- F. Reduce dependence on fossil fuels.
- G. Reduce dependence on chemicals and other manufacturing substances that accumulate in the environment.
- H. Encourage natural resource conservation.
- I. Provide safe and reliable water infrastructure.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Beloit Transit ridership increased by 1,697 rides.
- Student bus pass sales doubled year over year.
- Public Works completed 18 construction projects.
- Completed projects on Henry Avenue and Cranston Road that improved road integrity while introducing traffic calming measures.
- Completed traffic calming measure near Milwaukee Road and White Avenue to address the excessive and dangerous speeds in that corridor.
- Made significant progress in replacing sub-6" water mains and lead service lines.
- Work continued on the Water Pollution Control Facility project with completion date expected for 2025.
 - Installed new odor control system that uses activated carbon instead of sodium hypochlorite.
- Fiber expansion project design work completed with implementation planned for 2025.
- Completed 8 comprehensive building surveys.
- Added 2 full-time employee to improve maintenance.
- 381 work orders tracked.
- Purchased the fourth electric truck for the Department of Public Works.
- Used 16.8 million cubic feet of biogas from the wastewater treatment process; this reduces the amount of methane released and the volume of natural gas purchased.



GOAL 6: CREATE AND SUSTAIN *ENHANCED COMMUNICATIONS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, WHILE MAINTAINING A POSITIVE IMAGE*

Provide engaging and transparent information to residents and community members using inclusive, modern and strategic methods.

- A. Continue to provide important, timely and accurate information to residents and customers using a variety of communication channels.
- B. Continue to provide a detailed citywide communications, outreach and engagement strategy that involves enhanced internal communications, media relations, and community involvement.
- C. Develop and implement inclusive messaging plans that reflect the diversity of our community.
- D. Update city website content so that it positively showcases our community, reaches a digital audience, is easy to navigate, and contains accurate, updated information.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Launched Beloit Community Academy to connect residents with city departments.
- Introduced neighborhood associations and adopt a trail as resident engagement opportunities.
- The City of Beloit's Facebook page grew by nearly 22% in 2024.
- The top performing post in 2024 was a video of the Henry Dorrbacker's ribbon cutting, which was seen over 100,000 times.
- We received positive news media coverage from projects like the USS Beloit Commissioning, the Ho-Chunk Nation casino ground breaking, Henry Dorrbacker's opening, and the city's initiatives to increase the housing stock in the community.
- The Beloit Report's open rate for newsletters was 48% in 2024, significantly higher than the average 29% open rate for government marketing emails.
- Received an award for outstanding achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting for the fiscal year 2022. Submitted the 2023 report with award decisions being made spring 2025.
- Continue to develop key relationships with outside agencies, non-profit organizations and business leaders to collaborate on messaging efforts.
- City Manager held five satellite City Halls in 2024; these events are designed to meet with the community.
- The City continues to translate social media information into Spanish. The city also disseminates that information to Spanish media outlets and to schools serving the community.



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