



**City of Beloit**  
**2023**  
**STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE**  
March 2024



**Beloit**  
WISCONSIN



*Back: Markese Terrell, Sherry Blakeley, Kevin Day*

*Front: Kevin Leavy, Regina Dunkin, Nancy Forbeck, Yusuf Adama*

# 2023-2024 Beloit City Council

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# Mission & Values

The City of Beloit's 2023 Strategic Plan Update has a five-year outlook with a current year implementation plan.

## Mission

The City of Beloit's mission is to provide outstanding public service.

## Core Organizational Values

- B - Be safe:** Safety comes first. We each play a role in the health, safety and welfare of the public at large and must act in ways that enhance our own personal safety, the safety of our co-workers and those we serve.
- E - Ethical behavior:** We are dedicated to high ethical and moral standards and uncompromising honesty in our dealings with the public and each other. We do what we say we are going to do.
- L - Leadership** is developed and shared throughout the organization with an emphasis on continuous improvement.
- O - Outstanding public service:** We are committed to providing outstanding services to our diverse public and internal customers.
- I - Inclusion of diverse people and ideas, creating a sense of belonging:** We respect the unique contributions of our fellow employees, residents, groups, and organizations throughout the community by seeking out their opinions, talents, and needs.
- T - Teamwork to creatively solve problems:** We are a team of diverse employees, working internally across departments and divisions, as well as externally with our many stakeholders to creatively solve problems.



# Strategic Framework

We are committed to incorporating frameworks of **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging** and **Sustainability** in all areas of the Strategic Plan and in the daily operations of the City of Beloit.

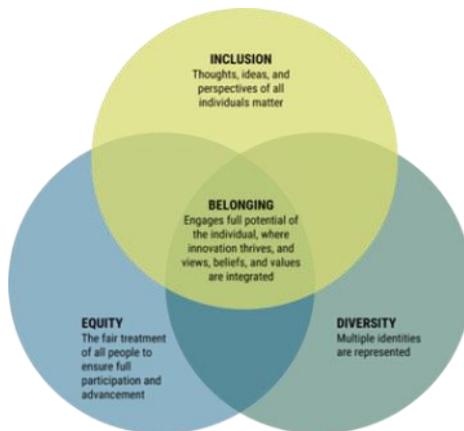
# Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging

## What are equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging?

Inclusion of diverse people and ideas is a core organizational value for the City of Beloit. It is also a lens through which we view everything we do both inside the organization (internal) and for the community (external). This lens requires the understanding and integration of the concepts of diversity, equity and inclusion to achieve the ultimate goal of belonging.

These words are commonly used interchangeably. It is essential to differentiate these terms and to create shared meaning in order to achieve mutual understanding.

One of the ways to achieve this is to acknowledge unconscious bias. All humans have biases based on their experiences and viewpoints. Rather than pretending to be all-inclusive all the time, we must tap into our vulnerability and openly acknowledge biases—no more claiming color, age or gender blindness. Recognizing unintentional bias helps create learning that moves organizations and communities toward inclusion and environments where all individuals feel they can be authentic and belong.





# Sustainability

## What is sustainability?

The City of Beloit supports a simple model of sustainability that consists of three “pillars”: **environmental sustainability, economic sustainability, and social sustainability**. These three pillars are interrelated and true sustained community wellbeing is not achievable without addressing all three.

The most widely accepted definition of sustainable development emerged from the United Nation’s Brundtland Commission, which in 1987 defined it as “**development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.**” This framework establishes the necessity of responsibly managing our environment and resources.

## Environmental Sustainability:

Environmental sustainability requires that we live within the means of our natural resources and work to preserve and improve the natural environment. We must use land, water, and energy in a responsible manner that ensures the health of our natural environment and considers the scarcity of the resources we are consuming. This is achieved by adopting policies and programs that preserve, protect, and enhance our natural environment to protect future generations. The City of Beloit wants to foster a resilient community that maintains and protects existing resources.

## Economic Sustainability:

Economic sustainability means that we make decisions in an economically and fiscally responsible way. We must consider the health of our local economy and strive to establish an environment that allows businesses to grow and thrive in the City of Beloit. The success of the local economy and businesses allows the City of Beloit to maintain financial solvency and continue to provide residents with outstanding public services that ensure a high quality of life. Economic sustainability also means equitable access to employment opportunities. The City of Beloit wants to strengthen the economic outlook and encourage private adoption of sustainable business practices.

## Social Sustainability:

Social sustainability means that we make decisions that are in the best interest of the health and well-being of our residents. The City of Beloit must be committed to building a healthy community. The City of Beloit should provide its residents with information and resources on healthy living and invest in programs that promote healthy lifestyles or prevent negative health consequences. A massive element of social sustainability is also the strength of the community, which is measured by the sum of the social connections and shared values. The City of Beloit wants to improve the health and wellness of Beloit residents and create a shared community value of sustainability and environmental protection.

# Goal 1: Create and Sustain *Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods*



*The City of Beloit Police Department held a successful Heroes Holiday event with Community Action, serving hundreds of Beloit children*

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.

# Key Initiatives

- 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.

# Goal 1: Create and Sustain *Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods* HIGHLIGHTS

## 11.7% Reduction in Vehicle Accidents

Traffic accidents decreased from 920 in 2022 to 812. Traffic enforcement has helped this trend improve over time. Accidents are down 86% from 2018 to 2023.

## -4.7% Reduction in Crime

Total crimes in Beloit decreased from 2,552 in 2022 to 2,432 in 2023. The City experienced significantly less gun-related crimes in 2023 vs. previous years.

## 21 Houses Sold

The city has sold 21 foreclosed houses to ACTS Housing program from 2019-2023. Residents improve our city's housing stock and strengthen their neighborhoods while achieving the dream of homeownership.

## 2 Neighborhood Cleanups Held

City staff joined Community Action in holding the annual neighborhood cleanups in the Hackett and Merrill neighborhoods. Dumpsters were provided to help dispose of larger items.

## CDBGG Programs Help Residents

Hundreds of residents were assisted directly from Community Development Block Grant funds in 2023:

- Job training/life skills: 139 (up 21%)
- Youth programming: 70 (down 73% due to funding changes)
- Assisted by systems navigators: 155 (up 67%)



## **Building Relationships for a Stronger Community**

The City of Beloit Police Department began partnering with students through Community Action's Fresh Start program. These students were at risk of not graduating high school, but through participation in the intensive program, they received their degrees, learned valuable skills, served their neighborhoods, and connected with community. The police department developed positive relationships with these teens and young adults and even held a competitive kickball tournament against the students in May 2023.

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### **21 Private Lead-Service Lines Replaced**

We reduced the number of private lead-service lines in our community by 21 lines through our grant replacement program. This will help continue to provide quality drinking water for our residents.

### **\$1M Increase in Residential Improvements**

In 2023, the value of residential improvement projects totaled \$5.18 million. That's a 24% year over year increase and a 72% increase from 2021.

# Goal 2: Create and Sustain A High Performing Organization



*The City of Beloit Police and Fire Departments helped lead School District of Beloit summer school classes to introduce middle school students to careers in public service.*

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.

# Key Initiatives

- 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.

# *Goal 2: Create and Sustain A High Performing Organization*

## **HIGHLIGHTS**

### **City's Fund Balance Improves**

The City's fund balance, which is its rainy day fund, increased by 1.8% from 2022. Increased fund balance helps improve our bond rating, which will result in lower interest rates.

### **Hired a New City Manager**

The Beloit City Council brought Jerry Gabrielatos in as the newest City Manager to lead the organization.

### **Maintained Bond Rating**

The City of Beloit's Standard & Poor's bond rating was increased in 2020 from an A+ to a AA- rating. This improved bond rating helps the city to borrow at a lower interest rate. This bond rating was maintained in 2023.

### **8,790 Training Hours**

Beloit firefighters trained with other jurisdictions to promote efficiency and expedite responses to all emergencies.

### **Improved Health Fund**

We've put significant effort into our health fund that was running a significant deficit just a few years ago. The year-end balance was \$3.8 million, which aids in the organization's fiscal strength.

### **Winter Weather Emergency Collaboration**

Snow response involves several departments. The city issued 457 tickets for vehicles parked on the street during emergencies. We get the message out in a variety of ways, including to the 2,768 individuals who signed up for text and email notifications.



## 2023 Hiring Report

The City of Beloit hired 42 full-time employees, 10 part-time employees, and 257 seasonal/casual employees. The City of Beloit continues to take appropriate steps to ensure the workforce is more reflective of the community we serve, including:

- Blind recruitments that remove all identification details from applications to avoid any biases.
- Inclusion of a non-binary gender option for reporting.
- Posting positions to several job boards to reach a diverse group of candidates.
- Host jobs fairs and participate in college and local job fairs.
- Share postings on social media and with various community groups serving our city.
- Create interest in city jobs among local students, including through Craftsmen with Character, mock interviews and other school engagements.

# Goal 3: Create and Sustain *Economic and Residential Growth*



*Construction began in 2023 on Beloit College’s Morse Library and Impact Beloit Hub. The City of Beloit supported the college by successfully applying for grant funding on its behalf.*

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

# Key Initiatives

- 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.

# *Goal 3: Create and Sustain Economic and Residential Growth*

## **HIGHLIGHTS**

### **56% Increase in Business Contacts**

The Economic Development team visited 277 businesses in its retention and recruiting efforts, a 56% increase from the 177 visits in 2022 and a 119% increase from the 126 visits in 2021.

### **\$56 Million**

Businesses invested \$56 million in Beloit.

### **168,308 Square Feet**

New investments resulted in 168,308 square footage built in Beloit.

### **45 Sites**

Developers were shown 45 sites in the city's development initiatives in 2023.

### **32**

Developer and broker contacts.

### **40 Jobs**

40 new jobs were created by new development in 2023.

### **4.5 Acres**

Developers purchased 4.5 acres in Beloit for new investments.

### **386 Students Connected to Businesses**

As we seek to build a talent pipeline from within our own community, 386 local students were connected to our businesses in 2023 through programs like Craftsmen with Character and mock interviews at the high school.



*Trick or treating in downtown Beloit.  
Photo Credit: Peer Canvas Photography*

## Recent and Upcoming Economic Development Activity

- Construction completed on the second Wright and Wagner Lofts building (83 units).
- 20 permits issued for single-family residences.
- ABC Supply Training Center is under construction.
- Scooter’s Coffee was completed and opened.
- OrthoMidwest Surgery Center was completed and opened.
- Construction completed on The Lincoln Academy cafeteria addition.
- Club Carwash on Ford Street is under construction.
- NorthStar Campus Expansion - PUD Master Plan approved.
  - 30,000 sq ft building is under construction
  - 53,000 sq ft building is under construction
- The Morse Group Addition - 25,600 sq ft addition is under construction.
- Beloit Precision - 41,000 sq ft new building is under construction
- Welders Supply Company - purchased and rehabbed building on Park Avenue.

City leaders continue to plan for a future Ho-Chunk Casino and Resort project, including through the administration of a \$13.5 million RAISE grant obtained for road improvements near the proposed project.

# Goal 4: Create and Sustain *A High Quality of Life*



*July 4, 2023, Pickleball Tournament at Wootton Park.*

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.

# Key Initiatives

- 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.

# Goal 4: Create and Sustain *A High Quality of Life* HIGHLIGHTS

## **Increased Electric Vehicle Charging Station Usage**

The city's electric vehicle charging stations in the Third Street lot were used 1,221 times, a 24% increase from 2022.

## **134 New Trees**

We planted 134 new trees on city properties and residential terraces.

## **39 Ash Trees Removed**

Forestry removed 39 Ash trees in 2023. There are only 125 trees left to remove. These trees are being removed due to the damage from Emerald Ash Borers.

## **75 Days Open at Pool**

We had a great season at Krueger Pool and were open for 75 days. We were able to maintain staffing for the majority of the season and had limited closures outside of weather-related events.

## **12% Digital Collection Increase**

The Beloit Public Library expanded its electronic offerings from 1.6 million materials in 2022 to 1.8 million materials in 2023.

## **Enhanced Literacy Programs**

Parks & Recreation offered 27 literacy and learning opportunities in its 2023 programming, serving 3,086 participants. Beloit Public Library offered 737 early literacy initiatives and collaborations, serving 12,010 people.



## Enhanced Collaboration with USS Beloit Crew

As the City of Beloit prepares for the future commissioning of the USS Beloit, the city has hosted the crew three times as they have gotten to know the spirit of our community. The Commissioning Committee will begin its work in 2024.

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### City Uses Grant to Address Childcare Crisis

The City received a \$35,000 economic mobility cohort grant from ICMA to develop a plan to address the growing childcare crisis. The strategic plan will help guide necessary changes in the childcare industry.

### 7,586 Program Participants

With the first full year of recreation programming offered post-COVID, we had 87 program offerings with 7,586 participants.

# Goal 5: Create and Sustain *High Quality Infrastructure & Connectivity*



*Department of Public Works 2023-24 snow removal crew.*

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.

# Key Initiatives

- 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

# *Goal 5: Create and Sustain High Quality Infrastructure & Connectivity*

## **HIGHLIGHTS**

### **62 Lead Lines Retired**

As we continue to reduce the number of city-owned lead lines to promote safe drinking water, we retired 62 lead service lines.

### **Progress Continues on Water Pollution Control Facility Project**

Improvements to the Water Pollution Control Facility continued in 2023 with the project expected to be completed in 2025. The project includes improvements to help the facility efficiently serve our customers over the next few decades.

### **Investments in Electric Vehicles Continued**

Beloit Transit began operating its first hybrid bus and the Department of Public Works purchased three electric vehicles.

### **Engaged in Green Tier Legacy Communities**

The City of Beloit is a member of the elite group of Wisconsin communities that are committed to sustainable practices. The city has established its baseline numbers and is identifying areas to advance its sustainability initiatives.

### **47% Increase in Transit Ridership**

Beloit Transit ridership exceeded pre-pandemic rates with 140,201 rides provided, which was a 47% increase from 2022. We also increased the number of bus passes to Beloit students by 50%.



## ARPA Project Status

The Beloit City Council prioritized its \$15.2 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.

- City Infrastructure Improvements: \$11.2 million. Projects include:
  - Ambulance: \$222,000
  - Sub 6” Water Main Replacement: \$2.2 million
  - Lead Service Line Replacement: \$4.3 million
  - Park Improvements: \$2.9 million
- Homeless Response and Prevention: \$2.95 million
  - 839 residents served
  - 65 people provided with overnight shelter
- Non-Profit Building Improvements: \$800,000
- Non-Profit Youth Recreation Programing: \$250,000

Learn more at [www.beloitwi.gov/arpa](http://www.beloitwi.gov/arpa).

## 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.

# Key Initiatives

- 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.

# *Goal 6: Create and Sustain Enhanced Communications & Community Engagement, While Maintaining a Positive Image*

## **HIGHLIGHTS**

### **City Receives PAFR Award**

The City of Beloit introduced Popular Annual Financial Reporting (PAFR) documents starting with financial year 2018. We have received awards for 2018-21 and expect to be notified in spring about 2022's submittal. The 2023 PAFR will be available in July 2024.

### **Maintained Strategic Partnerships**

We work collaboratively to provide unified messaging with other government and non-profit partners. This collaboration can happen during a time of crisis and during a time of celebration.

### **City Increases Reach Through Social Media**

The City of Beloit social media pages continue to grow each year. The following pages reached more people in 2023:

- Beloit, WI government: 8,718 followers; up 14.5%
- Beloit Fire: 8,248 followers; up 8.3%
- Beloit Parks & Rec: 7,313 followers; up 25.3%
- Beloit Public Works: 2,768 followers; up 10.8%
- Beloit Police: 34,980 followers; up 6.6%



### Satellite City Hall

City Manager Jerry Gabrielatos started his Satellite City Hall initiative to meet with residents throughout the community. These pop-up City Hall events have been held several times on both sides of the city with more to come!

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#### Spanish Engagement

In an effort to provide a welcoming and inclusive environment, the City of Beloit began translating surveys, social media posts, flyers and news releases into Spanish. This information is also disseminated to Spanish-speaking families through several niche media outlets and the School District of Beloit.

#### Beloit Report Open Rates Above Industry Average

The Beloit Report open rate is 45%; this is significantly higher than the average 28.77% open rate for government marketing emails.



# CONNECT WITH THE CITY OF БЕЛОИТ



## Address

City Hall  
100 State St., Beloit, Wisconsin



## Website

[www.beloitwi.gov](http://www.beloitwi.gov)



## Beloit Report

[beloitwi.gov/citymanager](http://beloitwi.gov/citymanager)



## Hours

8am-4:30pm  
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