



BC City Connection

Bi-monthly newsletter for the Battle Creek community

City Manager's Corner with Rebecca Fleury



It is hard to believe August is upon us. I hope you all are enjoying the last days of summer. There still are many **great summer events** planned, and I hope you are able to attend. These include Cruise the Gut on Aug. 11, International Summerfest on Aug. 18, and Backyard Burgers and Brewsfest on Aug. 25, to name just a few.

August also means back-to-school planning and shopping. Don't forget that there are many great, local places that can help you get ready. **Shopping local** helps our local businesses stay in business!

The **Blue Ribbon Advisory Committee** has made their final recommendations in a report, dated July 3. Learn more about that on the back page of this newsletter.

A workshop on the Committee's recommendations will be set for a date in September, later than anticipated because, as I write this, the commission is in the process of replacing the **Ward 5 seat** vacated by Dave Walters, who resigned on July 15. The selection process begins with interviews at a special meeting July 31. You may already have seen the result of this via the local media, and you can find the information on our website, battlecreekmi.gov.

Our **new Police Department** headquarters opens this month! For those who will see this in time, please join us at the public open house, on Friday, Aug. 10. A ribbon cutting is planned for noon, with open building hours of 1-3 and 4-6 p.m. Tour the new building, and learn more about each police division. You'll see videos and more on our website and social media, so please stay tuned!

Also remember to **get out and vote** on Aug. 7, mid-term primary Election Day. The general election is Nov. 6.

There is much going on in your city, and I hope you take part in as much as possible! Enjoy!

City Calendar

For more, visit www.battlecreekmi.gov

- **Board of Appeals**, 1 p.m., City Hall: Sept. 19, Oct. 17
- **Bicycle Advisory Committee**, 3 p.m., City Hall: Sept. 20, Oct. 18
- **City Commission**, 7 p.m., City Hall: Sept. 4, Sept. 18, Oct. 2, Oct. 16
- **Civil Service Commission**, 4 p.m., City Hall: Sept. 24, Oct. 22
- **Dangerous Buildings**, 1 p.m., City Hall: Sept. 12, Oct. 10
- **Historic District Commission**, 4 p.m., City Hall: Sept. 10, Oct. 8
- Historic District **petition deadline**: Sept. 21, Oct. 19
- **Human Relations Board**, 3:30 p.m., City Hall: Sept. 19, Oct. 17
- **Planning Commission**, 4 p.m., City Hall: Sept. 26, Oct. 24
- Planning Commission **petition deadline**: Sept. 28, Oct. 19
- **Police/Fire Retirement System Board**, 10 a.m., City Hall: Sept. 17, Oct. 15
- **Sustainable BC Committee**, 1 p.m., City Hall: Sept. 24, Oct. 22
- **Zoning Board of Appeals**, 4 p.m., City Hall: Sept. 11, Oct. 9
- Zoning Board **petition deadline**: Sept. 14, Oct. 19
- City offices **CLOSED** for Labor Day: Sept. 3. Transit bus/van services canceled for the day; Waste Management closed, with one-day pickup delay the rest of the week.
- **Household hazardous waste collection**, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Sept. 8, county building parking lot, 315 W. Green St. For those living in Calhoun County. Details at calhouncountyrecycling.com.
- **Fall cleanup**, Sept. 17-21, at the curbside for those within city limits. Place items on regular trash day.
- **Movies in the Park**: activities start 8 p.m., lawn of Mill Race Park, dusk—Sept. 29, Coco
- **Krazy for the Kazoo** river cleanup, 8 a.m.-12 p.m., Oct. 6, starting at Bailey Park. More info at bcwater.org.
- **City scrap tire collection**, 4-7 p.m., Oct. 8, Dept. of Public Works, 150 S. Kendall. More details to be released.
- **BCPD Trunk or Treat**, Oct. 31. Details to be announced.
- **BC Cargo**: Full Blast parking lot at McCamly & Hamblin, Wed-Sun thru Sept. 2; 11a-3p Sat, Sept. 8-Dec. 8. More info: smallbusinessinfo@battlecreekmi.gov
- **Yard waste curbside pickup** for those within city limits, March 26-Nov. 30. Place in specially marked containers and/or paper yard waste bags. 50-lb limit each.

The Battle Creek Police Department is moving!

After beginning construction in May of 2017, we are ready to celebrate the opening of the new Battle Creek Police Department, **34 N. Division St.** Some neighbors may remember that the BCPD was previously located at this address!

Hope to see you there soon. We hope to complete the move in mid-August.





City Hall
10 N. Division St., Battle Creek, MI
49014

www.battlecreekmi.gov

- City Manager**, 269-966-3378
Fax, 269-966-6654
- City Clerk**, 269-966-3348
- Code Compliance**, 269-966-3387
- Fire Department** administration, 195
E. Michigan Ave., 269-966-3519
- Police Department**, 20 N. Division
St., 269-966-3322
Non-emergency, 269-781-0911
- Department of Public Works**, 150
S. Kendall St., 269-966-3343
- Recreation/Full Blast Fitness Center**,
35 Hamblin Ave., 269-966-3431
- Transit**, 339 W. Michigan Ave., 269-
966-3474
- Utility Billing**, 269-966-3366
- W.K. Kellogg Airport**, 15551 S.
Airport Road, 269-966-3470

City Commission 2017-2020

- Mayor Mark Behnke, at-large
269-441-7663
- John Griffin, Ward 1
269-358-4756
- Lynn Ward Gray, Ward 2
269-830-2456
- Kate Flores, Ward 3
269-832-2912
- Christopher Simmons, Ward 4
269-274-8993
- Jim Lance, Ward 5
269-234-1016
- Susan Baldwin, at-large
269-963-6901
- Kaytee Faris, at-large
734-330-6236
- Sherry Sofia, at-large
269-967-8272

The BC City Connection is compiled & designed by Communications Manager Jessica VanderKolk: 269-966-3378 / PublicInput@battlecreekmi.gov.

Connect with us!

City of Battle Creek, Michigan

@BattleCreekCity

City of Battle Creek
Battle Creek Police Department

PublicInput@battlecreekmi.gov
See our website for a full staff directory.

Learn more about city departments and services on Commissioner Lynn Ward Gray's AccessVision TV show, *Keeping You Informed*. It appears on Channels 17 and 917 at 6 p.m. Wednesdays, and online, accessvision.tv.

August: Be Safe Battle Creek initiative
September: Tour of the new Police Department

Spotlight on: Blue Ribbon Advisory Committee

The City Commission created this year's Blue Ribbon Advisory Committee by resolution on Jan. 2, with direction to consider potential changes to the city charter, and make recommendations to the commission. This group has 18 members, with two appointed by each commissioner.

The focus of the committee was selection of mayor and vice mayor, size of the commission, staggering commission terms, length of terms, gendered charter language, and any other related issues.

City staff provided historic city data, as well as comparable data from other municipalities. Staff also created a survey to collect public input on the focus issues; it received more than 1,300 online and mailed in responses.

Following are the committee's recommendations to the commission. A City Commission workshop to discuss them will be scheduled, likely in September, after the Ward 5 commissioner seat vacancy is filled.

The **report is available** at the city's website, battlecreekmi.gov. Navigate to Your Government;

Agendas, Minutes & Videos; and choose the July 17 online agenda. The report is attached.

Watch the Blue Ribbon Advisory Committee meetings at the AccessVision website, accessvision.tv. Click On Demand, then Government Meetings on the right side of the page.

Mayor & vice mayor

A majority of the committee (with a vote of 12-4) supported a recommendation that the commission consider direct election of the mayor and vice mayor.

Members expressed a preference that the mayor and vice mayor be determined with the top vote-getter as mayor, and the second top vote-getter as vice mayor, instead of a separate ballot question.

Size of commission

The committee agreed to stay with nine commissioners, with a vote of 14-2.

Members recommend changing to seven ward commissioners, serving specific geographies around the city, and two at-large commissioners, to be the mayor and vice mayor.

A comment about having seven ward commissioners was that it

would allow wards to be drawn as more representative of the city's neighborhoods.

Length of & staggered terms

The committee unanimously voted to recommend that commission terms remain at two years, non-staggered (all commissioner terms expire at the same time), with elections every other year.

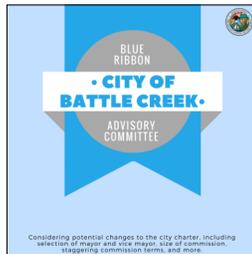
Some members, in favor of staggering terms, said it would avoid the possibility of complete commission turnover. However, others said that, if complete turnover happened, it would be the will of the voters.

Gendered charter language

The committee unanimously voted to recommend revising the charter with ungendered language. Members noted that the time has come to make this change, and that it will promote inclusivity.

Other issues

The committee briefly discussed commissioner term limits. Without taking a vote, members determined that term limits would be placed by voters, when making their choices at the polls.



Railroad crossing reconstruction news —

At this time, Capital Avenue SW will be closed at the tracks, near downtown, for two weeks — Aug. 27 to Sept. 7. Elm Street will be closed at the tracks for two weeks — Sept. 10-24. Stay tuned to local media and the city's website/social media for updates as we near these dates. These projects were accepted as part of an MDOT Office of Rail program, and city funds will not be used for the improvements.