

# Battle Creek Current



February 2015

## City Manager's Corner



*City Manager Rebecca Fleury*

The winter season has returned to the city! We want to be sure everyone is safe and understands the importance of good winter maintenance.

One of the ways to keep people safe is to clear your sidewalks in a timely fashion. On Oct. 21, 2014, the City Commission passed a new ordinance that offers another way to clear sidewalks—Chapter 450 Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs). This ordinance permits the seasonal use of ORVs for the purpose of clearing snow and/or ice from sidewalks in the city's residential areas.

This is allowed from Oct. 1 to May 1, the most likely dates of snow/ice events.

One goal is to achieve better compliance with the city's ordinance requiring citizens to keep sidewalks adjacent to their homes clear of snow/ice. Another goal is to let neighbors use an ORV to assist other in clearing snow/ice from driveways and sidewalks without fear of violating the law.

On another winter safety note, the Fire Department would appreciate your help clearing snow from fire hydrants. Winter creates a challenge in keeping them clear for use during emergencies.

Thanks to the men and women in our Department of Public Works who work hard to keep our streets clear and thanks for your patience after large snow events!

Have a safe and prosperous new year!

## Keeping the winter wonderland safe, clear for all residents

It's winter in Battle Creek and we've got some tips and reminders to keep everyone safe and keep city streets and sidewalks clear for all forms of traffic this winter.

- When snow falls, it's up to the property owner adjacent to the sidewalk to clear it before noon after an overnight snow, and by noon the following day for daytime snow.



- When ice forms, please remove it as soon as possible, or salt it in the meantime, to protect pedestrians.

- It is a resident's responsibility to clear snow away from his/her mailbox so that mail may be delivered.

- Please help our Fire and Transit departments, if you can, by clearing snow around a hydrant on your property, or at a bus stop nearby.

- Please note that shoveling or plowing snow into the street is a hazard to passing vehicles and violates state law.

- Plowing to make our streets safe is our top priority. The same crews that plow also clear city-owned sidewalks as time allows.

- Street plowing priorities are state trunklines and major streets first, then BC Transit bus routes, then residential streets and, finally, cul-de-sacs and alleys.

We want to thank residents and business owners for their patience this winter and encourage neighbors to work together to keep the city a safe place for everyone. While last winter was extreme, if everyone keeps up with his/her properties, it'll go a long way to keeping ice and snow from building up.

If you have concerns about plowing, call the Streets Division at (269) 966-3507.

If you have Code concerns, including ice and snow on sidewalks, call (269) 966-3387.

For more information, see our website, watch local media outlets and keep up with us on social media.

### Feb./March Calendar —

- 2/3—City Commission, 7 p.m., City Hall
- 2/5—What's Brewing in Battle Creek with mayor/vice mayor, 5:30 p.m., Ritzee Hamburgers, 1463 W. Michigan Ave.
- 2/9—Historic District Commission, 4 p.m., City Hall
- 2/10—Zoning Board of Appeals, 4 p.m., City Hall
- 2/10—City Commission/Planning Commission workshop to discuss Capital Improvement Plan, 6 p.m., Dept. of Public Works
- 2/13—Zoning Board & Historic District petition deadline for March
- 2/16—City offices **CLOSED** for Presidents Day. Bus and van services running.
- 2/17—City Commission work session, 5:30 p.m., City Hall  
City Commission, 7 p.m., City Hall
- 3/1—“Battle Creek” TV show premieres, 10 p.m., CBS
- 3/3—City Commission, 7 p.m., City Hall
- 3/8—Daylight Saving Time begins
- 3/9—Historic District Commission, 4 p.m., City Hall
- 3/10—Zoning Board of Appeals, 4 p.m., City Hall
- 3/17—City Commission, 7 p.m., City Hall
- 3/20—Zoning Board & Historic District petition deadline for April.
- 3/30—Yard waste curb pickup begins

Mayor Deb Owens holds office hours from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Monday and Wednesday in City Hall Room 202.

The Battle Creek Current is compiled and designed by Communications Specialist Jessica VanderKolk: (269) 966-3378 or [PublicInput@battlecreek.gov](mailto:PublicInput@battlecreek.gov).



## City of Battle Creek

City Hall

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

[www.battlecreekmi.gov](http://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

**Parks & 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

Mayor Deb Owens, Ward 1  
(269) 420-4031  
[owensfamily49017@aol.com](mailto:owensfamily49017@aol.com)

Vice Mayor Lynn Ward Gray, Ward 2  
(269) 830-2456  
[g4bcnow@gmail.com](mailto:g4bcnow@gmail.com)

Susan Baldwin, at-large  
(269) 963-6901  
[susanbaldwinbc@gmail.com](mailto:susanbaldwinbc@gmail.com)

Mark Behnke, at-large  
(269) 441-7663  
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(269) 339-1868  
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Andy Helmboldt, at-large  
(269) 660-9659  
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Dean Newsome, Ward 3  
(269) 924-6794  
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Michael Sherzer, Ward 4  
(269) 420-0384  
[sherzer4bc@gmail.com](mailto:sherzer4bc@gmail.com)

Dave Walters, at-large  
(269) 209-0626  
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## Connect with us!



[City of Battle Creek, Michigan](#)  
[Battle Creek Fire Department](#)  
[Battle Creek Parks & Recreation](#)  
[Battle Creek Police Department](#)  
[Battle Creek Transit](#)



[@BattleCreekCity](#)  
[@BCESMI](#)  
[@BattleCrkParks](#)  
[@BattleCreekPD](#)



[PublicInput@battlecreekmi.gov](mailto:PublicInput@battlecreekmi.gov)  
[CityClerk@battlecreekmi.gov](mailto:CityClerk@battlecreekmi.gov)  
See our website for a full staff directory.



Learn more about city departments and services on Vice Mayor 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](http://accessvision.tv).

February: Assessing  
March: W.K. Kellogg Airport

## Watershed photo contest

There's still time to enter the Battle Creek Area Clean Water Partners photo contest! Photos may be taken during any season between July 2014 and July 2015, with submissions due July 31. Photographers may submit one photo per season and the winners will receive \$100 prizes or a \$300 grand prize.

See [www.bcwater.org](http://www.bcwater.org) for more information or call our environmental programs coordinator, Tiffany Welsh, at (269) 966-0712. Photos can be sent or emailed to Welsh: Battle Creek Department of Public Works, 150 S. Kendall St., Battle Creek, MI 49017 or [tawelsh@battlecreekmi.gov](mailto:tawelsh@battlecreekmi.gov).



## Get to know: Assessing

**Assessor: Steve Hudson**  
**Phone: (269) 966-3369**

The Assessing Division is responsible for keeping records on ownership, addresses, Principal Residence (Homestead) Exemptions, sales and land and building details for about 25,000 properties located in the city.

State law requires our assessor every year to value all property (not specifically exempt) at 50 percent of its fair market value.

Fair market value is the price negotiated by an informed buyer and informed seller for a property, in its current condition. For example, a house with a market value of \$100,000 would have an assessed value of \$50,000.

The city, schools, county, library, community college and

state rely on these annual assessed values to generate property tax revenue, considered the fairest way available for collecting money to finance these public services.

The assessor determines a property's value based on the sales of similar properties within a neighborhood during the two previous

years. The division updates the value estimates/assessments each year.

State law also requires assessors to send

notices to taxpayers whose taxable or assessed values have increased. As a courtesy, we also send notices to taxpayers whose values have decreased. It is a

**Notice of Assessment, Taxable Value and Property Classification**. It is not a tax bill.

These are sent out in the mail during the fourth week of February.

If you agree with the information in the notice, no further action is necessary. However, if you disagree, you have the right to appeal. We encourage residents to first contact the Assessing Division with questions and concerns so staff can talk you through how your value was determined.

Those who still wish to appeal can do so to the Board Of Review, a group of five city residents appointed by the City Commission. They meet each year during the second week of March to review property values and hear appeals.

Once the board adjourns, it certifies the assessment roll, which sets the current year's summer and winter tax rolls.

Please call us with your questions or visit us online at [www.battlecreekmi.gov](http://www.battlecreekmi.gov). Navigate to City Government, Departments, [Assessor](#).

