

# BELDING BUGLE

July, 2017

## Belding Poised for Growth

The City of Belding is on the cusp of significant growth. In the last two years, we have experienced an unusual interest in the city.

It appears that, in the midst of the recent spectacular growth cycle of the Grand Rapids metropolitan area, more and more people long for the advantages of small and easily accessible towns. Tree-lined streets, beautiful parks within walking distance, varied residential living options, and friendly and personal environments are attractive features that draw families to cities like Belding.

Urban planners tell us that four key factors are required to produce the kind of community experience that attracts people to small cities:

- ◇ Attractive and reasonably priced residential neighborhoods.
- ◇ A variety of retail and commercial opportunities
- ◇ A strong industrial base.
- ◇ Quality of life opportunities that create interest in this community.

Belding has beautiful neighborhoods and a wide variety of housing types. Unfortunately, over the last 15 years or so, the city has not been committed to enforce ordinances that lead to attractive and financially stable housing units and neighborhoods. While the city has passed ordinances over the years with minimum standards for home maintenance, without a well-planned and reasonable code enforcement program some homes will be allowed to deteriorate to the point that entire neighborhoods are affected visually and financially. This has happened here and needs to be the focus of attention.

Approximately a year ago, the city appointed an enforcement officer to "clean up the city". Our goal was to softly enforce maintenance codes. We have endeavored to work with home owners in accomplishing a desirable end product rather than having a police state mentality. The response has been very encouraging. In the last year, over 45 homes have been re-painted or re-sided. Much of the junk stored in front and side yards have been removed. The condition of our city and its

neighborhoods is remarkably better. We still have work to do but progress is being made.

Side issues, also covered by ordinances, are front yard parking and signs in the public right-of-way, both of which contribute to unsightly neighborhoods. The Police Department and DPW have been instructed to begin enforcing these provisions also. The only exception to the sign ordinance is garage sales that allow signs in the public right-of-way.

Retail opportunities have been focused on the M-44 corridor and, to a limited extent, to the downtown area. The Covered Village Mall has not lived up to its potential but plans are afoot to find solutions for the issues that have so long escaped implementation. Continued support for local retail establishments is critical as both areas develop new and interesting retail outlets.

Our industrial base is very strong with many of the 21 local companies having been established by Belding based entrepreneurs. Since it is estimated that 85% of new industrial growth in a community comes from the expansion of local companies, our challenge is to make sure that every possible advantage is available and communicated to local industries. We are closely aligned with the Ionia County Economic Alliance, the Right Place program, the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council and the Montcalm Community College to make sure that our local companies have access to state and federal programs that are designed to enhance their ability to grow and prosper.

The restructured Belding Area Chamber of Commerce serves as a source of information and growth for the entire community and the spokesman for the community events that bring interest and visitors to Belding.

Finally, we need to understand what "quality of life" advantages are available to our community. These items are extremely difficult to define as they encompass those things that make a community interesting and attractive and set it apart from others. Quality of life opportunities are usually the very activities that attract visitors and tourists to our community. Certainly our excellent park system is at the core of quality of life features in Beld-

ing. We continue to add to the viability to the park system by seeking additional features that will add to its desirability. Under study currently is a joint kayak facility serving Belding and Greenville to make better use of and celebrate our beautiful Flat River. We are also studying the possibility of expanding the Farmers Market in the downtown area. The unique new Welcome Sign and Clock Post have added a degree of quality and interest to the downtown area. Belding's pedestrian walkway system in addition to the Fred Meijer Trail offers those who seek an outdoor experience the opportunity to do so. Finally, the City Council has embarked on the development of an interesting mural on the Library parking lot wall that will trace the history of the city from its inception to the current period in which we live.

The Belding Area School system also serves as a core "quality of life" function representing the heart of the community and a reminder of excellence in education.

Historically, we have much to be thankful for as we still enjoy the fruits of our history in beautifully restored and preserved buildings like the Alvah N. Belding Library, the Belrockton Museum, the Depot, the City Hall, Richardson Mills, and hopefully the recently purchased Basket Factory.

Belding is a community on the move with a bright and exciting future. Missing in the discussion so far, however, is the most important factor that provides the glue holding all of these things together - Belding's engaged and expectant citizenry. Volunteers physically and financially support virtually all of the programs above. Interested citizens routinely appear before the City Council and various boards and commissions to express their unique view of the city and the resources required to make it successful.

As we look to the future and the challenges before us, we may find inspiration in the words of Daniel Burnham, architect, city planner and designer of the 1893 Chicago World's Fair: "Make no little plans for they have no magic to stir men's blood. Make big plans. Aim high in hope and work remembering that a noble, logical plan, once recorded, will never die".

## Music at East Riverside Park - Mondays from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

	<u>Performer</u>	<u>Genre</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>
July 3	Holiday week - No event		
July 10	The Larsen Brothers	Country/Gospel	Leppinks Food Centers
July 17	Peat in the Creal	Irish/Folk	Chemical Bank
July 24	Dusk	Light Rock	Mercantile Bank
July 31	Kari Ann & Lost Creek	Gospel/Folk	Gus Macker
August 7	Overtone	Classic Rock	Belding Chamber of Commerce
August 14	Ionia Community Band	Big Band	Ron and Carla Gunderson
August 21	Sweet Swing Ensemble	Jazz	Ernie and Karen Thomas

Many thanks to our June sponsors - Bruce and Lynne Brown, Johnson Feuerstein Funeral Home, Daniel R. Tift, D.D.S., and the Belding Family! Please join us for free popcorn and chance to win a door prize each week!

## Belding Fire Department

### Bon Fire Permits

Please contact the Fire Dept. at 794-1900, Ext. 212 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. for the annual Bon Fire permit. Please speak with the on-duty firefighter at the fire station to renew an existing permit. Brushfires or the burning of yard wastes is strictly prohibited within the city limits.

### Severe Weather

The City's weather warning sirens will be tested on the 1st Saturday of every month at 12 p.m. starting in April and continuing throughout the severe weather season.

The National Weather Service will issue a tornado watch when conditions are right for the formation of a tornado. This is the time to begin preparations. The weather siren will be sounded when a tornado warning has been issued for our area. A tornado warning means a tornado has been sighted and that persons should immediately take cover.

### Smoke Detectors

City of Belding ordinance requires working smoke detectors in all existing residential occupancies, which include all one and two-family dwellings and apartment

houses. Detectors must be located on the wall or ceiling in each room used for sleeping purposes, on the wall or ceiling outside of each separate sleeping area, and one on each floor of the dwelling unit. Installation information may be obtained by contacting the Fire Dept. Check regularly and change batteries.

### Paid /On-Call Firefighters

The Belding Fire Dept. is currently accepting applications for the position of paid/on-call firefighter. See the City of Belding website for application information at [www.belding.us](http://www.belding.us)

## Belding Police Department

All of the city parks, as well as the trail system, are being patrolled by the police department. If you observe any criminal or inappropriate activity in the parks, please contact the police department. Do Not Wait to Call!

Please obey the posted speed, which is 25 mph in the city unless posted otherwise. That is important as you drive the streets especially now, with children out of school for the summer. They will be out walking, riding bicycles and playing in the yard and they could dart into the street at any time.

Avoid scams by not talking to telemarketers. If you did not make the call then you are not obligated to give out any personal information. Get it in writing! Remember, if the offer sounds "too good to be true", it probably is. Don't be pressured.

Take some time to check your home for security. Have locks on doors and windows, trim bushes and shrubbery, and place lights on timers. If you are going to be away for an extended period of time, please contact the police department and request that your property be placed on the vacation property inspection during your absence. While you are away, make sure neighbors also watch your residence, stop mail delivery, and have grass mowed.

Parking enforcement has been stepped up throughout the city. There are many violations, including vehicles that are parked facing traffic or left wheels to the curb or edge of roadway. Front yard parking is being strictly enforced. No front yard parking, vehicles must be parked in the driveway!

## Summer Taxes

The 2017 summer property taxes were mailed on July 3, 2017 and are due by Tuesday, August 15, 2017. After this date, a 3% penalty will be added to the property tax bill.

Application for deferment of summer taxes may be made if one of the following are met: 62 years of age, Paraplegic, Hemiplegic, Quadriplegic, Eligible Serviceperson, Eligible Veteran, Eligible Widow, Widower, Blind Person, Totally and Permanently Disabled. The eligible party must apply for the deferment of summer taxes by filling out the application before the August 15, 2017 due date.

## Dial-A-Ride

Belding Dial-A-Ride will be working very hard this summer to provide fast and efficient service for all of our riders!

Don't forget that you can purchase tickets and tokens in advance for future rides! All tickets are 10 rides per ticket. Tokens can

be purchased per ride.

Rates (per trip):

Student (4-17)	\$2.00
Adult (18-61)	\$2.50
Seniors/Disabled (62+)	\$1.25

Information about our bus services can be obtained by calling 616-794-3278 to our dispatch center weekdays from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Brochures about our services are available at the Pere Marquette Depot, 100 Depot St.

## Belding Housing Commission

Belding Housing Commission administers rental properties for eligible senior citizens, handicapped and disabled individuals, and families with or without children. Questions regarding availability of rental units and eligibility for admission may be directed to the administrative office by

phone 616-794-1740, Monday through Friday or by visiting the office located at 41 Belhaven Avenue during window hours from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Rent is offered on a flat or income basis. Preferences apply for admission in ac-

cordance with federal regulations and agency policy.

Belding Housing Commission is an Equal Housing Opportunity agency.

## Code Enforcement/Animal Control

Spring and summer bring an increase of animal complaints and it is important for residents to remember to keep their dogs and cats confined to their yard. City ordinance stipulates that there are to be no more than two dogs and two cats per residence without a special permit. Animals walked in the city park areas must be on a leash and waste must be collected and disposed of.

Garbage and trash in bags or receptacles

may not be put to the curb earlier than 24 hours before pick up day. Emptied containers MUST NOT remain at the curb and MUST be removed within 24 hours of pick-up.

### Blight:

Grass can be no longer than 10 inches, and leaves must be raked.

No unlicensed or inoperable vehicles are allowed within the city limits, unless

stored within a four sided enclosed building. The storage of building materials outside of an enclosed building is prohibited without a building permit.

Any chemical containers (oil, gas, coolant, etc.) must be disposed of in an environmentally safe manner. Outside storage of these chemicals is a violation of City Ordinance.

## Library Happenings

July 10, 17, 24 @ 6 p.m. - Toddler Time - 3 years - Kindergarten - stories, music, activities and crafts

July 11, 18, 25 @ 10 a.m. - Toddler Time

July 12 @ 2 p.m. - Castle Building for 1-5 grade - build and decorate your castle

July 13, 20, 27 @ 10 a.m. - Little Wiggles - Birth to 2 years - stories, songs, free play

July 14 @ 2 p.m. - Teen Craft Day - take home crafts everyone will enjoy making

July 19 @ 2 p.m. - Habitat for Humanity for 1-5 grade - talk about their role in community and help kids build their own bird

feeder.

July 26 @ 2-4 p.m. Touch a Truck for all ages - hands on opportunity to explore a variety of machines and to meet the people who build, protect, and serve Belding and the surrounding communities.

July 28 @ 2 p.m. - Minute-to-Win-It - Teens - simple games using common household items. Snacks too!

July 31 @ 5 p.m. - Summer Reading Program Finale Party - Teens - pizza, prizes, games and activities

August 11 @ 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. - Teen Flix

Star Wars Marathon - Teens - snacks, crafts and games during Star Wars Marathon.

August 16 @ 2-4 p.m. - Drop in Crafts - All ages - use your imagination and our craft supplies and create something amazing!

August 21 @ 1-3:30 p.m. - Eclipsing - All ages. Pick up your eclipse viewing glasses courtesy of Star\_Net's NASA @ My Library and join us for activities and eclipse viewing. Bring a picnic blanket and stay for the whole event or stop by for a quick peek!



# CITY of BELDING

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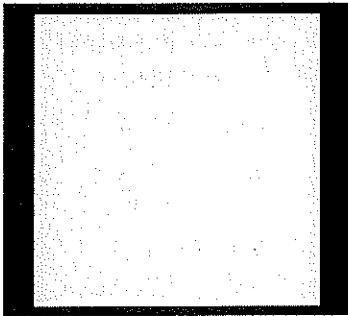
Phone: 616-794-1900, Ext. 210  
Fax: 616-794-0091  
E-mail: kthomas@ci.belding.mi.us

### City Hall Office Hours:

Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

LOCAL POSTAL CUSTOMER

BELDING, MI 48809



## Special Events

August 5 and 6, 2017

Gus Macker Tournament

September 1- 4, 2017

Belding Labor Day Celebration

## Belding Museum

Open the 1st Sunday of each month from 1-4 p.m. The museum is also open on September 2, 3 and 4 from 1-4 p.m. for the Labor Day weekend.

## Children's Museum

The museum will be open through August on the 1st Sunday and every Wednesday from 1-4 p.m., and beginning in September on the 1st Wednesday and Sunday of each month from 1-4 p.m. The museum is also open on September 2, 3 and 4 from 1-4 p.m. for the Labor Day weekend.

## Adopt-A-Spot

The City of Belding wishes to thank all the generous volunteers for sharing their time, talent and treasure in caring for the Adopt-A-Spot landscaping areas surrounding the Covered Village Mall. Your efforts are truly appreciated in making such a dramatic improvement in the appearance of our downtown area!

A special thank you is extended to Katherine Henry, who has dedicated much time, and has been very committed to communicating with and coordinating with the many volunteers since the inception of the program through the DDA.

Volunteer efforts make such a difference in our community and for that we are very grateful!

## Fire Hydrant Flushing

Hydrants will be flushed on September 10-13 from midnight to 7 a.m. If you experience discolored water, please flush the cold water faucet closest to the water meter until the water runs clear.

## Dept. Public Works

### Yard Waste/Leaves

Yard waste and leaves must be placed in biodegradable bags and will be picked up every Friday through November 22, 2017.

Bags must not exceed 35 pounds and cannot contain other materials, such as rocks, shingles, garbage, sticks or brush. Please place bags at the curb by Friday at 7 a.m., but no earlier than 6 p.m. on Thursday.

Loose leaves will be picked up from October 16 - November 22, 2017.

### Brush Pick-Up

July 24, August 21, September 25 and October 23

Please place brush at the street by 7 a.m. on the above dates, but no earlier than the 18th of the month. The total amount of brush and limbs per household shall not exceed 10 cubic yards per month. Do not include other materials with the brush.

To ensure pick-up, please locate brush in a clear area, away from any obstacles and overhead wires.