



City Council Study Session

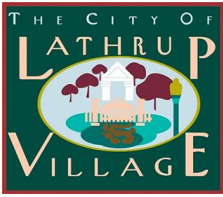
Monday, September 23, 2024 at 6:00 PM

27400 Southfield Road, Lathrup Village, Michigan 48076

1. **Call to Order** by Mayor Garrett
2. **Discussion Items**
 - A. Finance Review Committee Recommendation
 - B. Communication Plan
 - C. Town Hall Scheduling - Plans & Priorities Feedback
 - D. Short Term Rental Enforcement
 - E. Eastbound 11 Mile Paving Project
 - F. Service Line Marketing Agreement Amendment
3. **Public Comments**
4. **Mayor and Council Comments**
5. **Adjourn**

ADDRESSING THE CITY COUNCIL

- Your comments shall be made during times set aside for that purpose.
- Stand or raise a hand to indicate that you wish to speak.
- When recognized, state your name and direct your comments and/or questions to any City official in attendance..
- Each person wishing to address the City Council and/or attending officials shall be afforded one opportunity of up to three (3) minutes duration during the first and last occasion for citizen comments and questions and one opportunity of up to three (3) minutes duration during each public hearing. Comments made during public hearings shall be relevant to the subject for which the public hearings are held.
- In addition to the opportunities described above, a citizen may respond to questions posed to him or her by the Mayor or members of the Council, provided members have been granted the floor to pose such questions.
- No speaker may make personal or impertinent attacks upon any officer, employee, or City Council member or other Elected Official, that is unrelated to the manner in which the officer, employee, or City Council member or other Elected Official, performs his or her duties.
- No person shall use abusive or threatening language toward any individual when addressing the City Council.
- Any person who violates this section shall be directed by the Mayor to be orderly and silent. If a person addressing the Council refuses to become silent when so directed, such person may be deemed by the Mayor to have committed a “breach of the peace” by disrupting and impeding the orderly conduct of the public meeting of the City Council and may be ordered by the Mayor to leave the meeting. If the person refuses to leave as directed, the Mayor may direct any law enforcement officer who is present to escort the violator from the meeting.



City of Lathrup Village
27400 Southfield Road
Lathrup Village, MI 48076
www.lathrupvillage.org | (248) 557-2600

TO: Mayor & City Council
FROM: Mike Greene – City Administrator
DATE: September 23, 2024
RE: Study Session

Finance Review Committee Recommendation

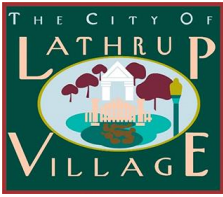
Mayor Pro-Tem Kantor will provide a high-level overview of the Finance Review Committee’s recommendation, and the Council can discuss their initial thoughts on the recommendation. A formal presentation from the entire committee will take place during the regular meeting.

Communication Plan

Councilmember Hammond and staff have continued discussions regarding a formal Communication Plan for the City. These discussions have led to reviewing the neighboring community’s plans as a template. Included in your packet is the City of Berkley’s Communication Plan which has been the plan we intend to build ours from. It is understood that Berkley is a different community from Lathrup Village and the staffing levels to manage such a plan and the services they offer vary, however, the structure of the plan is solid. Below are initial thoughts on items that will need to be addressed when modifying the Berkley plan to meet our needs. The purpose of the discussion is to gauge the rest of the Council’s vision of the Communication Plan and to see if we are heading in the right direction before committing an excess of staff and Council time to finalize this plan.

- It's too long. A communication plan should be clear, concise, and readable in less than 30 minutes.
• Many typos and grammatical errors. A Communication Plan should not include typos and grammar mistakes. It should be clear that it was crafted with care to provide clear communication itself. Typos and grammar mistakes send a message that not even the plan itself was done carefully. Mistakes may happen and typos may exist. It will be important to quickly identify them and remediate them.
• Chapter 1: Communication Plan Overview and the Community Engagement Officer
o We don't have a Community Engagement Officer position. Perhaps 1 or 2 staff members or residents could be assigned to share the role.
o Introduction
▪ Makes it clear what the intent of the document and policy is.
▪ Final paragraph: "Strategic communication is an essential service provided by the City..."
• Should include something like "fosters a method for clear, efficient, valuable information between the city and its citizens and stakeholders"
o Purpose:
▪ We could customize it to better reflect the purpose of Lathrup Village
o Image, Identity, and Perception:
▪ Be cautious of stating the structure of messages should be to "create a positive or neutral effect". This could be construed as a massaging message to suppress potentially negative, problematic, or controversial topics.
▪ The last paragraph is important. We need to be clear that the Communication Plan is a "living document" that can be adjusted and improved as appropriate and necessary.
o Audience sectors:
▪ Independent volunteers should be included in the "Additional stakeholders" section. They may not be associated with a defined Community Organization, city committee, or city event.
o Community Engagement Officer (CEO):

Table with 5 columns: Kelly Garrett (Mayor), Bruce Kantor (Mayor Pro-Tem), Jalen Jennings (Council Member), Dalton Barksdale (Council Member), Jason Hammond (Council Member)



City of Lathrup Village

27400 Southfield Road
Lathrup Village, MI 48076

www.lathrupvillage.org | (248) 557-2600

- We do not need a full-time CEO or to assign this task to a single staff member. Perhaps this could be assigned to a couple of people, and maybe even include a resident who works with staff to craft communications.
 - If we don't have a CEO, the plan should state that the City Administrator or another person is delegated the responsibility to, create, update, implement, and manage the City Communication Plan. Or it could say the assigned Community Engagement people, in partnership with the City Administrator, do this.
 - The role should be described as helping to promote, inform, and provide information to all audiences defined in the "Audience sectors" section.
- Chapter 2: Communications Plans Goals & Objectives
 - Objectives look good
 - Goals should be "targeted" not "used"
 - Goals should be measurable
 - Goals for communicating with residents should be the #1 item in the goals list. There is a lot in this section about communication with media and only little mention of residents
 - Item 8: Do they mean their public access TV\Cable channel? We should do this and be very clear about what we mean by "public governmental channel"
 - Periodic training for city officials in media relations is important and we should include this, but only if we can first determine how we would do it.
 - "*Potential Future Initiatives*" shouldn't be in this section. If we want to include that, perhaps it goes into an appendix which is referenced at the end of this section.
- Chapter 3: Ways to Communicate Our Message
 - I like the list of "*Distribution Channels/Communications Toolbox*". I suggest we make the primary channels/tools **bold** and place them at the top of the list. Some of these we don't use at all or might only use infrequently
 - "*Public Feedback*" section is a positive
 - For the process that statements actions will be taken by a specific interval following a meeting, event, or post\comment.
 - Responses to voicemail messages and emails should be included
 - Expectations for what should happen if a deadline is missed should be stated
 - I like the idea of strategy tiers. They should reflect how often people should expect communications from various channels, which ones are used more commonly, and which are used under special circumstances
 - Outreach by city staff and elected and appointed officials should be included in the strategies
 - I like having clear rules about what can and cannot be posted in city facilities
 - City website: A deadline should be indicated for when important documents are posted to the city website (ordinance changes, election results, financial documents, water quality documents, etc.)
 - The rest of the info about the website in the Berkley plan is overly verbose. If we decide we need something like that, it should be in a separate, dedicated document specifically about the website and linked in the Comms Plan
 - Same for Government Public Access TV channels
- Chapter 4: Creation of Public Information Materials Policy & Procedure
 - Description of public information materials should be shorter, highlighting the most common types of materials, and should have a disclaimer that the list is not comprehensive and other material types could be created
- Chapter 5: News Release and Public Service Announcements (PSA) Guidelines and Submittal Policy

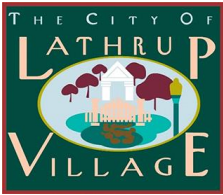
Kelly Garrett
Mayor

Bruce Kantor
Mayor Pro-Tem

Jalen Jennings
Council Member

Dalton Barksdale
Council Member

Jason Hammond
Council Member



City of Lathrup Village
27400 Southfield Road
Lathrup Village, MI 48076
www.lathrupvillage.org | (248) 557-2600

- We should have a brief explanation of how Public Safety\LVPD PSAs are distributed
- Suggest we state that the city retains the right to utilize distribution methods not defined in the Comms Plan in extenuating or emergencies
- Chapter 6: Policy for Requesting & Releasing Public Information Documents
 - Our policy should be much more concise
 - Important to include examples of information that will be released (I.F., I.G.) and will not be released (I.H.)
- Chapter 7: Policy for Requesting Ceremonial Documents
 - It would be a good policy to define outside of the communication plan.
- Chapter 8: Media Request for an Interview with City Employee and/or Holding a Press Conference Policy & Guidelines
 - This is an important part of the Comms Plan to protect city staff and provide them with guidance on how to handle a request for comment from a media outlet
- Chapter 9: Social Media Policy, Users Guidelines & Codes of Conduct
 - Our Comms Plan should note that the city is required by state FOIA and public records laws to treat all official social media posts and comments as public records and to manage them in compliance with these laws. As a result, the policy only authorizes social media posts on specific channels that the city backs up. The city is not responsible for and does not participate in posts on community or resident-administered social media pages.
- Chapter 10: Crisis Communication Plan
 - Should be a separate policy for Crisis Communications. The policy could be referenced and linked in the Comms Plan

Town Hall Scheduling – Plans & Priorities Feedback

Councilmember Hammond requested a discussion regarding scheduling a town hall to receive resident and business feedback for future plans/priorities for the City.

Short-Term Rental Enforcement

Mayor Pro-Tem Kantor requested a discussion regarding the potential specific enforcement of short-term rentals.

Eastbound 11-Mile Paving Project

This item is an action item on the regular meeting agenda. The purpose of this discussion is for staff to answer any initial questions regarding this project and the cost share required from the City.

Service Line Marketing Agreement Amendment

This item is an action item on the regular meeting agenda. The purpose of this discussion is for staff to answer any initial questions regarding this program.

Kelly Garrett Mayor	Bruce Kantor Mayor Pro-Tem	Jalen Jennings Council Member	Dalton Barksdale Council Member	Jason Hammond Council Member
------------------------	-------------------------------	----------------------------------	------------------------------------	---------------------------------



A HERITAGE OF GOOD LIVING

FINANCIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

CITY OF LATHRUP VILLAGE

27400 Southfield Road, Lathrup Village, Michigan 48076

RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL TO INCREASE AND SUSTAIN GENERAL FUND REVENUE

SEPTEMBER 23, 2024

The Issue:

The Financial Review Committee was formed in early 2024 and tasked with examining how to grow Lathrup Village's General Fund balance and do so in a sustained manner. The City Council established this committee because it has become increasingly difficult to pay for necessary City expenditures with the current revenue collected from the residents and business community. Over the last several fiscal years, the City has been forced to use funds from its General Fund account to fully cover its annual expenses; as a result, the City's General Fund fund balance has decreased from approximately \$1.591M to \$1.242M to \$583K. This is an untenable trend that cannot continue if the City is to remain fiscally stable.

Each year, the City prepares a balanced budget using the best information available at the time. However, as the year progresses, amendments to the original budget are made to cover unplanned expenses (e.g., repairs, equipment replacement, grant matches, consulting services, additional legal services, etc.) and increasing costs. These unexpected expenses ultimately result in reductions from the General Fund's fund balance to cover these costs.

While the City has always been conservative with its expenditures, over the last several years, the City has continually reduced General Fund spending to balance the budget. For example:

- The Recreation Director position was eliminated and the department’s funding was reduced.
- The City stopped transferring money from the General Fund to the Road Funds.
- Necessary equipment expenditures and repairs are continually deferred.
- The Our Town Magazine is no longer published.
- Significant code enforcement, landscaping, streetscaping, planning, and service drive maintenance expenses have been shifted to the Downtown Development Authority.
- Fewer meetings and events are recorded and/or streamed.
- The City has hired less experienced staff who can grow into positions rather than more experienced candidates at significantly higher salaries.

In the past, the City has also outsourced large budget expenditure items such as fire service, public safety dispatch service, police lock-up, animal control, technology assistance, property value assessing service, the Building Department, and the Department of Public Works. The City has also converted retirement benefits from a defined benefit program to a defined contribution program to save on fringe benefit costs. The only significant cost center that has not been outsourced is Lathrup Village’s police department, which the Committee did not consider, given the high importance of community policing to the City’s residents and businesses.

Cuts and spending reductions such as the examples noted above have made it possible for the City to continue to balance its budget—the fiscal year 2025 budget is balanced. However, the City has reached a point where making any significant additional expense reductions will require the City to cut desired and necessary services for the residents. Plainly put, it is becoming impossible to continue to deliver the services demanded by our residents with the existing revenue stream. To add to the challenge, the City is expecting large expense increases in areas like policing costs, equipment replacement, necessary repairs, building maintenance, pension funding, etc. in the next year. It is expected that the new police contract alone (at the end of 2024) will make it impossible to balance the fiscal year 2025 budget without a reduction in services. Below is an explanation of why the City’s revenue has declined over the last decade and why this issue will only continue to get worse over time.

The Cause of the City's Revenue Issue:

There are several reasons that, when combined, have significantly diminished the City's revenue stream and will continue to do so. As the City's revenue continues to decrease, operating the City at current service levels becomes increasingly more difficult. The various factors that contribute to this revenue reduction are discussed below.

Proposition A and the Real Estate Market Crash of 2008 – Proposition A is a Michigan State tax law that is designed to control increases in homeowner property taxes. Property taxes are the primary source of revenue for the City and they are based upon the taxable value of a resident's home. Proposition A ensures that the maximum annual increase in the taxable value of a home is limited to the lesser of the inflation rate or 5%. This means that while the market value of a home can increase dramatically over time, the taxable value will increase at a much slower rate. This law has worked to keep the taxable values on resident homes depressed. Over the last couple of decades, on average, the State has seen low inflation and high market value gains, resulting in many long-term homeowners having homes with very high resale value, but a very low taxable value. While this law has been effective at keeping taxable values low, when it was passed by the legislature in 1998, their assumption was that property values would always increase.

Unfortunately, in 2008, the real estate market crashed and taxable values fell nearly in half. This resulted in the City losing almost half of its revenue. While the market recovered over the years and market values are currently much higher than those of 2008, because of Proposition A's strict limitation on taxable value growth, the taxable value recovery has occurred at a dramatically slower pace. Today, 16 years after the crash and a full market recovery, the City's aggregate taxable value is STILL less than it was in 2008! As a result of this revenue loss and very slow revenue recovery, the City is functioning with less revenue and services than it did before 2008. Many long-term residents remember the "old days" when the City could provide more service and be more flexible with its spending; they wonder what happened. The market crash combined with Proposition A devastated the City's revenue stream and changed City finances dramatically.

While the City had to operate with less revenue for the past 16 years, it did so while costs continued to rise, which put further pressure on the City's budget. In addition, for decades, infrastructure needs (roads, equipment, buildings and grounds, sidewalks, maintenance,

etc.) were not attended to, which freed up the City’s revenue during that time and allowed the City to maintain services and balance the budget (and slowly grow the General Fund). However, these maintenance and repair deferrals can no longer be ignored; unfortunately, their costs have a substantial negative effect on current City finances. For example, the City could not afford to fund roads from the General Fund, which caused a significant decline in the quality of the City’s roads and resulted in a road millage. Further, the City has not been able to afford to replace equipment that has outlived its useful life, which results in continuous and very expensive repairs. The City’s Capital Improvement Plan has identified nearly \$20M in capital needs, a large portion of which is a result of past Councils’ deferred spending. Some of these capital needs can no longer be ignored and their cost will further strain the City’s budget.

The Headlee Amendment (Headlee) – Headlee is similar to Proposition A in that it was designed to control how much tax revenue a city can collect from its residents. In years when the aggregate taxable value of a city increases, Headlee requires the city to lower its operating millage rate to ensure it collects no more revenue than it did the prior year (with an inflation adjustment). For example, the table below shows a city that has a chartered millage rate of 10 mills and a taxable value of \$100M. That city would collect \$1M in revenue. If in the next year, the aggregate taxable value of this city increases to \$110M, then the city would be required to lower its assessed millage rate to 9.0909 to ensure it only receives that same \$1M in revenue.

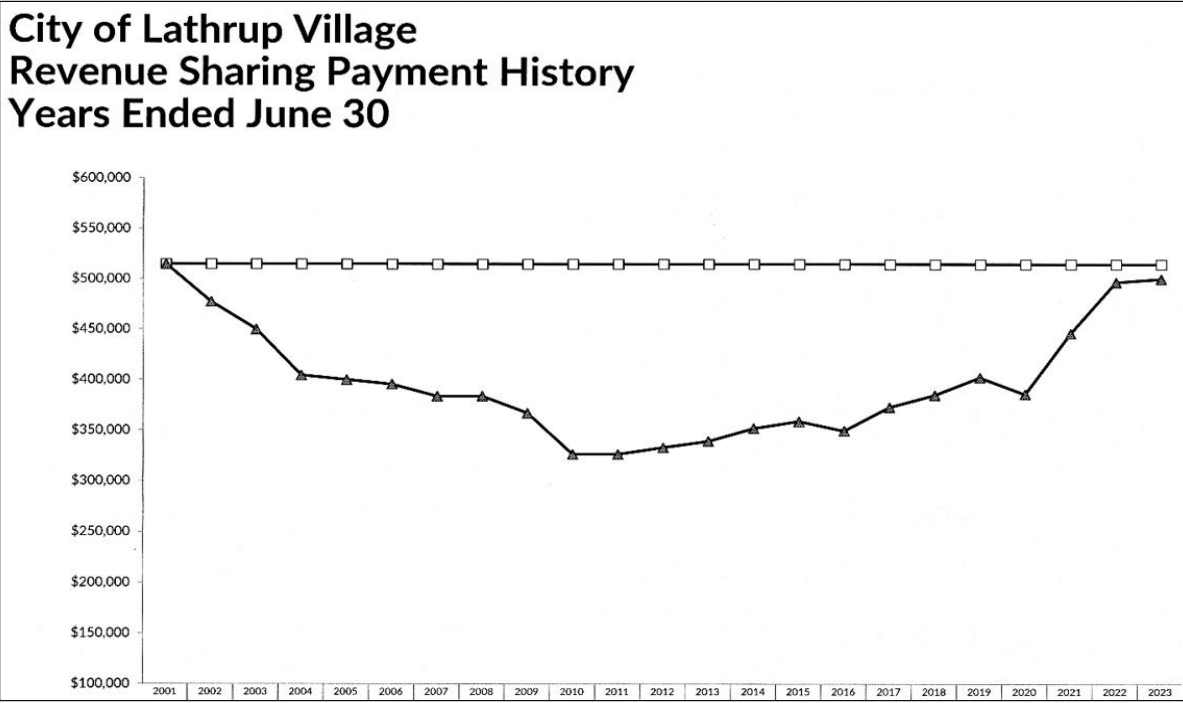
	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>
TV:	\$100 M	\$110 M
Millage:	10 Mill	9.0909 Mill
Revenue:	\$1M	\$1M

Given that the aggregate taxable value of the City almost always increases on an annual basis, the general operating millage will continue to fall. Unfortunately, in the rare instance where the aggregate taxable value of a city decreases (e.g., the market crash in 2008), the city is not permitted to raise the millage rate. This means the assessed millage rate will perpetually decrease.

The City’s chartered general operating millage rate is 20 mills. By 2010, annual Headlee reductions had decreased the chartered rate to 16.08 mills. This lowered millage rate produced approximately 20% less revenue than what would be expected from the chartered rate. Because Headlee was dramatically affecting the City’s budget, a Headlee Override was placed on the 2010 ballot and approved by the voters by more than a 2 to 1 margin. The approved Headlee Override allowed the City to restore its assessed millage rate back to the chartered rate of 20 mills. However, as the taxable value of the City continued to rise over the last 14 years, Headlee has once again continued to lower the City’s re-established 20 mill rate—it has now decreased down to 17.3001 mills. This means that the City is currently collecting less revenue than our City charter requires while costs continue to rise and new expenses and needs continue to occur.

The only way the City can increase its property tax revenue is to build new structures outside of the business district. Because the City is already completely built out, Lathrup Village has no method of increasing its property tax revenue. The City is facing a perpetually lowered millage rate with no opportunity to counteract this reduction effect on property tax revenue.

State Shared Revenue – Lathrup Village and its residents send significant tax dollars to the State of Michigan. The State is required both statutorily and constitutionally to return a proportion of those funds back to the City. Unfortunately, about 20 years ago, the State began balancing its own budget by refusing to return the full amount owed to its municipalities. As you can see in the chart below, in 2001, the City was receiving approximately \$525K in revenue sharing, but the State began reducing this amount down to as low as about \$300K. From 2002 to 2020, the Michigan Municipal League calculated that Lathrup Village lost almost \$2M in revenue sharing it was due. Again, similar to the effects of Proposition A and Headlee, this put further pressure on the City budget and caused more deferred maintenance and spending.



Other Factors – In addition to the influences noted above, other factors also stress the City budget. Runaway inflation over the past three years has made nearly everything more expensive. In the past three years, the inflation rate was 7.5%, 6.5% and 3.4%. This means that everything the City purchases, from office supplies to police cars to salaries, is significantly more expensive, while our revenue remains flat.

Technological improvements and changes to the law also make it more difficult for the City to make ends meet. The City currently has significant expenses that did not exist 10 or 15 years ago that place additional pressure on the budget. Video camera vests, mandated training, software licenses, building security, sanitation, data security, data archiving, and social media are just a few examples. At the August City Council meeting, the necessary purchase of TASERS for almost \$45K was approved. In 5 years, these TASERS will need to be replaced again at a higher cost. Ten years ago, these funds were available for other uses.

While the City has other revenue sources (e.g. building permits, district court fines, cable television franchise fees, cell tower leases, etc.), it has little ability to significantly increase revenue from these sources. Lastly, the City also pursues available grants and has received approximately \$4.5M in grant income over the last 8 years. However, most of these grants offset spending from funds other than the General Fund (e.g. the Water and Sewer Fund,

Major Road Fund, etc). In addition, many grants require the City to provide matching funds, which would come from the General Fund and further reduce its balance.

All of these factors together combine to put enormous pressure on City's finances. The City has been proactive over the years in determining ways to decrease expenditures. However, the City has reached the point where there are no significant expenses left to cut that will not affect services to the residents. Large expense increases are expected in fiscal year 2025 (e.g., the new police contract, potential pension payments, etc.). Long deferred expenses and repairs have been reaching the point where they can no longer be avoided if the City is to maintain its current service levels. As an example, in August, the City Council approved the long-overdue purchase of a new lawnmower and pickup truck for the DPW at a cost of almost \$70K. There are many more looming capital expenses in this category (e.g. a crumbling DPW building, a failing HVAC system in City Hall, a backhoe that is long past its useful life, roof replacements at multiple facilities, DPW furnace replacement, etc.). The City revenue issues described above make it difficult to pay for the day-to-day operational expenses and nearly impossible to do so for those expenses that are imminent. Necessary capital expenditures have reached the point where they can no longer be deferred, which exacerbates this financial issue. Worse of all, the resident-desired, lower priority expenditures that make Lathrup Village a desirable place to live (e.g., replacement of outdated playground equipment, recreational programs, a recreation coordinator, an updated community room, tree maintenance and replacement, more parks, etc.) are virtually impossible.

While the discussion above helps to explain why Lathrup Village struggles with generating sufficient revenue, residents often wonder how that can be the case when residents pay some of the highest tax rates in Michigan. Unfortunately, while that is true, the City does not retain most of the taxes that are collected. Only about 30% of collected property taxes are used for general City operations. And, of the 30% the City retains, over half of that amount is used to pay for police and fire services, leaving little remaining for City operations. See Appendix B for more information on how property tax dollars are allocated.

As the City’s financial consultant noted, “Lathrup Village has a revenue problem, not a spending problem.” The Finance Review Committee agreed and felt if the City cannot determine a way to increase its revenue in a sustained manner the City will need to begin searching for new ways to cut costs. This could include reductions in staff, reductions to policing, elimination of the use of the Southfield Public Library, periodic City Hall closures, elimination of remaining recreational programs, etc.

The Committee is making the following recommendations for increasing revenue and avoiding any cuts in services provided to residents and businesses. The recommendation has been split into both a long-term and a short-term recommendation.

Long-Term Recommendation:

The Committee researched and discussed a variety of potential recommendations to increase the City’s revenue. For a discussion of those items that were considered, but **not** recommended, please see Appendix A of this document.

In the Fiscal Year 2023 independent audit of the City’s finances, it was noted, “A Headlee rollback will need to be considered by the City Council and voted on by the citizens to maintain the same level of services.” After significant committee discussion of the positive and negative aspects of the limited options available to municipalities for raising revenue, the Committee agreed with the auditor’s assessment and recommends that the City Council add a ballot question to approve a Headlee Override to the November 2025 ballot. While this could be done at an interim or special election, the Committee felt strongly that this ballot question should appear during an election that would have the largest resident turnout, which would be a November election. The deadline for including a ballot question as part of the November 2024 election has passed, which means, the City would propose the ballot question during the November 2025 election.

The Committee recommends that the Headlee Override ask voters to restore the Headlee-lowered general operating millage rate from the existing 17.3001 mills to the chartered rate of 20 mills and to restore the lowered refuse (trash) millage rate from the existing 2.5948 rate to the chartered rate of 3 mills.

	Current Millage Rate	Proposed Millage After Headlee Override	Difference
General Operating	17.3001	20.0000	2.6999
Refuse	<u>2.5948</u>	<u>3.0000</u>	<u>0.4052</u>
Total	19.8949	23.0000	3.1051

Note: The current millage rates will be subject to another round of Headlee reductions prior to the November 2025 election. Adjustments to these figures may be necessary once next year’s Headlee application is complete.

Further, it is recommended that the ballot question include the locking of the chartered millage rates for ten years, as other municipalities have done, which would protect these chartered rates from being lowered by Headlee for ten years. This would ensure that the City has the funds needed to operate for at least ten years and that Headlee would not return the City to a diminished revenue state. If approved, this would restore the assessed millages by 3.1051 mills, but not increase the millage rate beyond that which should be assessed according to the City Charter. The effect this increase will have on residents will be discussed below.

The Committee felt this option would increase revenue back to chartered levels and sustain that revenue for ten years. Approval of this Headlee Override would provide the City some breathing room in its budget to address increasing costs while simultaneously providing some additional funds to begin addressing deferred maintenance and capital expenditures. Because the City passed a similar Headlee Override in 2010 by greater than a 2 to 1 margin, the Committee is hopeful that residents would be willing to support such a measure again. The Committee fully understands that a tax increase could be a contentious issue for some city residents. However, to maintain the quality of life that Lathrup Village residents expect, increased revenue from a Headlee Override is necessary. The punitive tax laws and other factors discussed above, leave no choice for built-out cities like Lathrup Village other than to eventually cut services.

Short-Term Recommendation:

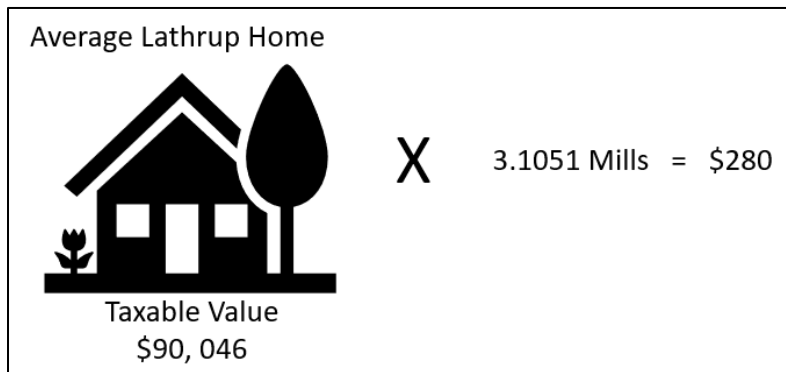
Unfortunately, placing a Headlee Override on the November 2025 ballot means waiting a year for this election and its result. If a Headlee Override is approved by the electorate, additional revenue would not be received by the City until August of 2026 with the summer tax bill. This means that the City would continue to remain in a strained budget situation for the next two years. Given the expected increases in expenses associated with fiscal year 2025, this delay would almost certainly result in budget cuts.

To avoid this situation, the Committee recommends that the City Council use its authority to enact a Public Act 33 of 1951 Special Assessment for Public Safety. Under this Act, cities with a population under 14,500 people can levy up to 10 mills for public safety operations and 10 mills for public safety capital. This would allow the City Council to determine its monetary needs for fiscal year 2025 and determine the expected shortfall. Once that shortfall is determined, the City Council would have the authority to levy the corresponding millage to the 2025 summer tax bill to make up that difference. The resulting funds would be earmarked for Public Safety and could cover the increased cost of the new police contract, as well as some existing public safety costs. This would forgo the use of some of the General Fund dollars for Public Safety, freeing up those general funds for other operational uses.

The Committee recommends that the proposed City Council resolution to provide this authority specifically state that the authority expires after one year. This is because PA 33 authority is recommended only as a stop gap measure until the Headlee Override can be voted upon by the electorate. Further, the Committee recommends that the establishing resolution also limit the levying authority of the City Council to a maximum of 3.1051 mills. This millage figure is simply the millage amount that would be restored had both the general operating and refuse (trash) millages been set back to their respective chartered rates of 20 and 3 mills. While the Committee believes that it is unlikely the City would need to levy this entire amount, it believes City Council should have the flexibility, if needed.

What Does This Mean for Residents:

As noted above, an approved Headlee Override would add 3.1051 mills to the tax bill of Lathrup Village residents. The current average taxable value of a home in Lathrup Village is \$90,046. Applying the 3.1051 mills to this average taxable value would result in an additional tax of \$280 to the average homeowner. To calculate their potential tax burden, homeowners can multiply their actual taxable value from their most recent Oakland County property tax assessment (mailed to resident homes in March) by .003105.



As with any millage in the State of Michigan, due to existing tax laws, those longer-term residents who have been protected by Proposition A will have a lower tax burden, while newer homeowners will have a higher tax burden. Unfortunately, in Michigan, there is no manner in which millage-based tax rates can be applied evenly to all residents within a municipality. The chart below illustrates the distribution of a Headlee Override cost by homeowner taxable value.

Homes Affected	Taxable Home Value	Headlee Override Cost per Year
43% - Mostly long-term residents	\$0 to \$75,000	Less than \$233
51% - Mostly residents who bought 4 to 10 years ago	\$75,000 to \$150,000	\$233 to \$466
5% - Mostly residents who purchased recently	\$150,000 to \$200,000	\$466 to \$621
1% - Mostly residents purchasing high value homes recently	Over \$200,000	More than \$621

Appendix C provides a table showing the tax burden based on various homeowner taxable values.


Next Steps:

If the City Council accepts this recommendation, it will need to work with the administration and City Attorney to follow the various steps (public hearings, resolutions, approvals from the Attorney General and Governor, etc.) required to both enact the Public Act 33 Special Assessment and place the Headlee Override on the November 2025 ballot.

In addition, if this recommendation is approved, the Committee will next begin working on a multi-faceted education plan to educate the residents on all aspects related to this recommendation. This would include Town Hall programs, FAQ documents, videos, etc.

The Committee would like to acknowledge Michael Greene, City Administrator, and Michelle Townsend, City Finance Director, for their invaluable assistance to the Committee. The Committee would be happy to meet with the City Council to discuss this recommendation further if so desired.

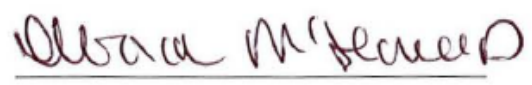
This recommendation is made unanimously by the following voting members of the Infrastructure Committee:



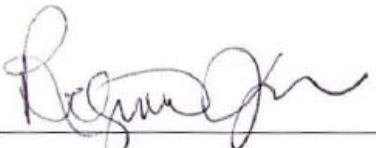
Bruce Kantor, Committee Chair
Mayor Pro Tem



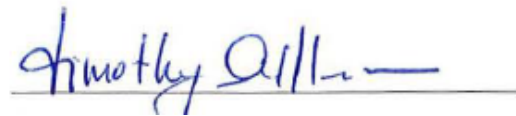
Saleem Siddiqi



Deborah McDonald



Regina Jones



Timothy Hillman

Appendix A – Funding Options NOT Recommended

The committee invited a Plante Moran consulting partner, who both specializes in municipal finance and is intimately familiar with Lathrup Village accounting and finances, to present the potential options available to municipalities to generate additional revenue. The Committee discussed each option with the consultant and then held subsequent meetings to debate the feasibility of each presented option for Lathrup Village. The following is a listing of the other various funding options that were considered by the Financial Review Committee but were **not** recommended to the City Council for consideration.

- A Road Millage: - Implementing a road millage would provide dedicated funds for road improvement and repaving. In turn, the City could then use the General Fund dollars presently spent on road repaving for other purposes. However, since the City does not currently spend General Fund money on road pavement projects, collecting road millage dollars would not free up General Fund dollars to be used elsewhere.
- Lean on the (Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to Share More Funds with the City: The City currently has a great relationship with the DDA. There is an existing cost-share agreement between the parties, where the DDA transfers funds to the City to help pay for staff salaries, beautification, code enforcement, gardens, landscaping, and other expenses. The DDA is also amenable to supporting other City expenditures as they arise. For example, the DDA agreed to purchase a new Code Enforcement vehicle for the City and was a Title Sponsor of the Lathrup Village Music Festival. As the DDA is already contributing significant funds to the City and has its spending priorities, receiving significantly more funds from the DDA is unlikely. That said, the City should continue to work with the DDA when new cost-sharing opportunities present themselves.
- Replace the Refuse (Trash) Millage with a User Charge: The City charter allows the City to levy 3 mills for trash and recycling services. The revenue generated from this millage covers the expense of trash and recycling services—General Fund money is not used. This option would simply move the revenue collection from a millage to a monthly utility bill and would not generate additional money for the General Fund. This option would only be feasible if the City was using General Fund dollars to pay for trash services, which it is not. The administration of such a program would add significant additional costs.
- Special Assessments for Infrastructure: The City is not currently spending General Fund dollars on infrastructure projects, especially given recent major projects to improve the road, water, sidewalk, water, and sewer systems. These projects were all fully funded via other non-General Fund monies. There would be little opportunity to save General Fund dollars by assessing infrastructure costs to the residents for these types of projects. This is because the City is not currently funding any infrastructure projects from the General Fund.

- Debt Millage: The City's current debt is nearly fully funded. The road project debt is paid for via a road-specific millage and the Capital Improvement Bond cost is fully funded via both a surcharge on the water bill and the capital component built into the water rate. The only other long-term debt payments are for sewer projects that occurred in 2006 and 2009. The debt payments for these projects will be complete in 3 to 5 years and only account for approximately \$120K per year. Further, these debts are paid for from the Water and Sewer fund. Therefore, there are no General Fund debt payments that could be offset by a debt millage.
- Publicity Millage: There is a Michigan State Act that allows municipalities to levy a millage to cover publicity and communication costs. The maximum amount that can be collected under such a millage is only \$50K, which is not significant enough to address the City's revenue issue.
- Public Act 345 Public Safety Retirement: Public Act 345 allows municipalities to levy a tax dedicated to funding Public Safety pensions and other post-employee benefits (e.g. retiree healthcare). This option would only make sense if the City was making significant yearly payments into the pension fund. A decade ago, the City contributed \$1M to fully fund its MERS pension program, which made subsequent yearly contributions unnecessary. Recently, however, the General Accounting Standards Board changed its funding methodology. This change resulted in the City's pension funding percentage decreasing to 76%. The program has recommended that the City contribute approximately \$350K, which will put a strain on future budgets. However, given the City is not currently making annual payments nor does it have the revenue to do such, there would be no General Fund monies to free up by taking advantage of Public Act 345.
- Lower the Operating Millage and Introduce a Public Act 33 Public Safety Assessment: The City could choose to lower its operating millage and then dynamically make up the difference each year by initiating a Public Act 33 Safety Assessment. This would allow the City Council to dynamically determine how much additional revenue would be needed each year and to assess the corresponding amount to resident taxes. It was felt this option would add too much uncertainty and unpredictability to City finances. It would also rely on City Council action each year, making city finance a political issue. Since the City Council has the potential to change every two years and there is no guarantee that future councils will be willing to levy the required funds, this option was considered to be high risk. It would also make planning and budgeting exceedingly more difficult.
- Do nothing and cut services: - It was agreed that this option is counter to the establishment and purpose of the Committee. The Committee does not believe that cutting services is in the best interest of the residents or the future of the City. However, it was noted by the Committee that if the final recommendation is not accepted and acted upon by the City Council, or if it is acted upon and residents vote to reject this initiative, the City Council and the administration will have no choice but to begin cutting services relied upon by Lathrup Village residents and businesses. It is recommended that the City prepare a list of services that would be cut by a failed millage. This will help residents to have a realistic understanding of the implications of revenue levels remaining as they are currently.

Appendix B – Property Tax Allocations

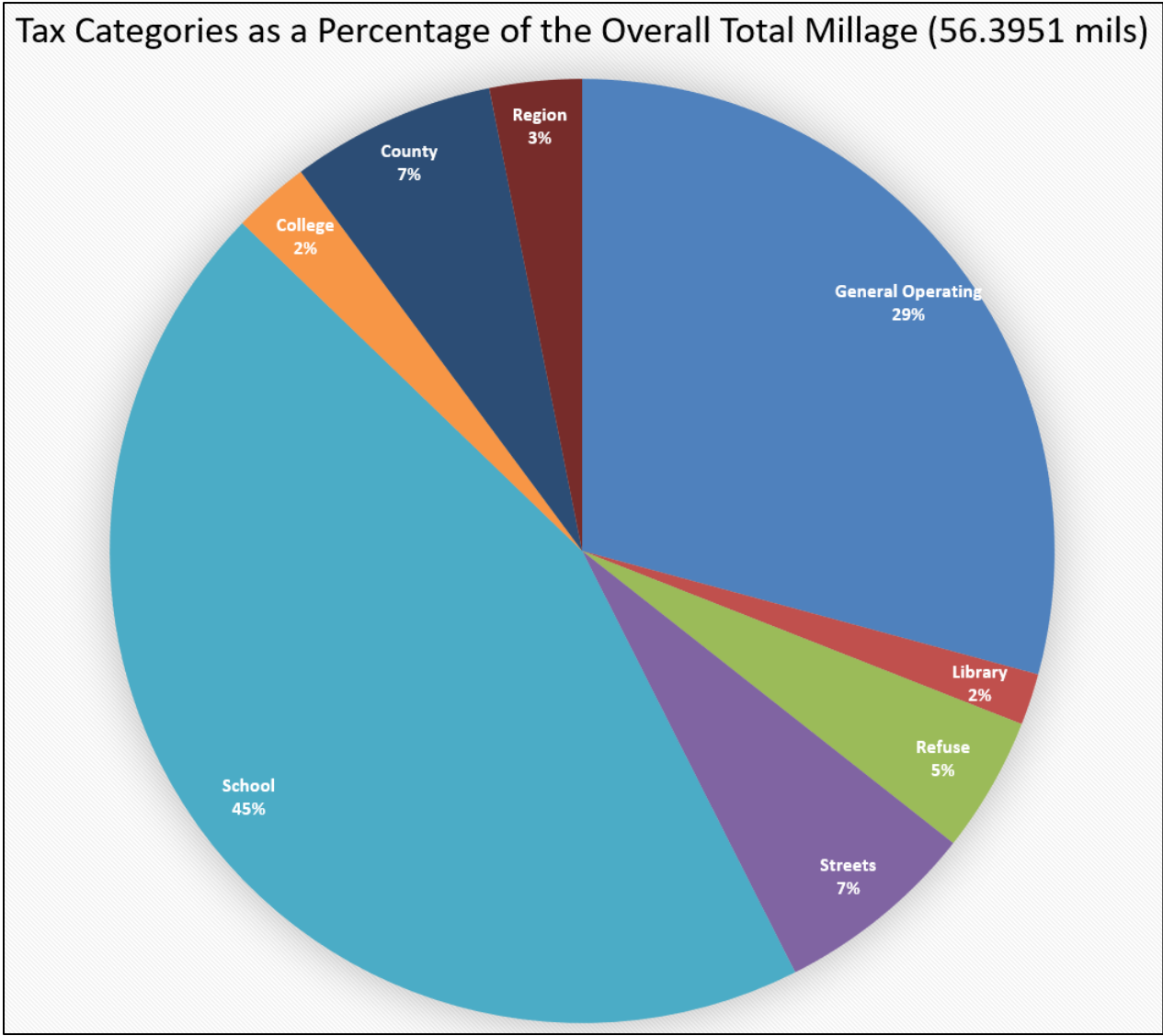
Lathrup Village residents pay a total millage rate that is one of the highest total rates in the State. The chart below shows both the statutory millage rates along with the actual assessed rates. The assessed rate is always equal to or lower than the statutory rate. The assessed rate can be lower either because of Headlee rollbacks or because the governing body has decided not to assess the full rate.

As the table below indicates, residents are currently levied a total of 56.3951 mills against the taxable value of their homes.

Tax	Annual Statutory Millage Rate	FY 23/24 Annual Millage Rate (Headlee Reduced)	FY 24/25 Annual Millage Rate (Headlee Reduced)
General LV Operating	20.0000	17.3001	17.3001
Refuse	3.0000	2.5948	2.5948
County Operating	5.2600	3.9686	
County			
Parks & Rec	0.3500	0.3431	
Huron Clinton Metropark	0.2500	0.2070	
Detroit Zoo	0.1000	0.0945	
Detroit Inst of Arts	0.2000	0.1945	
OCPTA	0.9500	0.9500	
Road Millage	3.9307	3.9307	3.9307
Schools			
Sinking Fund	0.7000	0.6911	
School Debt 2017 - no limit	1.5000	1.5000	
School Debt 2023 - no limit	4.0600	4.0600	
School Supp <18	16.9698	9.9058	
State Education	6.0000	6.0000	
College (OCC)	1.4891	1.4891	
Intermediate (Spec Ed)	3.8983	3.1658	
Total	68.6579	56.3951	23.8256
School Operating (non-PRE)	18.0000	18.0000	
DDA Operating (in DDA district)	2.0000	1.8823	1.8823

Given this high property tax rate, residents are often puzzled as to why the City would not have the revenue it needs. This is because the City keeps only about 30% of resident property taxes for general operations.

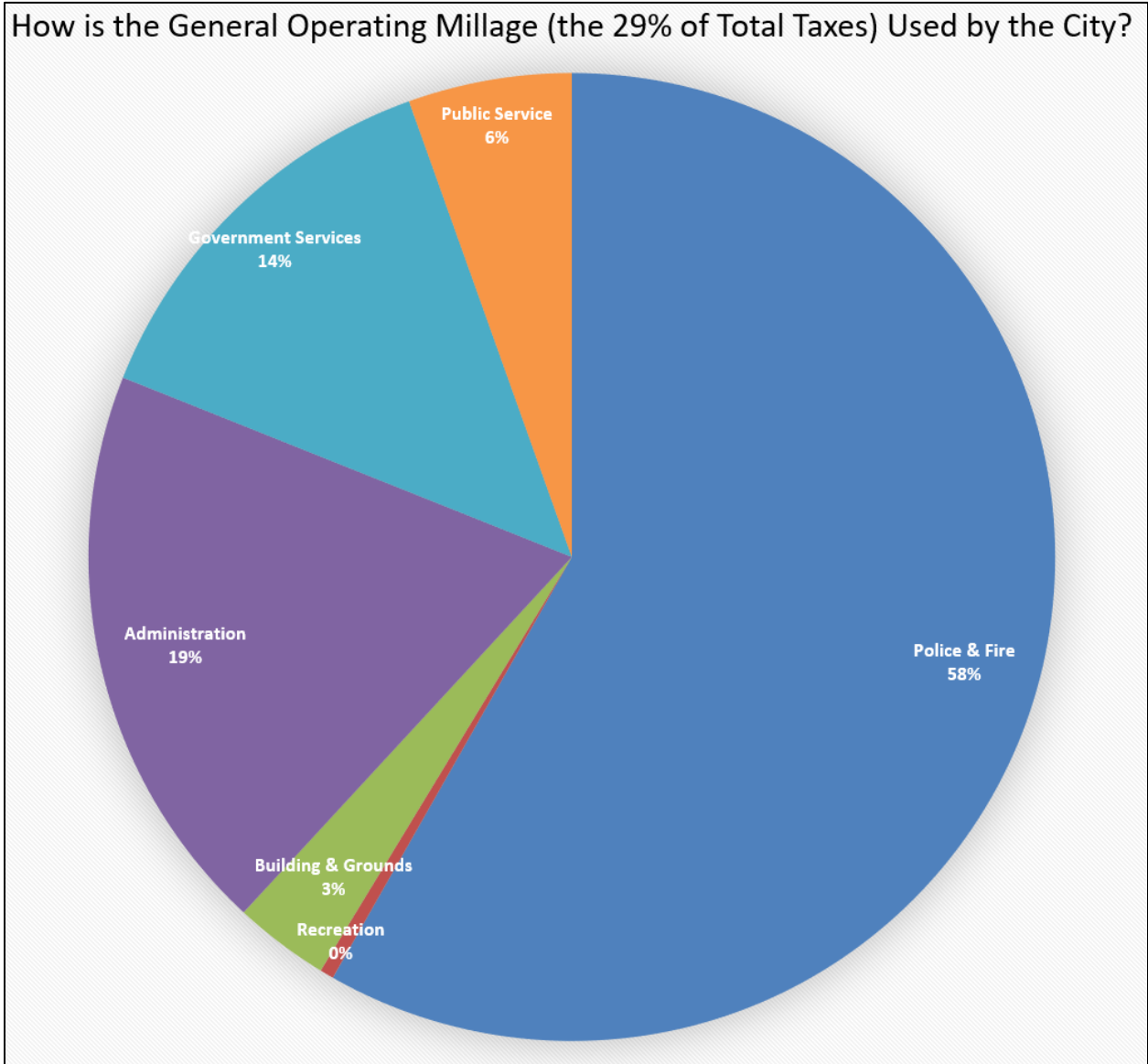
The chart below shows how resident tax payments are allocated:



As the pie chart shows, 47% of the overall tax payment is allocated to education. 7% goes to Oakland County. 3% is associated with regional taxes for the DIA, Metroparks, etc. 7% is used to pay for the recent repaving of 8.28 miles of residential roads. 5% is dedicated to trash and recycling services and 2% goes to provide library services to Lathrup Village residents. The remaining 29% of property tax payments are used to fund all City operations.

The following chart explains how the City uses the 29% of property tax payments that remain for City operations.

As the pie chart below shows, almost 60% of the portion of the tax payments kept by the City (the 29% discussed previously) are used to fund police and fire services. This leaves only 6% to fund the DPW, 14% for government services (communication, engineering, planning, building department, cable TV, etc.), 19% for staff salaries, 3% to maintain the City buildings and grounds, and almost no money for recreation services.



To put this in monetary terms, if a resident receives a \$4,000 tax bill, just over \$1,200 remains with the City for operational purposes. Of that amount, a little more than \$700 is allocated to public safety, leaving about \$500 to fund all of the other various City operations. Given the overall needs of the City, this is a relatively small amount.

Residents are correct that Lathrup Village residents pay very high tax rates, but unfortunately, only a small percentage of the total property tax payments are available to the City to fund its services and operations.

Appendix C – Cost by Taxable Value Table

The average taxable value in the City of Lathrup Village is \$90,046. At 3.105 mills, a Headlee Override will cost the average resident \$280. To calculate an exact cost, multiply the taxable value (not market value) from the Oakland County Tax Assessment by 0.003105. The chart below displays the cost of the Headlee Override for Homeowners at various taxable values:

Taxable Value		Average Cost/Year
<small>(not Market Value)</small>		
\$20,000	.....	\$62
\$25,000	.....	\$78
\$30,000	.....	\$93
\$35,000	.....	\$109
\$40,000	.....	\$124
\$45,000	.....	\$140
\$50,000	.....	\$155
\$55,000	.....	\$171
\$60,000	.....	\$186
\$65,000	.....	\$202
\$70,000	.....	\$217
\$75,000	.....	\$233
\$80,000	.....	\$248
\$85,000	.....	\$264
\$90,000	.....	\$279
\$95,000	.....	\$295
\$100,000	.....	\$311
\$105,000	.....	\$326
\$110,000	.....	\$342
\$115,000	.....	\$357
\$120,000	.....	\$373
\$125,000	.....	\$388
\$130,000	.....	\$404
\$135,000	.....	\$419
\$140,000	.....	\$435
\$145,000	.....	\$450
\$150,000	.....	\$466
\$155,000	.....	\$481
\$160,000	.....	\$497
\$165,000	.....	\$512
\$170,000	.....	\$528
\$175,000	.....	\$543
\$180,000	.....	\$559
\$185,000	.....	\$574
\$190,000	.....	\$590
\$195,000	.....	\$605
\$225,000	.....	\$699
\$285,000	.....	\$885
\$300,000	.....	\$932
\$315,000	.....	\$978



CITY OF BERKLEY, MICHIGAN

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION PLAN & POLICES AND PROCEDURES

ADOPTED JANUARY 2020

Chapter	Title	Page
1	Communication Plan Overview and the Community Engagement Officer	3
2	Communication Plan Goals and Objectives	8
3	Ways to Communicate our Message	11
4	Creation of Public Information Materials Policy & Procedure	23
5	News Release and Public Service Announcement (PSA) Guidelines and Submittal Policy	28
6	Policy for Requesting & Releasing Public Information Documents	33
7	Policy for requesting Ceremonial Documents	38
8	Media Request for Interview and/or Holding a News Conference	40
9	Social Media Policy, User Guidelines & Codes of Conduct	44
10	Crisis Communication Plan & Guidelines for Communicating with the Media	48
11	Appendices	58



Chapter 1

Communication Plan Overview and the Community Engagement Officer

I. Introduction

A communications plan is necessary to determine how information should be shared, and who needs to receive it in what order. This becomes even more critical when considering the many functions of local government; i.e. providing police and fire protection, to building playgrounds, to zoning parcels of land.

Public input in planning and policy development processes is crucial to building consensus and buy-in from residents and other community stakeholders. The City seeks engaged community input to inform planning and policy outcomes.

This document serves as a guideline to inform residents, staff, business owners, and Berkley’s neighboring communities of situations that may arise in the city in a timely manner. Constructive and timely public participation builds community consensus and strengthens a sense of place. Conversely, public participation can be negatively impacted over time if stakeholders do not believe their input is being acted upon by the city government. Creating a culture of collaborative visioning enriches democracy by allowing citizens to voice their ideas and not just their complaints.

Information is distributed to the public through newsletters, news releases, brochures, flyers, the City’s public government channel, the City’s website, e-mail alerts, social media, booths at local events and festivals, presentations to civic and neighborhood groups, one-on-one communication with residents and businesses, and other various forms of communication.

Strategic communication is an essential service provided by the City of Berkley in order to build community pride, attract new residents to our neighborhoods, encourage business development, draws visitors to the community, and attracts capable employees. City communications must be an important tool for City government to ensure that the community and surrounding areas are informed of those services.

II. Purpose

- The Communication Plan introduces a process for communicating timely, accurate, and useful information to the City’s target audiences which will help to strengthen connections with Berkley citizens, stakeholders, the region, nation, and world.
- The plan will validate the desire and commitment of City government to develop a two-way flow of information which enhances community problem solving, both internally and externally. It is as important to receive feedback and gather information as it is to provide information.
- The Communication Plan will present strategies to follow when providing information to our target audiences that will change, develop, or enhance the perception of services, issues, and projects in the City of Berkley.
- The plan will help to enhance the City’s image and identify ways to communicate with local, state, and national citizens so others will see that Berkley is a strong, progressive, and growing community.
- The plan will assist with the promotion of Berkley to others and all it has to offer in amenities, services, location, quality of life, and the feeling of community among its citizens. It will show Berkley’s dedication to providing the best essential services to our citizens, stakeholders, and the strong partnerships that we want to develop with our local businesses.

- The plan will establish how information from the City is distributed to others and provides direct guidelines that will be followed by all City employees when communicating with the media, while also providing a plan of action to follow in the event of a crisis when it is necessary to quickly and accurately provide information to the citizens of Berkley, City employees, stakeholders, and the media.
- The intent of the Communication Plan is to take a proactive rather than a reactive approach to the dissemination of information.

III. Image, Identity and Perception

A strong Communication Plan can help to enhance the City’s image. The Communications Plan will guide the information flow so perception, reality, and fact all meld into one idea.

An effective Communication Plan will help to inform citizens and the media of any positive or negative information that needs to be shared. Positive news releases, articles in local and state publications, local coverage of newsworthy issues and events regarding City services, programs, events, employee achievements, City awards and honors, etc., help to show all citizens that Berkley is, and will continue to be, a strong, progressive and visionary community.

While the message delivered may be one that might potentially be received as negative to City citizens and the media, it is important to structure those messages so they create a positive or neutral effect rather than a negative one. When a situation or issue arises that is perceived as negative to the City’s image and/or leadership, it is imperative to be responsive to those situations, to state the facts, to provide background information about the issue, to show that the issue will be corrected and/or the proper decisions will be made to assure it is corrected, and to assure others the issue is being dealt with and taken seriously.

Like technology, communication changes frequently, making it important for the Communications Plan to be constantly updated and improved in order to improve public perception.

IV. Audience Sectors

Identifying audience sectors are incremental when developing a communications strategy. These sectors include but are not limited to:

- 1) Berkley Residents – The residents of Berkley are essential to the success of the Communications Plan. By keeping our residents at the forefront of our communication, we will create a sense of relatability and ownership.
- 2) Mayor and City Council – It is vital to keep our elected officials informed of items of interest and newsworthy events in the City of Berkley. In doing so, they will be able to speak on behalf of the City; answers questions and respond to remarks with factual and current information. The continuous flow of information to these individuals is extremely important as the community looks to them for answers, as well as, make educated decisions when determining their stance on City issues. This task is a primary function of the City Manager’s Office as a whole.

- 3) Berkley Employees – Berkley employees serve in a variety of roles. Our employees are continuously communicating with residents on a daily basis. They are a valuable resource and can greatly enhance or harm the City’s image.
- 4) Surrounding Communities and Visitors– Citizens from surrounding communities work, shop, dine, and attend entertainment venues within the City of Berkley. They are not residents of Berkley, but they can be affected by the actions and decision of the City. Berkley’s economic health with the region and state is supported by individuals and visitors who live outside the City limits. The image they perceive from visiting our community can lead to a positive or negative perception which will be share with others. We want their experience to be a positive one so that they will see that “Berkley is a where you want to Be.” We welcome them and look at them as guests in our community, potential business owner, and as possible residents who may return here to live one day.
- 5) Berkley’s Community Organizations – Berkley has numerous civic, fraternal, and community organizations. These groups are made up of volunteers who give of their time and money to support their organization and its outreach efforts. The City benefits from partnerships with community organizations and hopes to continue building strong relationships. These organizations have dedicated residents who are actively involved and support their community. They make a huge impact on the success of the community, its programs and events, and the City will continue to work to increase communication and the sharing of information with these community leaders.
- 6) Berkley Businesses – Berkley has a vast set of small and corporate businesses in the community that are patronized not only by our residents, but our surrounding communities. Additionally, they provide jobs to our area. The City’s benefits from establishing a unified relationship with our businesses as they interact with the public more frequently and be a channel of information sharing for the City.
- 7) Media – The media are an extremely important audience to target because their coverage of meetings, issues, events, programs, and projects reach a significant number of audience sectors. Local newspapers communicate with the Community Engagement Officer on a regular basis. City communications are also shared with local television stations, radio stations, magazines and other publications, as well as, other local, county, and state government agencies. These entities are the mainstream media outlets including many other media venues that target non-English speaking residents. The relationship between the Community Engagement Officer and the media is vital because messages to the Communications Plan because the message and information they disseminate impacts the City’s image.
- 8) Additional stakeholder groups that are important to keep in mind include:
 - Appointed boards and commissions
 - Southeast Oakland County municipalities
 - Current and potential investors
 - Local senior centers
 - Regional social groups
 - Social services

- Local, Regional, and State universities
- Young professional groups
- County, regional, and state elected officials
- Berkley Public Schools

V. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER

The Community Engagement Officer creates, updates, implements and manages the City Communication Plan, which will provide clear direction as to how daily communication and crisis communication information is handled and shared with the public. The Community Engagement Officer is responsible for the City’s communication outreach which includes: media relations, community relations, print and digital content creation, visual and design aesthetics, intergovernmental relations, and internal communications.

The Community Engagement Officer responds proactively to community concerns and ensures that residents are educated and informed about the services, policies, news, events, and programs that are offered to them by the City of Berkley. The Community Engagement Officer works to share information about the City with organizations, as well as, local and state media representatives, and is always striving to share the positive and innovative things that are happening in Berkley.

The Community Engagement Officer helps to promote, inform, and provide information to the citizens of Berkley, City elected officials, and City staff.

The Community Engagement Officer is available to assist all City departments with their communication efforts and can offer help with ways to reach their intended audience.

The Community Engagement Officer is part of the City Manager’s Office. Successful communication must always be supported by the top of an organization in order for it to flow through the organization, as well as disseminate throughout the City via citizens and the news media.

The Community Engagement Officer will work to continuously seek the best ways for the City to communicate its priorities and to achieve its policy objectives which encompasses: informational news updates, achievements, public education, and community outreach initiatives. Additionally, the Community Engagement Officer will inform citizens and the media about City services, policy, news, programs, and events. The Community Engagement Officer serves as the one person that can be contacted in the City of Berkley to provide information, locate information requested, or put an individual in touch with appropriate departments, employees, or contacts that can assist them with the information or answers they seek. The Community Engagement Officer is always available to assist with everyday communication needs for all City departments, as well as, work to provide information to Berkley’s citizens, businesses, and City staff in the event of a newsworthy situation.



Chapter 2

Communications Plans Goals & Objectives

I. Objective

The City of Berkley is a community with diverse communication needs and several approaches are needed to give everyone a voice. In creating its communication plan, the City has developed a set of objectives intended to guide staff and elected/appointed officials as they move through the planning and policy process:

- **Inform and engage the community.** Effective participation in the decision-making process requires an understanding of issues that arise in the community and the framework for making local decisions, including budget. Ensure that background information is easy to find and easy to understand. Understand that different populations/demographics use different methods to receive and share information.
- **Utilize effective and equitable communication tools.** There are many techniques and mechanisms available to ensure that a diverse public is well-informed and able to play a role in the planning process. Recognizing that no single technique or mechanism will work in all cases, it is up to the City staff and officials to consider the diverse communication needs of the public. City staff and officials need to employ visualization techniques that optimize public understanding of issues and concepts. Storytelling techniques can be especially helpful with specific sites or areas of redevelopment.
- **Develop and maintain staff expertise to inform and support participation.** City staff should understand the composition of the community and cultivate expertise within City Hall that results in an open and welcoming environment. Staff should receive training and enrichment to learn effective techniques for bridging language, cultural and economic differences that affect participation. Encourage staff to convey issues and information in meaningful ways to various cultural groups, as well as, ensure equitable representation for all segments of the population and sectors of the economy.
- **Provide a transparent record of public engagement.** To properly capture the concerns, priorities and vision of the public, City staff will develop a system to track the various techniques and mechanisms of public input. To maintain transparency and consistency, Berkley will develop a method for sharing public participation with the public.

II. Goals

Additionally, the City of Berkley strives to provide its audiences with information about the City’s government programs, services, events, and activities. Below are the following goals which will be used to provide and improve City communications internally and externally.

- 1) Maintain a quality working relationship with local and regional media to effectively deliver City of Berkley government information to the community.
- 2) Respond to all media requests for information in a timely manner and serve as the media’s advocate in dealing with City officials.
- 3) Distribute information regarding positive City government stories and City employee awards, accomplishments, and other information to the media and interested organizations.

- 4) Distribute news releases announcing City programs, services, and events through all of our communications channels to local and regional media.
- 5) Provide information and help maintain the City of Berkley website with the most current information. Ensure that content is accurate, timely, and up-to-date.
- 6) Produce a community e-newsletter to deliver City government information to local citizens.
- 7) Continuously update the City's digital and social media accounts with information to the public.
- 8) Provide regular content for the City's public governmental channel with up-to-date informal and educational programming to the community.
- 9) Assist departments with print and digital materials, news, and information for the public.
- 10) Respond to mail, e-mail, online, and telephone requests for City government information from Berkley citizens and others.
- 11) Establish a comprehensive design and brand aesthetic to enhance the City's overall image, as well as, aid in various communications projects with departments and partner organizations.
- 12) Assist City officials, including elected officials and staff, with presentation materials, speech writing or media interview request preparation, and offer strategic communications advice if needed.
- 13) Conduct periodic training on media relations with City officials.
- 14) Work to improve the City's Strategic and Crisis Communication Plan.
- 15) Develop clear guidelines of community interaction and conduct between the City, residents and businesses, community partners, etc.

Potential Future Initiatives:

- 1) The City of Berkley is a dynamic community. As more residents make their home in Berkley and more businesses are attracted to the community, it will become necessary to take advantage of new ways to communicate with target audiences.
- 2) "A Great Place" Guide to Berkley would be beneficial to new Berkley residents or to those who are interested in finding our more about this great community. The publication would include a description of City departments, a list of popular annual events, important contact numbers and information about City programs and services, the City Council and City boards and committees. The publication could also include other informative features about the community.
- 3) The City may want to update its "app" for mobile devices. To communicate directly with citizens, to receive information from citizens and to enhance customer-service capabilities.
- 4) The City should explore the possibility of developing a "video tourbook" that could posted on the City website and on the City's YouTube channel. The tourbook would consist of several short videos that highlight different aspects of Berkley (i.e., parks and recreational amenities, economic development, relocation information and schools).
- 5) The City must continue to stay abreast of developments in the world of social media and embrace new social media as needs dictate and resources allow. The City should look at the possibility of launching a blog authored by the City Manager or perhaps the Community Engagement Officer.



Chapter 3

Ways to Communicate Our Message

I. Introduction

The City of Berkley works hard to share information with the community. Various methods of doing so are available, but finding those outlets that best serve, and are used by, Berkley residents is an ongoing process. The City will continue to keep the public, through the media and other avenues, informed about newsworthy events and the services and programs offered, and parks and facilities that are available to the community, as well as, how the City is working on their behalf.

It is necessary to research and ask our City residents what elements of communication they use frequently. We must determine what our message requires, and question: Is it urgent? Do we need feedback? Are we building a following through new technologies?

Each of these answers lead to a different distribution system. In many cases, more than one communication vehicle is necessary to ensure the message reaches the entire community.

II. Distribution Channels/Communications Toolbox

Distribution channels/ Communications Toolbox include but are not limited to:

- E-mails/e-mail blasts
- Meetings
- Social media
- City of Berkley website
- City of Berkley Intranet site
- Newspaper ads/articles
- Presentations
- Press releases
- Letters
- Publications
- Manuals
- Handouts
- Banners
- Booklets
- Brochures
- Blogs
- Door hangers
- City employees
- Elected officials
- Voicemail
- Community information call-in line
- Employee information call-in line
- Television PSAs /news/commercials
- City of Berkley public governmental channel, Comcast channel 17, WOW Channel 10
- Radio
- Videos
- Webinars/webcasts
- Training sessions
- City of Berkley citizen newsletter
- Posters
- Fliers
- Signs
- Word of mouth
- Mass mailings/direct mail
- Electronic mailing list service
- Fax
- Promotional items (pens, magnets, etc.)
- City hold messages
- Regional/national/international media
- Special events
- Utility bill inserts

Public Feedback

Additionally, it should be made clear that the intention of this plan is not simply to gather input from Berkley stakeholders, but rather to engage the public in a multi-directional conversation. This

demonstrates that the responses of our audiences were heard and acted upon, and creates an environment of transparency. These examples include but are not limited to:

- **Public Meetings:** Public meetings (City Council, ZBA, Planning will be broadcast live on the City website and WBRK. Also, City Staff will make available all public meeting minutes on the Berkley website (for City Council, Planning Commission, DDA, ZBA) no later than 5 days after the minutes are approved by motion by the appropriate body and also be made available through the Clerk’s office upon request. Other committees will post minutes prior to next meeting.
- **Community Workshops, Town Hall & Informational Meetings:** City Staff is charged with taking notes and photographs during these types of community events. These notes will be posted on the City’s website no later than one week after the event. In addition, the results of these events will be communicated in a wrap up community meeting.
- **Standing committees:** Meeting minutes will be taken by recording secretary and posted online no later than 5 days after the standing meeting occurs. A hard copy of the minutes will be available in the City Clerk’s office.
- **Social networking:** Communications Department is responsible for monitoring social media and website feedback and will respond to public posts no later than 48 hours after the post was made, as needed. Due to shifting user preferences and popularity of social media outlets, the City should be open to expanding their presence to a wide range of outlets.
- **Surveys:** When utilized, surveys will typically be compiled by City Staff no later than 30 days after the survey was completed; however, this may vary by project. The results will be posted online. A hard copy of the results will be available in the City Clerk’s office.
- **Walkabouts:** The facilitator(s) of walkabouts, or tours for the public, will take notes and photographs during the activity. These results will be compiled by City Staff and posted on the City’s website no later than 10 days after the walkabout. A hard copy of the results will be available in the City Clerk’s office.
- **Ad hoc meetings and focus groups:** General information will be shared with the public, but names and specific details of participants may be kept confidential for the comfort of the participants unless requested otherwise.

III. Strategy Tiers

A communication plan requires a meaningful and thought-out process when utilizing its distribution channels to push out information to its stakeholders. The following tiers break down the planning process for the City’s flow of information. Note: Each of these tiers is ever-changing and is not limited to what is listed under each as more communication channels become popularized by the public.

Tier One: Basic methods for notice

Basic methods for notice will be utilized when advising the public of routine planning and community activities. Methods include but are not limited to:

- Website posting at www.berkleymich.org
- Community calendar posting on City website
- Notice of agenda postings on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Nextdoor)
- WBRK Notifications
 - Announcements at televised meetings of the City Council (aired on WBRK and YouTube)
- Posting at City buildings and facilities
- Legal notice in Woodward Talk (paper of record)

- Digital newsletter

Tier Two: Enhanced methods for notice

Enhanced methods for notice will be used when trying to reach out to the community and ask for input on a broad range of planning, ordinance, and policy issues. These methods may require additional resources compared to the Tier One approaches. Methods include but are not limited to:

- Email blasts
- Newspaper Paid Posting
- Post Card Mailings
- Digital display in City Hall
- Media notification/press releases
- Messages on water bills
- Distribution to media and partner businesses and organizations (i.e. Chamber of Commerce)

Tier Three: Active engagement methods for notice

Active methods for notice will be used when trying to actively engage the community and ask for input. These approaches will typically be utilized for major community events. These methods will require more resources than the first two tiers. Methods include but are not limited to:

- Social media marketing outreach
- Community workshops
- Surveys
- Canvassing
- Solutions mapping/workshops (i.e. ESRI mapping tools)
- Crowdsourcing
- One-on-one interviews

These tiers allow the City of Berkley to encourage and plan for public input, rather than simply reacting to it. Proactively engaging our audience sectors and stakeholders fosters a sense of ownership and prevents delays caused by unforeseen complications.

When developing public policy and planning events, the sooner the public is aware, the easier it will be for new ideas to be incorporated into the planning process. The planning process typically falls into three categories. Below describe each of the categories and some of the topics that occur often throughout our community.

Informational/Educational – Intended to inform or educate/enlighten the community on City services, programs, special non-emergency work that may affect everyday activity. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Construction
- Water main work
- Trash and Yard Waste pick-up

Special Event/Administration – Intended to share or publicize special events, meetings, or non-emergency situations in which the City may need public engagement in some capacity. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Community meetings (i.e. Fire Open House, Parks & Rec Master Plan)
- Community events (i.e. Berkley Days, Artbash, Cruisefest, and the Holiday Lights Parade)
- Ballot proposals
- Operational & Rate changes (i.e. water or tax rate increases)

Crisis – Urgent situations that have an adverse effect on the safe and well-being of the community

- See emergency operations plan

IV. Media Distribution

Additionally, the City of Berkley will facilitate communication and share information to reach our audiences by communicating with various groups and the following media outlets:

- Core media – local print and broadcast media
- City of Berkley communication group - employees, elected officials, City affiliates
- Expanded media - media groups who share key or critical information with the public
- Special interest groups – receive press releases for special-interest areas
- Local communications group – public offices in the Oakland County area representing local agencies and governments
- E-mail lists, social media networks – receive information in various formats

A complete list of the City’s distribution list is included in the appendices of this document. (See Appendix A-2)

V. Event Posting on Community Calendars

Many organizations and agencies offer free program and event postings on their websites’ community calendar. This is an easy and economical way to distribute information to the public about the City’s upcoming programs and events.

City departments are encouraged to take advantage of this free opportunity to post upcoming City meeting, program and event dates on community calendars. A complete list of sites, in priority order, used by the City for posting events on local community calendars can be found in the appendices of this document.

(See Appendix A-3)

VI. Posting Information and Literature in City Facilities

Purpose

- 1) To ensure that only City of Berkley departments or other City government partners or county agencies are allowed to post materials in Berkley City Hall and other City buildings and facilities.
- 2) To ensure that informational postings are not derogatory to any individual or group.
- 3) To ensure that postings appropriately reflect the character and goals of the City of Berkley.

Posting of Information & Literature in City Buildings & Facilities Policy:

- A. Who May Post Information: Posters, fliers, advertisements, announcements, and informational literature may be posted only by City of Berkley departments and other City government partners (DDA, Berkley Chamber of Commerce, etc., as approved by the Community Engagement Officer or county agency (Oakland County Resources for Seniors, Oakland County

Meals on Wheels, etc., as approved by the Community Engagement Officer. Any materials to be posted in a City of Berkley building or facility must be approved prior to posting by the Community Engagement Officer, unless the information has received prior approval by the Community Engagement Officer during its design and production.

- B. Posting Areas: Posters, fliers, advertisements, announcements and informational literature may be posted only in the lobby of City of Berkley buildings and facilities, or in the display cases that are available at some of those facilities and in City of Berkley parks. Items should be posted at, or near, a customer-service window, lobby entrance windows or doors, or in designated lobby display stands.
- C. Posting Removal: Expired posters/fliers will be removed by City staff upon their expiration or when the information is no longer pertinent. Any materials posted in City Hall or at any City facility that have not been approved are subject to be removed.
- D. Poster Criteria: Any material that is posted at City Hall or any other City facility will have clear evidence that the information being advertised is being sponsored or offered by the City of Berkley, or deemed as pertinent information that would be of interest to City of Berkley residents. All City of Berkley programs, services and events that are advertised should have the City of Berkley’s seal or logo clearly displayed on the material. Any article posted must not be found to be in bad taste or to blatantly offensive to any individual or group, or to be any form of harassment.

VII. City of Berkley Website

The City of Berkley developed its first website in 1987. Since that time, the site has been redesigned several times in order to keep up with changing technology. What began as only a few pages has now grown into a site that offers the public a vast amount of information and resources.

The City of Berkley develops, maintains, hosts the files and provides security for the City’s website. The City’s Information Technology Department is responsible for the programming, security and overall management of the site. The City’s Community Engagement Officer works with City departments to help ensure that all site information is current, accessible, and informative so users can search and find the information that they need. Each City department works hard to maintain and provide information on the site that is useful and informative to Berkley citizens, the media, potential residents, business owners, and site visitors. The site offers electronic forms, publications and documents, economic development information, community information, government information, links to other resources, City news, event information, a listing of City jobs, public notices, programs and events, parks, and facility details and other information.

A) Website Objective and Goals

Objective: Provide a citizen-focused and visitor-friendly City government website.

Goals:

- To improve and enhance the image of the City of Berkley.
- To help the public quickly and easily accomplish their most critical tasks online and find the information they seek.
- To describe what the City has to offer in terms of services, programs and events.
- To keep public information available to citizens and visitors, and to make the site easy to search and find the information they seek.

- To provide public information and a large number of the City’s public records to make them easily accessible to the public, in accordance to the Michigan Freedom of Information Act, enacted in 1977.
- To bring greater recognition and support to City of Berkley programs and services.
- To keep all website information informative, available, and current to the best of our ability.
- To communicate our successes and challenges to citizens.
- To continue to learn new technologies and innovative ways to share information with the public on the City of Berkley website.

B) Domain Name Integrity

The City of Berkley is the owner of the “Berkleymich.org” domain name. Domain names are used in websites and e-mail addresses to uniquely identify computers and networks. The domain name is the core of an organization’s or program’s internet identity or its online brand. Managed domain names that are able to use the .gov extension are required to meet certain eligibility requirements. Domain names with the extension include .gov, -NSN.gov, and .fed.US are managed by the Government Domain Registration and Services Office under the US General Services Administration (GSA).

C) Berkleymich.org Specifics

The City of Berkley website was redesigned in 2009 using the asp.net programming language. The site uses various databases to pull information from City departments to the appropriate areas on the site. Updates to the site are usually made on a daily basis.

D) Content Management for Berkleymich.org

The Community Engagement Officer provides each City department with a content management system for website updates. Each department has an assigned website administrator who is responsible for updating and posting information to their department’s pages on the site. Access to numerous City of Berkley public records is convenient and available via the website. Information can be found easily by using the search feature or browsing through the icon guides on each page that routes visitors to government, community and business information, City departments, City forms and publications, City news and events, public notices, press releases, and job openings.

Visitors to the site can easily contact the City’s Community Engagement Officer for any information that they are unable to locate by clicking on the “Contact Us” listed within the Quick Links on the right-hand side of each webpage. The Community Engagement Officer will route the message to the appropriate department employee for an answer and will follow up to see that the response has been made for each message received.

If inaccurate information is found on the City’s site, we encourage visitors to use the contact form option on the “Contact Us” page to send an e-mail of the information that needs updating, or any problems that they encounter on the website. We also appreciate any comments and suggestions from site visitors on ways to improve the site and information that they would like to see available in the future.

If visitors or City officials are unable to locate the information that they seek on the website, they are encouraged to e-mail the Community Engagement Officer by using the “Contact Us” link on each web page or by contacting the Community Engagement Officer, tmathes@Berkleymich.net or by phone at (248) 658-3333.

VII. Government Access Channel Guidelines and Policy

Objective:

In 2009, the City of Berkley received the rights to broadcast information to the public by way of a public access channel named WBRK, on COMCAST Cable Channel 17. (See Appendix A-5 Cable TV Fact Sheet) In 2010, WOW granted permission to the City to broadcast information on their Cable Channel 10. The City of Berkley’s Information Technology Department (IT), the Community Engagement Officer and their broadcasting partner, CMN Media, will be responsible for maintaining the equipment, documentation and relationship with COMCAST Cable and WOW in order to continue the operation of the channels.

The objective of this policy is to specify the appropriate use of the City of Berkley’s government access channel, hereinafter called the “WBRK” channel. The WBRK channel is used to share, inform and provide useful and educational information to viewers in the community. This policy shall govern the availability and use of the City of Berkley’s WBRK channel as broadcast on COMCAST Cable Channel 17 and WOW cable channel 10 in Berkley.

Policy: Availability of the WBRK Channel

The WBRK channel is available to broadcast video programming and includes, but is not limited to, City-sponsored events and programs, public notices, public meetings, municipal services, job openings, emergency information, City presentations, community information, educational videos, local school information and events, local weather and any other information deemed appropriate by the City of Berkley’s Community Engagement Officer. The channel may also offer assistance with sharing information about a community service provider to include, but not limited to, the Berkley Downtown Development Authority (DDA), Berkley Chamber of Commerce and others. In addition, the City is contracting with CMN Media to record and broadcast two City Council meetings per month, and one Planning Commission meeting per month.

Non-profit organizations may submit information to inform the public of upcoming events and programs that may be of interest to viewers in the broadcast area. Information received will be available on the WBRK channel for a maximum of four weeks or until the date of the event passes. All requests for publicity will be broadcast only if deemed appropriate by the Community Engagement Officer.

The City of Berkley strictly prohibits the use of any program material that may contain obscene material, sexually explicit conduct, indecency, nudity or material soliciting, or promoting unlawful conduct. All City of Berkley and non-profit organization programming requests should be submitted to the Community Engagement Officer.

The Community Engagement Officer will be responsible for determining if information/video requests are acceptable, meet the objectives set forth in this policy and meet the requirements of the franchising authorities that allow the City of Berkley to broadcast on the WBRK channel.

(See Appendix A-6 City of Berkley PEG Channel Rules of Operation)

Policy: Programming Content Guidelines

The programming schedule and content for the WBRK channel will be the responsibility of the Community Engagement Officer or the City’s contracting partner, CMN Media. The Community Engagement Officer and other staff will work to develop ideas for original programming that

complements or informs the public of City events and programs and educates viewers about issues and/or services offered by the City.

Videotaping for use on the WBRK channel will be performed by CMN Media, the Community Engagement Officer, other City staff, or other outside sources approved by the Community Engagement Officer. Video editing will be performed by CMN Media with direction from the Community Engagement Officer.

Public service announcements (PSAs), videotape or programming from outside agencies must meet certain criteria (see below) to meet approval for broadcast on the City’s WBRK channel.

The programming content criteria will consist only of material designed to inform, entertain, and educate the public regarding:

- 1) The City of Berkley municipal government
- 2) Agencies, departments and organizations funded in whole or in part by federal, state or local tax funds
- 3) Material designed to communicate, educate, inform, or examine the social, economic and cultural history and future of the City
- 4) Current news, items and information about local events that may be of interest to viewers;
- 5) Material designed to respond to an immediate short-term community situation, emergency or need
- 6) Information provided by community service providers and non-profit organizations that is deemed appropriate. Material must not promote a particular sect or religion but may include information about a community service offered by a faith-based organization

Policy: Responsibility for Programming

In an effort to meet required, responsible programming on the City of Berkley’s WBRK channel, the following guidelines will be followed:

- 1) The Community Engagement Officer will retain the right to determine the programming content and schedule for the City’s WBRK channel.
- 2) Should human error result in the broadcast of incorrect information over the WBRK channel, the City shall not be liable for the inaccuracy of the information.
- 3) Typically, programs broadcast on the WBRK channel will be tape-delayed and may be repeated on a pre-determined basis, as appropriate.

Policy: Requests to Air Programming from Outside Agencies or City Service Providers

It will be the responsibility of the City’s Community Engagement Officer to receive requests for programming from outside agencies and City service providers and to communicate the criteria and video requirements needed to submit items for programming on WBRK.

City staff are unable, and will not be required to participate in, the actual videotaping of events, meetings, programs, etc. from those requests received from outside sources and agencies to develop programming. The Community Engagement Officer will need to coordinate and determine if such requests can be met and if the requestor will provide videotape to CMN Media for editing, or if there are any City departmental staff that may be involved or have an interest in the programming and are available to assist with videotaping.

Requests for programming from outside agencies or City service providers should be made in writing to the Community Engagement Officer a minimum of four (4) weeks prior to the date that the requested programming should air.

The following guidelines will be used to determine the suitability of a submitted request:

A) Content Review Prior to Broadcast

The Community Engagement Officer will review all programming submitted for broadcast on Berkley’s WBRK channel to assure that it adheres to the guidelines set forth in this document (see section III of this chapter). Appeals regarding the decisions of the Community Engagement Officer shall be submitted to the City Manager’s Office, 3338 Coolidge Hwy., Berkley, MI 48072.

B) Production Quality Requirements

Programming shall be limited to available broadcast space. Programming produced by eligible submitters and provided to the Community Engagement Officer for broadcast must conform to the following requirements to ensure compatibility and to safeguard equipment:

- 1) All programming must be submitted in the proper format for use on the channel. (see Appendix A-9 Format for PEG Channel Submittals from Outside Agencies)
- 2) Do not submit compressed files such as those used on the web or on an authorized DVD.
- 3) Videos must have a reasonable picture quality and audible sound. The Community Engagement Officer reserves the right to reject any media that has subpar audio or does not have reasonable picture quality.

Policy: Programming Restrictions

The following restrictions will be placed on any material submitted for broadcast on Berkley’s Government channel (WBRK):

A) Obscene and Indecent Material

No program, production or presentation shall be permitted to be transmitted on Berkley’s WBRK channel that involves any “obscene,” “offensive” or “indecent” material, defined as follows:

- I. Any material in a program and/or presentation that could subject the supplier thereof, the City of Berkley and cable providers to prosecution or penalty under local, state or federal law for the presentation of obscene or indecent material.
 - a. “Obscene programming” is programming or programming content that meets the following criteria: has no artistic, social or educational merit, appeals to prurient interests or is definable as obscene according to contemporary community standards.
 - b. “Offensive programming” is programming or programming content that is designed to cause anger, annoyance, harm, anxiety, aggression, resentment or hostility; defamatory material or material intended as a personal attack on an individual or organization.
 - c. “Indecent material” is programming or programming content that contains in whole or in part, subject matter, pictures or words or any other material that describes or depicts sexual or excretory activities or organs in a patently offensive manner as measured by contemporary community standards. Material on the channel shall be appropriate for all ages.

B) Political and Religious Purposes

The WBRK channel is not a medium to be used by elected or appointed federal, state or local officials, or by anyone else for political or personal use. Discussion of partisan and/or political issues not adhering to equal time guidelines shall not be broadcast on the WBRK channel. The channel is not to be used for any political campaigning.

In addition, the WBRK channel is not a medium to be used to promote a particular sect or religion, although a community service provided by a faith-based group may be promoted or publicized on the channel. The Community Engagement Officer will decide whether material adheres to this policy.

C) Sponsorship and Acknowledgement

Sponsorship (financial assistance) for any City of Berkley program or event by a business, individual or non-profit organization may be acknowledged on the Berkley WBRK channel, utilizing the following guidelines. This allows limited identification of sponsors without creating an advertising or promotional effect:

- 1) Sponsor credits may appear one time during the entirety of the program.
- 2) Sponsors may be identified by name and location, however, no call to action to patronize the business will be permitted.
- 3) On-screen talent and/or a voiceover may accompany a graphic acknowledging the business for no more than 10 seconds, during which the sponsor is identified and thanked for helping to support the program.
- 4) Sponsors must complete a WBRK Underwriting Credit Agreement. (See Appendix A-10 WBRK Underwriting Credit Agreement)

D) Copyright Infringement

The City of Berkley will not transmit any programming that infringes the copyright of another person or organization.

- 1) Content containing copyrighted materials shall not be broadcast without proper copyright authorization.
- 2) Any outside agency or City service provider that provides videotape for programming for the WBRK channel shall be responsible for obtaining all necessary copyright clearance with respect to such production or programming and shall hold the City harmless in any instance of copyright infringement.
- 3) The use of original artwork, music or designs on the City’s WBRK channel must be supported with a signed art release form. (See Appendix A-11 Art Release Form)
- 4) If an image, photograph or video of an individual appears on the WBRK channel, then a permission slip should be signed to give permission for its use, if at all possible. Particular attention to this form should be given in the event that the individual is a minor, in which case, parental approval is needed and a parent or guardian should complete and sign the permission slip form. (See Appendix A-12, Media Permission Slip) Note: It will not be necessary to obtain permission from individuals who may be included in any images or videotape taken in a public place, such as a public park or community event.
- 5) When deemed appropriate by the City Manager, credit may be cited on the WBRK channel when special assistance has been provided by a commercial or charitable enterprise.
- 6) WBRK channel programs shall not be sold or commercially distributed without the express permission and authorization of the City of Berkley City Council.

- 7) All programming produced using WBRK channel equipment and/or personnel and/or agents of the City of Berkley performing at the specific request of the City shall be the property of the City of Berkley. All programming will be used only as administratively deemed appropriate. Any request to use any content produced for the Berkley WBRK channel by City employees or any agent performing work for the City of Berkley is prohibited without the express written consent of the City of Berkley (i.e. submission in award competitions).

E) Legal Permissions

Eligible program and/or public service announcement submitters should secure all rights, licenses, permissions and consents necessary for use of their productions. Neither the City of Berkley, nor the cable providers will assume a role of legal adviser in these matters.



Chapter 4

Creation of Public Information Materials Policy & Procedure

I. Objective

The objective of this policy is to specify the guidelines to follow when creating any public information materials that will represent the City of Berkley, the Berkley City Council and Mayor, City departments, City policies and procedures, City information, City programs and events, etc.

II. Purpose of the Policy

- 1) To present public information materials in a manner consistent with the City Council’s policies and the City’s mission, vision, values.
- 2) To ensure that the creation and use of public information materials are consistent with, and supportive of, the City’s Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and long-range established goals.
- 3) To ensure consistency and uniformity in the creation, appearance, and use of public information materials.
- 4) To ensure that reasonable standards of quality are met in the creation and use of public information materials and to maximize economy and efficiency in the creation and use of public information materials.
- 5) To ensure that all communication materials represent the City of Berkley professionally and that recipients are able to easily ascertain that the communication piece is a legitimate item distributed by the City.

III. Description of Public Information Materials

E-mails/e-mail blasts	Employee information call-in line
Meetings	Television PSAs /news/commercials
Social media	City of Berkley public governmental channel,
City of Berkley website	Comcast channel 17, WOW Channel 10
City of Berkley Intranet site	Radio
Newspaper ads/articles	Videos
Presentations	Webinars/webcasts
Press releases	Training sessions
Letters	City of Berkley citizen newsletter
Publications	Posters
Manuals	Fliers
Handouts	Signs
Banners	Word of mouth
Booklets	Mass mailings/direct mail
Brochures	Electronic mailing list service
Blogs	Fax
Door hangers	Promotional items (pens, magnets, etc.)
City employees	City hold messages
Elected officials	Regional/national/international media
Voicemail	Special events
Community information call-in line	Utility bill inserts

IV. Policy: Design and Distribution of Public Information Materials

The City’s Community Engagement Officer shall be involved in the design and distribution of all printed public materials that will represent the City and will be developed for public consumption. Individual departments may create their own public information materials, without input from the Community Engagement Officer, if those materials are being produced for a small audience and will not be displayed, mass mailed, etc. (Examples: memorandums, departmental letters, fliers or handouts for a committee meeting of 20 or less, etc.)

If materials are developed that will be mass produced, developed to advertise programs, events or services, and will be distributed to a large audience, then a copy of those materials must be sent to the Community Engagement Officer for approval prior to distribution.

This will ensure that all materials distributed to the public agree with the guidelines in place to meet the appearance, format, and message that effectively represent the City of Berkley. Items that would fall into this category include, but are not limited to:

- Materials placed in City buildings and facilities for advertisement of City programs, services and events
- Materials mass produced to be included as folder inserts or used as handout materials
Newsletters (printed and/or distributed by e-mail to a large number of recipients) Promotional items (key chains, banners, magnets, etc.)
- Posters, fliers or announcements placed throughout the community or in City buildings and facilities
- Brochures, pamphlets, mass-produced letters, postcards, etc.

If possible, the Public Information Materials Request Form (see Appendix A-1) should be completed and submitted to the Community Engagement Officer for approval before printing of those materials.

Policy on Use of the Berkley City Logo and Tagline “Berkley, where you want to Be”

I. Objective

This policy is designed to help establish a concise appearance and appropriate use of Berkley’s City seal and the “Berkley, Where you want to Be” Tag line.

II. Policy for Use of the City Seal

- 1) The Berkley City seal should always be included on all public materials, correspondence and items for distribution that represent a directive, legal matters or official business, governed by and distributed from, the City of Berkley and/or its elected officials. The City seal assures the recipient that the item is a legitimate and official document from a City of Berkley government office or official. Such items include, but are not limited to, letterhead, business cards, policies, handbooks, proclamations, applications, official City maps, etc.
- 2) The City seal should always be clear and legible on any document or City communication item, as mentioned above. The City seal should always be placed in a visible and appropriate location

on the document. Copies of the City seal, in various formats that meet the standards set forth in this policy, are available on the City’s computer network “public” drive. If there is a need for the City seal to be used on items that are larger than the resolution of the seal that is provided in this location, please contact the Community Engagement Officer for assistance in obtaining the appropriate format and resolution of the City seal for this use.

- 3) In order to ensure consistency, the Berkley City seal shall not be modified in any way. Staff should see the example of the City seal included in this policy to verify that they are using the approved City seal image on City documents, communications items and other materials. The City seal may, upon approval of the Community Engagement Officer, share space with other graphic elements such as the Public Safety Department seal.
- 4) The Berkley City seal should always be printed using the colors specified in the following pages of this policy, or in unicolor with those same specifications, or standard black and white.

III. Policy for Use of the “Berkley, Where you want to Be” Tagline

- 1) The “Berkley, Where you want to Be” Tag line shall be included on all public materials, and items for distribution, that are sent from City of Berkley departments that include general information, or advertise and inform the public about City events, facilities and programs.

In order to strengthen the recognition of the “Berkley, Where you want to Be” Tag line, it should be used freely on any posters, fliers, postcards or literature that do not represent “official” City business, directives or legal documents. The City Tag line is used as part of the City’s “branding” efforts and may help to distinguish the City from others with an identifiable image that builds community pride and can represent the community as a whole. As a rule, the Tag line should not be modified in any way.

- 2) The “Berkley, Where you want to Be” Tag line should always be clear and legible on any materials where it is used and placed in a visible and appropriate location on the document. Copies of the City Tag line, in various formats that meet the standards set forth in this policy, are available on the City’s computer network “public” drive. If there is a need for the City Tag line to be used on items that are larger than the resolution of the seal that is provided in this location, please contact the Community Engagement Officer for assistance in obtaining the appropriate format and resolution of the Tag line for this use.
- 3) With the approval of the Community Engagement Officer, it may be acceptable for City departments to slightly alter the tag line to represent their department. For example, the Parks and Recreation Department may wish to say, “Berkley, A Great Place to Play!” The Community Development Department may wish to say, “Berkley, Where you want to Be in Business!” Any department desiring to change the Tag line’s tag line should make their request in writing (e-mail is acceptable) to the Community Engagement Officer for approval.
- 4) The City Tag line must always be printed using the colors specified in the following pages of this policy, or in standard black and white if necessary. The Community Engagement Officer must review and authorize any proposed deviations from the standard color scheme (not including black-and-white where necessary).

- 5) The City Tag line is trademarked and should always appear with the ® symbol. The current Tag line with the ® symbol can be found on the City's computer network "public" drive. Please inquire with the Community Engagement Officer if you are unable to locate it.
- 6) Entities outside the City government wishing to use the Tag line must obtain express written permission from the City Council. Requests in writing should specify exactly how the Tag line will be used. The Tag line must not be altered in any way except with the express written permission of the Community Engagement Officer.



Chapter 5

News Release and Public Service Announcements (PSA) Guidelines and Submittal Policy

I. Objective

The objective of this policy is to specify the guidelines for submitting information to the media to advertise and inform the public of newsworthy City issues, meetings, programs, events or other pertinent information.

II. Policy: News Releases / PSAs

A news release is a free form of information distribution sent out, typically on a routine basis, to local media outlets to seek their assistance in publicizing information for the City.

Public service announcements (PSAs) are announcements made by TV and radio stations to promote an upcoming meeting, event, or program. PSAs are usually announced on the radio, so a short script will need to be written that can be read in 15-20 seconds with the details of the event and a phone number and website address to contact for more information. Public service announcements should be sent two to four weeks before the event.

Any City department that has information deemed necessary for distribution to the public, for the purpose of informing them of City issues, meetings, notices, programs and events, should follow the guidelines of this policy to request that a news release or PSA be issued by the City’s Community Engagement Officer on their behalf. **All press/news releases and PSAs distributed to the media from the City of Berkley will be done so only by the City’s Community Engagement Officer, or by his or her designee.**

The only exception to this policy will be the Public Safety Department, which employs its own Community Engagement Officer with the responsibility of information distribution from the department and the distribution of any emergency news information that may need immediate release to support the safety and wellbeing of City citizens.

A. Guidelines for Request Submittal

City staff should advise their department head or supervisor about information that should be made public and the need for a news release or PSA. The department head may then wish to assist with the information to be included in the release/announcement. After all pertinent information to be included has been compiled; the department head or their designee must give their final approval before sending the request and information to the Community Engagement Officer for distribution. It will be the responsibility of the requesting staff member and the department head to ensure that all information to be included is accurate and appropriate for release to the public.

A draft of the release/announcement, with pertinent and detailed information, should be submitted to the Community Engagement Officer via e-mail for review, editing, and distribution.

A press release request should be received by the Community Engagement Officer at least 10 days prior to the date of the program or event. A PSA request should be received by the Community Engagement Officer at least 4 weeks prior to the date of the program or event. The exception to this policy will be those events and/or situations that are deemed an emergency or require immediate attention.

B. Required Information for a City of Berkley News Release

- 1) Name of program, meeting, event or issue to be addressed
- 2) Purpose of the program, meeting, event, or issue to be addressed
- 3) Brief description

- 4) Location
- 5) Dates (when held and/or any deadlines for registration, etc.)
- 6) Time
- 7) Cost, if applicable
- 8) Sponsors or contributing organizations
- 9) Contact name, along with contact information (job title, department, phone number, e-mail address, website address, etc.)

C. Required Information for a City of Berkley PSA

- 1) Who is offering/sponsoring the event, program or meeting and/or who should attend?
- 2) Why should someone attend the event, program or meeting?
- 3) What is the event, program or meeting about?
- 4) When will the event, program or meeting be held?
- 5) Where will the event, program, or meeting be held?
- 6) How can you get more information (website, call, visit, etc.)?
- 7) Contact Information (name and telephone number) in case the station has a question or needs more information. If the contact information should be broadcast on the air, it should be indicated in the PSA.

After the Community Engagement Officer finalizes the news release/PSA for distribution, a copy will be sent to the department head or their designee for review. It is imperative that any request for changes to the release be kept to a minimum and that notice of such changes be made immediately to the Community Engagement Officer so all necessary media deadlines can be met for news release/PSA distribution.

D. News Release Distribution

The Community Engagement Officer maintains a media list with contact information for all agencies in the local area, including newspapers, radio stations, magazines, newsletters, publications, trade journals, reporters, editors, website managers for media agencies, individuals who request to be placed on the City’s media distribution list, special agencies or organizations (business, careers, environmental, health and wellness), etc. This distribution list is maintained and continually updated by the Community Engagement Officer.

Note: During a time of crisis, communication methods will be modified and optimized depending on availability of resources (power outages, etc.).

News Release Distribution to Others

City news releases generally will be sent to all City Core Media and City of Berkley Communication Group contacts. When applicable, the news release may also be distributed to contacts from the City’s Expanded Media, Special Interest Group and Local Communications Group lists.

Members from each these groups are listed on the City of Berkley News and Information Distribution List (see Appendix A-2).

The Community Engagement Officer will keep track of who receives news releases.

If for some reason, a news release should not be distributed to some particular media contacts, then the Community Engagement Officer should receive that information in the news release request that is first

made to the Community Engagement Officer. Request of this nature should specify who should be omitted from distribution and why.

If a City department has focus groups, individuals, or organizations that are not a part of the City’s media distribution list, and the department would like them to receive a specific news release, then a complete list of names and e-mail addresses must be provided to the Community Engagement Officer for distribution at the time the news release request is made.

E. News Release Follow-Up

If media coverage is strongly desired for a City announcement, special event, etc. then, the Community Engagement Officer may follow up the news release with a telephone call to media representatives to make sure the information has been received, since there is always the possibility that the recipient may be out sick or on vacation, left their position, forgotten about the announcement or experienced e-mail problems. For those reasons, following up with a telephone call is a must for times when we definitely want to receive media coverage. The call is to confirm that the information has been received, to ask if they need more details and to let them know we hope they can send someone to cover the City’s press conference, event, etc. The Community Engagement Officer will keep track of these outreach efforts.

Note: Timing is of the utmost importance in getting information to the media. But timing is also a double-edged sword in working with the media – contact them too soon and they may forget your announcement, contact them too late and they may already be scheduled to cover or run other information. At times, you may have submitted information to the media in a timely manner, but something else may take priority and deny immediate coverage. Therefore, the Community Engagement Officer will work to meet all media deadlines and make follow-up calls, if necessary, to work to share City of Berkley news and information through the media.

F. PSA Distribution

The Community Engagement Officer maintains a media list with contact information for local radio and television stations. PSAs will be sent to contacts on this list, unless the PSA requestor has requested otherwise.

If a PSA has no fixed time limit, it may be necessary to “freshen” the message by sending a new PSA every few months or weeks. If so, the script will indicate an “Air until [date],” and a new PSA should be sent after the expiration date of the old one.

III. City of Berkley News Release / PSA Specifications

A. News Release Specifications

All City of Berkley news releases will follow the Associated Press (AP) Writing Style Guide. (See Appendix A-4)

City of Berkley news releases should be succinct.
The news release draft should be typed using the Calibri or Arial font, regular-size 12.

The news release title should be a catchy, short, one-line summary of the included information. A good title will grab attention; a bad headline could mean that your release is headed for the trash bin without ever being read.

The news release should contain five main components:

- 1) What: one sentence saying what your event is
- 2) Where: location of your event
- 3) When: the date and time of the event
- 4) Why: This should be short, one to two paragraphs, about why you are holding this event
- 5) Who: include the name of at least one, and possibly two, contact people with contact information for both, including office and possibly cell phone numbers. This way, the reporter can call or e-mail to ask for more details. Contacts should be readily available to reporters and must respond quickly to their request for more information.

City of Berkley news releases should be written with the most newsworthy information first, followed by less crucial details in descending order of newsworthiness and importance. This format helps catch the attention of busy readers and allows the media to get the most crucial information first.

It is a good idea to use quotations from key individuals to convey the human interest element of the news story or information to the media. For every quote used in the news release, the person’s first and last name and their title, or how they are associated with the information, should be included in the release.

At the end of the news release, a brief summary or an acknowledgement of groups, individuals, businesses or foundations involved in the event, providing support or sponsorship of the program should be included.

If a photo is available and should be used, it should be directly related and a suggested caption and/or the names of individuals in the photograph included. Many times, media representatives will contact the Community Engagement Officer to request the photo, in a high resolution of at least 300 dpi, be sent to them in a separate email for use in printed media. Therefore, all photos submitted for use with a news release should be clear and in a high-resolution .jpg format.

B. PSA Specifications

A PSA should be concise enough to be read aloud in thirty seconds or less. Read the PSA out loud, and note the time it takes.

PSAs should be sent on City of Berkley letterhead.

The PSA draft should be typed using the Calibri or Arial font, regular-size 12.

PSAs must include contact information (name and office and cell numbers) in case the station has a question or needs more information.



Chapter 6

Policy for Requesting & Releasing Public Information Documents

I. Policy for Releasing City Information to the Media

This policy was designed to keep department heads and the City Manager’s Office informed about statements made to the press and to ensure that appropriate and necessary information is made available to citizens through the media.

A) Department Spokesperson

- I. The Community Engagement Officer and City Manager’s Office will be the spokesperson for each department and each department head will be the designated backup spokesperson for times when the Community Engagement Officer or City Manager’s Office are unavailable or need assistance.
- II. All departments will provide the Community Engagement Officer with after-hours contact number for the Department Head.
- III. The Berkley Public Safety Department assigns a sergeant to act as the department’s Community Engagement Officer. Contact information for the Public Safety Department’s Community Engagement Officer, Director, and Administrative Lieutenant shall be provided to the City’s Community Engagement Officer.

Berkley Public Safety Department

The Berkley Public Safety Department’s Community Engagement Officer is the media spokesperson for the department. The department follows established department protocol; therefore, they are exempt from this policy.

B) Responsibilities of the Spokesperson

- I. When any City employee is contacted by a media representative or reporter, he/she should immediately contact the department head and Community Engagement Officer, or in their absence, the City Manager’s Office, to meet, answer questions or provide an interview to any media representative or reporter that may contact the department.
- II. When the department is contacted by the media, they should provide answers as accurately and as quickly as possible. In the event that a department head or Community Engagement Officer believes another department employee would be best suited to speak to the media about their topic of interest, the department spokesperson should alert that person that they will be contacted by the media before the media contacts them, so that person can prepare with the Community Engagement Officer the appropriate response or seek assistance with their responses from the department head or Community Engagement Officer.
- III. The Community Engagement Officer is available to assist all department heads, City staff, or elected official with any requests for information, media inquiries, or interview assistance that they may encounter.
- IV. The department should immediately inform the Community Engagement Officer of any newsworthy communication between any City employee and the media.
- V. Department heads should provide a copy of any departmental information that has been distributed to the media to the Community Engagement Officer immediately.
- VI. Mobile phone, texting, or e-mails are good tools in a time crunch or crisis to fulfill these requirements.

C) Responsibilities of the Community Engagement Officer

- I. The Community Engagement Officer will contact the appropriate department head when contacted by a media representative or reporter about any request for

departmental information, interview request or other information that can be handled at the departmental level. If the department spokesperson is unavailable, the Community Engagement Officer or City Manager’s Office will be the main contact.

- II. The Community Engagement Officer will consult with the department head concerning news releases and announcements, or any request for information about his/her department, before issuing news about the department. A copy of any release or announcement sent to the media about the department will be provided to the department head.
- III. All newspaper, radio, television advertisements, public service announcements, news releases, etc., should be sent to the Community Engagement Officer for review and distribution to the City’s media contacts, and not distributed by individual departments.
- IV. The Community Engagement Officer is available to work with all departments in the distribution of City news. The Community Engagement Officer is available to assist any City employee or elected official with the arrangement of print, radio, and television interviews and appearances, as well as, deemed appropriate by the Community Engagement Officer.

D) Responsibility of City Employees

- I. Any employee contacted by a media representative or reporter about City business should direct them to the Community Engagement Officer.
- II. If a department has a prepared news release for the media, it should always be given to the Community Engagement Officer for distribution.
- III. If a department would like to publicize an event, service, program, etc., the Community Engagement Officer should be contacted to discuss the means of distribution (print media, broadcast media, City website, City newsletter, e-mail blasts, social media, WBRK channel, etc.). Scheduling of interviews on television or radio should be done through the Community Engagement Officer. The Community Engagement Officer should always be notified of any interviews with the media. Whenever possible, this notification shall take place in advance of the interview.
- IV. The Community Engagement Officer should take the lead in organizing news conferences intended to disseminate information about the City. The Community Engagement Officer is available to assist any City spokesperson or elected official with City news conferences as needed. The Community Engagement Officer or City Manager’s Office will speak on behalf of the City.

E) Request for City Employee Information (personal/business)

- I. Any media representative/reporter or anyone seeking access to a City employee’s personal information must be referred to the City Clerk in accordance with the City’s adopted Freedom of Information Act Procedures and Guidelines (This includes any request for personal information such as home address, personal telephone number, etc.).
- II. Some City personnel records are considered public record, including current salary information, salary history, promotion and discipline information, etc. This information will be released only by the City Clerk.

F) Information to be Released: Public Information

- I. Information that is public record will be released upon request. (Examples include; City of Berkley Ordinances and minutes from open meetings)

- II. It is the policy of the City of Berkley that all persons, except those who are serving a sentence of imprisonment, consistent with the Michigan Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), are entitled to full and complete information regarding the affairs of government and the official acts of those who represent them as public officials and employees. The people shall be informed so that they fully participate in the democratic process.
- III. The City of Berkley's policy with respect to FOIA requests is to comply with State law in all respects and to respond to FOIA requests in a consistent, fair, and even-handed manner regardless of who makes such a request.
- IV. The City of Berkley acknowledges that it has a legal obligation to disclose all nonexempt public records in its possession pursuant to a FOIA request. The City of Berkley acknowledges that sometimes it is necessary to invoke the exemptions identified under FOIA in order to ensure the effective operation of government and to protect the privacy of individuals.
- V. The City of Berkley will protect the public's interest in disclosure while balancing the requirement to withhold or redact portions of certain records. The City of Berkley's policy is to disclose public records consistent with and in compliance with State law.
- VI. City employees should never hesitate to seek assistance from the City Clerk if they have any questions or concerns about request for information or the release of any City records.
- VII. City employees will not release any debatable public records until they have received authorization from one of the following: the City Clerk, City Manager, or City Attorney. "Debatable" in this instance refers to records that are debatably public records or not. It also references potentially confidential public records.

G) Information to be Released: Public Records

- I. All requests for public records should be received or forwarded to the City Clerk. The City Clerk's Office will promptly send information requested in a timely manner to the recipient.
- II. The City Clerk will seek the guidance of the City Attorney when a request is received and assistance is needed to determine if the requested information can be released.

H) Information that Cannot be Released

- I. Personal information (age, home address, home or personal telephone numbers, etc.) for City employees should never be released.
- II. Information about pending court cases or administrative actions, personnel matters, real-estate negotiations by the City or economic development matters covered by nondisclosure agreements.
- III. Predictions or comments about a pending decision.
- IV. Statements of opinion or conjecture.

****Departments should plan carefully before releasing information of major importance; consultation with the Community Engagement Officer is advised****

I) Acting Community Engagement Officer

- I. In certain circumstances, the City's Community Engagement Officer may be unavailable. Particularly in crisis or time-sensitive situations, an acting Community Engagement Officer will substitute until the Community Engagement Officer is available. The acting Community Engagement Officer will be designated by the City Manager.

J) Reference

- I. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) information and forms can be found on the City web site here: http://www.berkleymich.org/departments/city_clerk/FOIA.php



Chapter 7

Policy for Requesting Ceremonial Documents

I. Requesting Ceremonial Documents (Proclamations)

Proclamations are ceremonial documents signed by the Mayor and issued for public awareness, charitable fundraising campaigns, arts and cultural celebrations, and special honors. To start the ceremonial document process, an individual or organization should submit a written request via e-mail or U.S. mail. To ensure efficient processing of requests, the City asks that requests be made at least 10 business days in advance of the date the document is needed. If you have questions about requesting a proclamation, please call Berkley’s City Clerk at (248) 658-3310.

Requests should include:

- Contact person’s first and last name, address and telephone number.
- A brief summary and/or background of the event or organization.
- The name and date (s) of the day, week, month or event to be proclaimed.
- Draft text for the proclamation that states why the proclamation is being made, adding any relevant history and background. This information is needed for creation and personalization of the proclamation.
- An indication of whether the proclamation should be mailed or will be picked up and, if so, what date.
- A date when the proclamation is needed.

Guidelines for City of Berkley Proclamations:

- For retirement proclamations, the person must have been employed with their current employer for 25 years or more.
- For birthday proclamations, the person must be at least 75 years of age.
- For wedding or religious anniversary proclamations, the anniversary must be 25 years or more and must be in five-year increments.

Submit proclamation requests to:

City of Berkley
Attn: City Clerk
3338 Coolidge Hwy.
Berkley, MI 48072
Office: (248) 658-3310
E-mail: vmitchell@berkleymich.net

Or deliver to the City Clerk in person at City Hall, 3338 Coolidge Highway.



Chapter 8

Media Request for an Interview with City Employee and/or Holding a Press Conference Policy & Guidelines

I. Purpose

The purpose of the policy articulated in this chapter is to provide City employees with guidelines for interacting with news media, and coordinating media interaction with the City’s COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER. In situations where a news conference may be needed to distribute information to the public, guidelines are set forth to help make the release of information successful and well organized.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all employees and departments of the City of Berkley. The Public Safety Department is exempt from this policy, due to the department having its own policies and procedures for release of information to the media pertaining to emergencies, crisis situations, and criminal investigations.

IV. Policy Overview

It shall be the policy of the City of Berkley to maintain and promote open avenues of communication between the City and the news media. If a member of the media asks for an interview with a City employee, the City will always try to meet their request. The City will seek to arrange an interview with the appropriate person who is most knowledgeable and best suited to share the information the media seek. This way, the City will be able to provide accurate, informed, and relevant information. The Community Engagement Officer and other City staff are expected to be responsive to all media inquiries and requests for interviews and information.

V. General Policy for Media Interviews

- If a City staff member is contacted by the media for an interview, they should notify their department head immediately before communicating with members of the media. Staff members and department heads should discuss only areas or programs for which they are responsible or have specific expertise.
- City department heads should notify the Community Engagement Officer when a member of the media has contacted their department about a specific interview or information. In an interview situation, a department head should try to contact the Community Engagement Officer before speaking with a member of the media. If the situation does not allow the departments head the opportunity to first contact the Community Engagement Officer, a follow-up call or e-mail should be sent as an update to the interview. The station identification, reporter’s name, contact information (e-mail address and office and mobile phone numbers) and subject matter should be included. A synopsis of the employee’s remarks should also be included in the message.
- If a reporter contacts an employee for specific fact verification and the reporter has already interviewed the employee in regards to a story, it is not necessary to contact the Community Engagement Officer before speaking with the reporter. If an employee has not previously had contact with the reporter and is contacted for fact verification, the employee should seek assistance from the Community Engagement Officer, after first contacting their immediate supervisor or department head. The department head is the key contact for each department and is responsible for the information disseminated by their key employees. No employee should speak with the media without reporting the media request to their supervisor or department head.
- When a department head has given permission for an employee to be interviewed by the media, and during the interview the employee does not know an answer to a reporter’s question, it is appropriate to answer, “I do not know, but I will get back to you with that

information.” The employee should always follow up with the reporter in a timely manner and provide that information, taking into account the reporter’s deadline. Be diligent and timely in your follow through.

- To avoid conflicting messages or confusion, department heads should always contact the Community Engagement Officer before they or someone from their department has spoken with the media.
- When communicating with the media, City staff should be mindful that they are perceived to be acting on behalf of the City. All employees should behave professionally and courteously and should avoid editorializing.
- City staff is required to be responsive to the media in a timely fashion. When a member of the media contacts a City employee, it is expected that the employee notify his/her department head and then respond to the reporter as soon as reasonably possible. City employees who may not feel comfortable discussing an issue may choose not to comment on the issue but are obligated to explain that their choice not to comment is not a reflection of department policy or City policy to avoid communicating with the media. Should such a situation arise, the staff member should contact the Community Engagement Officer as soon as possible.
- In any interview situation, a staff member or department head may decide to refer a member of the media to the Community Engagement Officer. This is completely acceptable. It is also OK to request that the Community Engagement Officer, your departmental spokesperson or other City staff member sit with you during your conversation with media representatives.

VI. Guidelines for Holding a News Conference

A news conference provides an opportunity to release information to the public through the media (both traditional and non-traditional). The Community Engagement Officer will be responsible for coordinating the setup of City news conferences, with the exception of press conferences held by the Public Safety Department. In order to be successful, news conferences must be well organized and should present timely, newsworthy information. The following guidelines will help make a City news conference successful and helps inform City staff of items that must be considered by the Community Engagement Officer when there is a need for a news conference and their assistance may be needed.

- News/Information – Hold a news conference when you need to provide new and/or updated information to the media in a timely manner or when several requests for information have been received by various news organizations.
- Location – The location should be easy for the media to access. Take into consideration the backdrop for television cameras and what will be seen behind the person speaking. (Suitable locations may include the front of the City Hall complex, or the City Council Chambers).
- Space – Consider the floor space needed for the speaker(s), podium, media and their equipment.
- Weather – If outside, consider potential weather concerns and have an alternate location available.
- Distractions – Always consider the possibility of distractions or issues that may cause problems during the news conference (excessive foot traffic, blocking entryways, noise, safety concerns, etc.).
- Timing – Timing is very important for news conferences. There should be no other major events scheduled at the time of the news conference. The best days of the week for coverage are Tuesday through Thursday. News conferences work best in the mornings and early afternoons so that reporters can meet their deadlines.

- Inviting an audience – To attract an audience for the news conference, it will be necessary to e-mail a media advisory about the event a few days before, if possible, to reporters. A follow-up phone call should be made to encourage attendance. In addition, remember to invite members of the audience who reflect the news or information being presented. For example, if the City is announcing the opening of a new children’s park and playground, then remember to have children present and ask supporters of the project to attend to show their support and be available for comment.
- Inviting policymakers – If you want to invite local policymakers to attend or speak at the news conference, then an invitation should be sent as early as possible and follow up with a phone call.
- Set-up – The set-up for a news conference should include a lectern and a microphone for the speakers to use when delivering their comments. Depending on your venue, you can provide chairs for the audience or they can stand. If the press conference is indoors, space should be available for television cameras at the back of the room or somewhere in the room that allows a direct line of sight for speakers to be captured on camera. Some camera operators will need to set up a microphone on the lectern, before the event begins, to be able to gain clear audio of the speaker(s).
- Sign-in – A table should be set up where the media is welcomed and where a sign-in sheet is available to record their name, affiliation and contact information. This sheet will help track which media outlets are attending the event.
- Visuals – Consider the visual impact of an event, especially for television cameras, and display a City of Berkley banner behind the speaker(s) or the City seal or logo on the front of the lectern.
- Press kit – A press kit can be made available to hand out to media at the news conference that includes fact sheets, a press release, maps, photographs, and other background material on the issue or news.
- Media – Expect television crews to arrive up to half an hour early for a news conference to get their equipment set up. In addition, it may be necessary to find a quiet space where outlets can interview individuals separately at the conclusion of the event.
- Program – The Community Engagement Officer should serve as the moderator for the press conference and will introduce the speakers and facilitate Q&A with reporters.
- Speakers – Careful thought should be given to who should speak and how many speakers are appropriate. Each speaker should have a specific topic to cover—and should have prepared talking points before the event. Other people can be present to answer questions after the news conference.
- Agenda – The news conference should always begin on time. The moderator should introduce the speakers, and then each speaker should ideally talk for no more than five minutes. The moderator should then facilitate a short Q&A session with reporters.
- Practice – If possible, a “dress rehearsal” before the news conference is held to make sure the speakers are ready for the event.



Chapter 9

Social Media Policy, Users Guidelines & Codes of Conduct

Federal, state, and local governments are increasingly joining private sector organizations in using social media to engage with and disseminate information to the public. In an effort to provide information and further the City’s mission and goals of connecting with users on social media outlets, the following policy and guidelines will be followed.

The City’s social media accounts will be used to distribute information, photographs, and video about City of Berkley’s services, functions, meetings, and events to City residents and other interested parties. At the discretion of the Community Engagement Officer, the social media accounts may also be used to disseminate information, photographs, or videos about other matters of interest to the community.

I. Social Media Policy: General Employee User Guidelines

This policy will set forth guidelines that City employees, elected official, and boards and commissions should follow for all online communications in reference to the City of Berkley with any relevant social media technologies. The purpose of any City of Berkley social media account is to present information and matters of public interest to City of Berkley residents, businesses, visitors, and other interested parties.

- 1) Departmental representative(s) from each department will be trained by the City’s Community Engagement Officer and allowed to post information to their respective City social media account. That departmental representative(s) may create and manage a separate social media account for his/her department if the account is approved and regularly monitored by the COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER.
- 2) Information distributed by way of social media generally will be similar to information published on the City of Berkley’s website, print and digital media, or TV channel. All information posted on City-managed social media accounts are open for public disclosure and may be retained on file, and are under the same responsibility to meet all public record disclosure laws.
- 3) Information posted that represents the City of Berkley should never contain any information that could be considered to be:
 - Spam or advertising
 - Content that is clearly off topic and/or disruptive
 - Promotion of illegal activity
 - Promotion or endorsement for any products, business, political official or organization
 - Copyrighted or trademarked material (unless approved by business or organization)
 - Personally identifying information such as home addresses, phone numbers or personal, etc.
 - Vulgar, offensive, derogatory, or sexually explicit language, pictures or information
 - Any personal attack of any kind, or offensive comments that target or disparage any group of people because of some shared characteristic
 - Any information viewed as threatening, libelous, or harassing are prohibited
 - Above all else, any City of Berkley employee, city official, or board and commission must always use good judgment on what material is posted to any social media site that represents the City of Berkley
- 4) Postings on social media sites are for informative or educational information distribution. However, any citizen needing assistance from the City or commenting become extensive, they should be directed to call, go to the website, or visit the appropriate department.
- 5) If any information submitted to a City of Berkley social media account is determined to not be in compliance with these guidelines, all information will be immediately deleted from City site(s).

- 6) All post, photos, and/or videos will remain on the sites as long as they are relevant unless otherwise indicated by the Community Engagement Officer.
- 7) All comments posted to any City Facebook site are bound by Facebook’s Statement of Rights and Responsibilities, located at <http://www.facebook.com/terms.php>, and the City reserves the right to report any violation of Facebook’s Statement of Rights and Responsibilities to Facebook with the intent of Facebook taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action. This policy shall also apply to other City social media sites containing similar Statements of Rights and Responsibilities, or Codes of Conduct.
- 8) All City-related communication through social media outlets should remain professional in nature and should always be conducted in accordance with the City’s communication plan, practices, and expectations. City staff or board/commission must not use social networking sites for political purposes, to conduct private commercial transactions, or to engage in private business activities. City staff and board/commission should be mindful that inappropriate usage of social media reflects negatively on the City and disciplinary action will be taken against any person who misuses any City social networking site. The City’s accounts will be used for the sharing of City news and information, and other matters deemed to be suitable and of community interest.

Berkley Public Safety Department

An exception to this policy is made for the Berkley Public Safety Department. Many times, it will be necessary for law enforcement officers to use social media sites for investigations as they try to locate people or obtain information.

The Berkley Public Safety Department has separate social accounts that are used for sharing general departmental information with the public. At times, their accounts may be used for investigations therefore, they require an exemption from this policy in order to perform their work. The Public Safety Director will be responsible for the security and guidelines for use of the department’s social accounts. The Director will also have the ability to grant permission to more than one officer to have the accounts’ login information with the ability to post information.

II. General Code of Conduct on the City of Berkley Social Media & Its Users

As your local municipality, we respect the rights of constituents to speak their views in public forums, even virtual ones. We only delete or hide comments in cases of profanity, specific threats, defamatory or libelous conduct. We are happy to address any questions or concerns regarding City-related topics, but generally do not engage in debate on social media. We recommend to our residents with questions or concerns contact us during business hours, where you can chat with a City employee who can help with your individual situation.

III. Posts on Social Networking Sites are Considered Public Records

Like e-mail, communication via a City-related social networking site is considered a public record and will be managed as such. **This means that any post made by City employees, board and commission, and the public will become part of the public record.**

IV. Security

Due to the relative vulnerability of social media sites to security exploits, it is important to be cautious when using such sites. In order to prevent potential harm, users of social networking sites should never share the site login information with others. This information must be kept in a safe location and away from easy view where others might be able to gain access to login information.

V. Social & Digital Media Sites Used by the City of Berkley

As of the publishing of this document, the City has multiple social accounts such as, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. These social media outlets have become an increasingly important way for the City to reach the public. As the social media landscape is constantly changing, the Community Engagement Officer will continue to assess ways to bolster the City’s social and digital media presence. That may entail joining other social or digital media sites in addition to the ones where the City currently maintains accounts.



Chapter 10

Crisis Communications Plan

I. Objective

The Crisis Communication Plan is different from the regular City Communication Plan, which is intended to inform the public of City events, programs and services. The Crisis Communication Plan is designed to handle emergencies and those situations that threaten the integrity or reputation of the City of Berkley. Situations considered to be a crisis can include any kind of legal dispute, theft, accident, fire, flood, manmade disaster or unexpected event that could be attributed to or affect the City. A crisis situation may occur when the media or general public believes that the City did not react to a given situation in an appropriate manner. The public will turn to the media and the government for information, instructions and reassurance. By providing critical information to the public in a timely manner, the City can maintain public safety and public confidence in all response efforts.

II. Handling a Crisis and Choosing a Spokesperson

- 1) The City Manager, or his designee, and Community Engagement Officer will immediately meet to discuss all information available about the crisis. The City Manager will notify City elected officials as quickly as possible. The City Manager may choose to contact the City Attorney to share the known facts of the situation and to determine if any litigation is possible that would require his assistance. The City Manager and Community Engagement Officer will work together to determine the facts and who is the appropriate person to speak on behalf of the City. The spokesperson will represent the City and make all official statements and answer media questions throughout the crisis.
- 2) A back-up to the designated spokesperson should also be identified to fill the position in the event that the primary spokesperson is unavailable.
- 3) In situations that result in a legal dispute or litigation, the City Attorney will act as the City spokesperson and will respond to all media request and inquiries.
- 4) Each department head, and their backup spokesperson, is responsible for alerting their staff to the crisis situation and reminding them that they are to refer all inquiries or request for information to the appropriate City spokesperson.
- 5) If handled correctly, damage to the City’s integrity and reputation can be minimized. It is important to always respond to a crisis situation as quickly as possible, stating all of the facts that can be shared and are known to be truthful. These measures will help minimize that crisis and to prove the City’s desire to assist in any investigation needed, request for public records or media inquiries.
- 6) The Community Engagement Officer will keep an accurate record of all media contacts and requests for interviews or information, along with the given response. The City Clerk will keep an accurate record of all requests for public records. Both will consult with the City Manager or Deputy City Manager if there are any questions related to the release of information. The City Attorney may also be consulted to determine the release of information.

III. Criteria for the Spokesperson and Backup Spokesperson

- 1) Comfortable in front of a TV camera and with reporters (print and broadcast).
- 2) Preferably, skilled in handling media, skilled in identifying key points, able to speak without using jargon, respectful of the role of the reporter.
- 3) Knowledgeable about the City and the crisis at hand.
- 4) Able to establish credibility with the media, able to project confidence to the audience, good diction, good appearance and charisma, sincere, straightforward and believable.
- 5) Accessible to the media and to the Community Engagement Officer who will facilitate media interviews.

- 6) Able to remain calm in stressful situations.
- 7) Clearly understands the City’s mission and goals.

IV. Crisis Communication Team

- 1) The Crisis Communication Team consists of the City Manager, Deputy City Manager, Community Engagement Officer, Economic Development Director, City Clerk and City Attorney. Based on the situation, the Chief of Police, or any City employee or elected official, may be asked to join the team if they are a key individual to the situation or if their assistance is needed. In some cases, the department head of the employee/department involved in the situation may be asked to join the team. If there is anyone else involved who could share the facts and/or be able to shed some light on the situation such as eyewitnesses, they may be asked to meet with the team to share information.
- 2) Since crisis situations do not always happen at the most convenient time and place, a complete roster of all Communication Team members will be kept by the City Manager, Community Engagement Officer and City Clerk so they can be easily contacted. The Community Engagement Officer will update the roster with any changes in contact information. However, it is imperative that all team members inform the Community Engagement Officer of any changes in their information. Contact information for each team member will include home telephone numbers, work telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, alternate phone numbers, work and home addresses. The Community Engagement Officer will also keep a list of all media contacts, representatives and reporters so that they may be contacted, if needed.
- 3) In addition to the designated spokesperson and backup, it can be anticipated that other parties involved in the crisis (i.e. police, fire department, county officials, etc.) will also have a spokesperson. The Community Engagement Officer will obtain the identity of that/those individual(s) as early as possible so all statements and contacts with the media can be coordinated between that/those individual(s) and their organization/interest(s) as part of a joint information system/joint information command. Contact information for that/those individual(s) will be shared and available to the Crisis Communication Team.

V. Positioning

- 1) The Communication Team will decide on a position for the crisis. It is important to step out of your role in your job with the City and put yourself in the situation of whoever was involved in the crisis or try to view the crisis from the eye of the public. Ignoring the situation will only make things worse. Examples of categories to consider for positioning are: human error, clerical error, unauthorized procedures, inadequate supervision, misuse of confidential information, errors of judgment, inadequate standard operating procedures. As you are considering the position it is important to consider the wide range of consequences (i.e., legal, financial, Community Engagement Officer, effects on administration, and effects on operations).
- 2) Once positioning has been established, a statement or update on the situation, by way of a news conference, should be planned and carried out as soon as possible. Keep in mind that people tend to remember what they hear first and last. Facts must be shared and information provided on what has happened, what steps or action is taking place to deal with the crisis, what action will be taken to remedy the situation for the best possible outcome, when will more information be given or when the next news conference held. Do not make assumptions or speak about information that has not been thoroughly verified.

VI. Preparing a Statement

- 1) If you don't communicate immediately, you lose your greatest opportunity to control events. After a crisis situation has taken place, a statement or news release should be prepared and distributed as soon as possible. Even if there is limited information available that can be shared, the news release should include at a minimum: who, what, when, and where of the situation. Always prepare a statement that can be used to make an initial general response to the media when knowledge about the crisis first becomes known on a widespread basis or by reporters.
- 2) State only the facts that have been gathered from reliable sources and confirmed. Don't overreach and don't speculate. If you do nothing more than show concern for the public and/or for your employees in your first press interaction, you are already on the right track. Always express concern and work to generate goodwill to secure the loyalty of City residents and employees by taking the initiative to share information with them. If employees and City residents don't feel like insiders, they are going to act like outsiders.
- 3) As the crisis progresses and new information and facts become available, it is also advisable to develop periodic prepared statements to be made by the City spokesperson at the onset of any media interview, briefing or news conference.
- 4) The City spokesperson should have the prepared statements available to read over the telephone to reporters who call to request information but are not represented at news conferences or briefings. The statement should also be made available to the media by FAX, e-mail and posting on the City's website.

VII. Collateral Materials

- Information brochures, fact sheets or other suitable documents about the City, department, company or the area in which the crisis has occurred should be made available for the media. This helps to inform the reporters, or anyone else seeking information, about the area/place where the crisis occurred.
- In some cases it might be necessary to explain in-house procedures or other pertinent information. If we explain how in-house procedure works and point out where a breakdown occurred, there is less chance of a reporter interpreting the situation erroneously.
- The core elements of crisis communication include messages, audience, staffing, working with the media and working with other agencies. A variety of messages may be required for effective communication. In emergency and disaster situations, core information such as shelter locations and survival tips can be prepared in advance. Some of this information is maintained by Oakland County Emergency Management. This can greatly reduce the response time of providing the public with crisis information.
- Relaying the information can and will go out through multiple methods. E-mail, fax, websites, social media, a recording on the main switchboard number and interviews are a few of the ways to inform the public through the media. An address- or neighborhood-specific reverse 911 message may also be recorded and used to notify City residents in case of emergencies or disaster relief notification. (The Berkley Police Department is the point of contact for such a message.)
- Always do what you can to make a complicated issue as simple as you can for reporters. If the crisis was caused by a piece of equipment, consider bringing in a similar piece of equipment to show reporters. At the very least, provide a schematic or drawing. If possible, always give media a visual to keep them from speculating or trying to find it on their own.

VIII. Developing a Contact Log

- A contact log should be established to record all telephone calls from the media or other parties inquiring about the crisis. This will help to ensure that callbacks or requests for information are not overlooked. It will also assist in the post-crisis analysis.
- The contact log should contain the following information: date, name of caller, affiliation/organization represented by called, questions(s) asked, office and mobile telephone number, e-mail address, person responsible for response and, if necessary, what additional follow-up is needed.

IX. Holding a News Conference

- 1) Select a place to be used for the news conference. It should be some distance away from the offices of the crisis communication team, emergency operations center, and in the case of a disaster, away from the disaster site, to ensure that media are not in the middle of the action. If there is a visual (a fire or rescue operation) the media center should be in an area close enough to allow them to see what is going on but far enough away that they will not in immediate danger or will interfere in the rescue effort. It is also important to locate the news conference in an area that can handle vehicular traffic easily and is not impacted by fumes or other potential negative airborne impacts of the crisis. If the crisis involves a disaster, the City Community Engagement Officer will consult with the Police Department Community Engagement Officer to determine the location of the news conference and to coordinate placement of media vehicles and equipment.
- 2) It is important to remember that the media are a useful tool to get the word out to the public and to keep them informed of any danger in the area, road closures, etc. Work with them, and they will work to help you share your message to the public. If you are unwilling to assist the media with getting their story when a crisis situation arises, then they may respond by not showing up to future news conferences, write community interest articles or publicize positive City news and events. You do not want to lose their confidence or appear to be hiding something.
- 3) The location for interviews and news briefings will be decided by the Crisis Communication Team.
- 4) Determine what, if any, equipment is needed for the news conference including lectern, microphone, video player, overhead equipment, etc. Allow the main spokesperson and other speakers to become familiar with the equipment.
- 5) Don't change the rules that you already have established for the media. If the media are currently required to be escorted, then during a crisis they should be required to be escorted. **If they are not required to be escorted now, then don't require them to be in a crisis. If there are special circumstances that would require them to be escorted such as a safety hazard, they should be advised of this up front.** Any change in the way the media are dealt with during a crisis may change the views of the reporters. It is important that they feel that you aren't trying to hide anything.
- 6) Reporters may ask to speak to staff that were involved with, or have been affected by, the crisis. Reporters have the right to interview anyone they want to; however, the City will restrict interviews to the primary spokesperson or back-up spokesperson. Controlling the interview process is key to managing the crisis.
- 7) All media should be treated equally. What is given to one (fact sheets, access to an area affected by the crisis, etc.) should be available to all media.

X. Assessing the Public's Response

- Media outlets will be monitored by the Community Engagement Officer and City staff to confirm that appropriate information and the correct messages are getting out to the public. Monitoring should also take place for rumor control and misinformation. Staff can assist the Community Engagement Officer by monitoring information that is being reported on television stations, radio stations, websites, etc., and providing any errors or questionable information found to the Community Engagement Officer, who can then communicate with the media to correct the information, reiterate the facts, etc.
- If the Community Engagement Officer is too involved in details regarding the crisis, another City staff member shall be assigned as the primary monitor of media information, to include television and Internet.

XI. Post-Crisis Analysis

- 1) The Crisis Communication Team will meet to discuss the way the crisis situation was handled and discuss what was learned from experience.
- 2) The Crisis Communication Team should discuss the strengths and positive elements of how the crisis was handled; these can be drawn upon in the future.
- 3) The Crisis Communication Team should discuss those areas that need improvement and the negative aspects where improvement could be made, whether it be in relation to procedures, organizational changes or other matters.
- 4) The Crisis Communication Team should discuss the issues and themes requiring debate and clarification. A written after-action report should be compiled by the team.
- 5) If Oakland County Emergency Management conducts a post-event debriefing, a representative of the City’s Crisis Communication Team should attend and participate.

XII. Crisis Communication Plan Quick Reference

Assessment:

- What are the known certainties about the crisis situation?
- What about the crisis situation appears true but cannot yet be verified?
- What is the worst possible outcome of this crisis?
- Who will be hurt by this crisis?
- Who might be blamed for this crisis?
- What could be misunderstood?
- What can be done to help?
- What cannot be said because of confidentiality, privacy or other reasons?
- What impact does this crisis have on Berkley’s image and reputation?

Preparation:

- Act quickly.
- Inform City Manager, Deputy City Manager and COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER.
- Inform City employees to direct all media calls and visits to the COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER.
- Gather accurate information and facts about the situation.
- Determine a spokesperson.
- Time code all information as it arrives.
- Verify all facts and the nature and scope of the incident with staff, the Police Department and/or responding emergency agencies.

- Determine if there are injuries and/or fatalities (do not release names).
- Assess the public health risk (if any).
- Inform elected officials of the situation and keep them up to date, via the City Manager, Deputy City Manager or City Clerk.
- Determine what authorities must/should be consulted.
- Keep in consultation with appropriate government and legal authorities.
- Consult immediately with responding agencies to coordinate release of information.
- Begin a plan to inform internal and external audiences of the situation.
- Prepare a statement that may include one or more of the following points:
 - Basic information on what has happened.
 - Express concern/sympathy for any victims who may be involved.
 - How the City is responding to the situation and what will be done to help.
 - How the City will/is providing for public safety.
 - How the City will keep the public informed of the situation and any changes.
- Determine best way(s) to distribute statement (news conference, e-mail, fax, and social media). Prepare for interviews.
- Alert City employees to the time and location of news conference for any media inquiries.
- Set up channels of communication so that any change or new information about the crisis is conveyed to the spokesperson.
- Make arrangements for updating the media.
- Keep the Crisis Communication Team up to date.
- Start a media contact record.

When the Media Arrive:

- Ask media for identification, ask them to sign in and exchange business cards.
- Determine a designated area for media, and show them where they may park vehicles and set up their equipment.
- Inform reporters of restrictions on movement/photography/filming.
- Proceed with a media briefing.
- Advise media of the time and place of the next briefing and/or how future updates will be distributed.
- Follow up on additional media inquiries.

What the Media Will Likely Ask

- **Casualties:**
 - The number of casualties, injuries or who and how many escaped (**use caution with initial numbers and cite only numbers that have been verified by the incident commander**).
 - Nature of injuries received.
 - Care given to the injured.
 - Prominence of anyone who has died, been injured or escaped.
 - How escape was handicapped or cut off.
- **Property Damage:**
 - Estimated value of loss.
 - Description of property.
 - Importance of the property.
 - Other property threatened.

- Insurance protection.
- Previous emergencies in the area.
- **Causes:**
 - Testimony of participants.
 - Testimony of witnesses.
 - Testimony of key responders—the crisis management team, police, fire, etc.
 - How emergency was discovered.
 - Who sounded the alarm?
 - Who summoned aid?
 - Previous indications of danger.
- **Rescue and Relief:**
 - The number of people engaged in rescue and relief operations.
 - Was there any prominent person in relief crew?
 - What equipment was used?
 - Were physically disabled persons rescued?
 - Will there be care for the destitute and homeless?
 - How the emergency was prevented from spreading?
 - How property was saved?
 - Were there any acts of heroism?
- **Description of the crisis or disaster:**
 - Extent of emergency.
 - Blasts and explosions.
 - Crimes of violence.
 - Attempts at escape or rescue.
 - Duration.
 - Collapse of structures.
 - Color of flames.
 - Extent of spill.
 - Accompanying incidents.
 - Number of spectators, spectator attitudes and crowd control.
 - Unusual happenings.
 - Anxiety, stress of families, survivors, etc.
- **Legal Actions:**
 - Inquests, coroner's reports.
 - Police follow-up.
 - Insurance company actions.
 - Professional negligence or inaction.
 - Suits stemming from the incident.
- **Action – Sharing Information**
 - Tell your own bad news first.
 - Show your concern for others affected by the crisis.
 - Avoid speculation. Don't assume anything. Politely decline to respond to hypothetical questions or give your own opinion.
 - Be open and responsive to requests from the news media.
 - Keep your answers brief, factual and to the point.
 - Let other organizations speak for themselves.

- If you don't know the answer or are unsure about what to say, it is better to say you do not know or not to say anything. Offer to get back to the reporter with accurate information. Be sure to follow up with the reporter as soon as you have the facts.
- Do not say, "No comment." Instead, explain why the information is not available.
- Don't place blame.
- Do not reveal confidential information or personal information about City staff.
- Don't be evasive or misleading.
- Respect reporters' deadlines.
- **Follow-up**
 - Promptly correct erroneous statements made by others and any errors in what has been reported.
 - Think of possible outcomes and prepare tentative responses.
 - Be willing to adapt responses as circumstances change.
 - Keep reporters up to date and advise media of any new developments.
 - Log all media contact.
 - Monitor media coverage.
 - Evaluate effectiveness of plan and what worked well and what could have been done better.
 - After plan evaluation; revise as necessary.

XII. Spokesperson Guidelines for Communicating with the Media during a Crisis

- 1) Demonstrate organizational concern about people.
- 2) Explain what is being done to remedy the situation.
- 3) Keep the message consistent with all constituencies. Never tell one constituency anything that is not being told to the media.
- 4) Be open, honest and tell as much of the full story as possible. If you do not, someone else will, thus increasing the possibility that the crisis team loses control of the situation.
- 5) Never respond with "no comment;" instead explain why you cannot answer the question (i.e., "We do not have the details confirmed at this time; we will provide you with an update when we do have an answer to that question.")
- 6) Do not guess or speculate. If you do not know the answer, say so and offer to track down the answer.
- 7) Respect reporter deadlines. If you promise to get information, do so promptly.
- 8) Never speak off the record. Assume that there is no such thing and the media can use any information released or obtained.
- 9) Never give exclusive interviews during a crisis. All members of the media should have the same chance for gathering information.
- 10) If an injury or death has occurred, do not release the name(s) of the injured/deceased until all next of kin (immediate family) have been notified. Consult with public safety officials to know when this has occurred.
- 11) Do not provide damage estimate, discuss responsibility for the incident or discuss legal liability in any way.
- 12) Be available 24 hours a day.
- 13) Notify all City employees to direct all media inquiries to the Community Engagement Officer without speculating on the situation.
- 14) Do not discuss illegal activity at any time. If it is assumed, say something to the effect, "Police are investigating. We are cooperating." Refer all questions to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

- 15) In cases when media request interviews with family members, provide a liaison to family members for the media so that the family can protect their privacy if they choose.
- 16) Avoid “side comments” meant to be humorous.
- 17) Do NOT accept hypothetical questions.
- 18) Do NOT repeat negatives in a question. Taken out of context, these remarks can be very damaging.
- 19) Use everyday language, not jargon, when talking to reporters. Lack of clarity makes people think the organization is purposefully being confusing in order to hide something.
- 20) Provide written materials that give reporters background information whenever practical.



Chapter 11

Appendices

APPENDICES

1) Public Information Materials Request Form	A – 1
2) City News and Information Distribution List	A – 2
3) Public Community Calendar List	A – 3
4) Associated Press (AP) Writing Style Guide	A – 4
5) Cable TV Fact Sheet	A – 5
6) City of Berkley PEG Channel Rules of Operation	A – 6
7) Availability and Use of PEG	A – 7 Channels
8) PEG Channel Requirements for Programming Submittals	A – 9
9) Underwriting Credit Agreement	A – 10
10) Art Release Form	A – 11
11) Media Permission Slip	A – 12
12) State Regulations on Public Participation	



City of Berkley
Public Information Materials Request Form

Initial proposals for public information materials shall be directed to the PIO before the printing of any materials. Please provide a draft of printed material to the PIO for proofing before printing.

Date: _____

Department Requesting Materials: _____

Requestor's Name: _____

Brief description of the proposed item: _____

Purpose or objective(s) of the proposed item: _____

Intended audience(s) for the item: _____

Intended method that will be used to produce the item (in-house, print shop, _____
etc.): _____

Intended method of distribution (handouts, mailing, available for pickup, etc.): _____

(Please attach a draft or example of materials, if one is available.)

Approved, as is *Additional info. required Approved, with recommended changes

*Additional information required for approval is: _____

Date

PIO Signature



The City of Berkley
City News and Information
Distribution Lists

Core Media – *local print and television media*

- The Daily Tribune (local newspaper for Berkley and surrounding areas)
- Woodward Talk – (Local paper for Berkley, Huntington Woods and Ferndale Area)
- Oakland Press
- WDIV-TV 4 (local TV station-NBC affiliate)
- WXYZ-TV 7 (local TV station-ABC affiliate)
- WWJ-TV 62 (local TV station-CBS affiliate)
- WJBK-TV 2 (local TV station-FOX affiliate)
- WJR Radio 760 AM

City of Berkley Communication Group - *employees, elected officials, City affiliates*

- Berkley City elected officials
- City of Berkley employees
- Berkley Downtown Development Authority
- Berkley Chamber of Commerce

Expanded Media – *media groups that share key or critical information with the public*

- Detroit Free Press (local business news and resources)
- Detroit News (local business news and resources)
- Associated Press (international wire service with Detroit bureau)
- WVTS TV Channel 56 (public television station)
- WKBD TV 50-CW (local TV station)
- WMYD TV 20-MyTV (local TV station)

Specialized Media – receive press releases/information on special interest areas

Local Governmental Bodies and Agencies

- Berkley Public Safety
- MABAS 3201
- Oakland County Homeland Security
- Oakland County Emergency Medical Services
- Oakland County Environmental Services
- Oakland County Public Affairs Office
- Michigan State Police Emergency Management Homeland Security Office
- Oakland County Sheriff's Office
- Oakland County Health Department
- Oakland County Department of Social Services
- Oakland County Clerk's Office
- Oakland County Commissioners
- Oakland County Board of Education members
- Local, county and state representatives



City of Berkley

Program & Event Posting on Public Community Calendars

Many organizations and agencies offer free program and event postings on their website’s community calendar. This is an easy and economical way to distribute information about our City programs and events to the public. Below are listings of sites that the City of Berkley uses to share information with the public about our programs and events.

The Berkley News – Web Event Calendar: <http://www.berkleymich.org/calendar.php>

Detroit Metro Times

<https://www.metrotimes.com/detroit/EventSearch>

Detroit News Events

<https://apps.detroitnews.com/events/>

Detroit and Ann Arbor Metro Parent Upcoming Events -

<https://www.metroparent.com/upcoming-events/>

Hour Detroit - Events in and around the Detroit metropolitan area

www.hourdetroit.com/Hour-Detroit/Events/

Eventbrite.com

<https://www.eventbrite.com/d/mi--detroit/events/>

Associated Press (AP) Writing Style Guide

The Associated Press Stylebook is the guide for publications overseen by the PIO that are produced for the public. These include Web content, news releases, public service announcements, print advertising and newsletters. This sheet shows a condensed version of the standard AP writing style that is used in all City of Berkeley written and print media. Below are some of the most frequently encountered style questions.

**Refer to the stylebook for more information.*

Abbreviations and Acronyms:

Avoid alphabet soup and do not use abbreviations that aren't quickly recognized. Abbreviate certain titles (except in direct quotations) when directly before a name. For full mailing addresses including ZIP code, use two-letter Postal Service abbreviations for states. In regular text, use abbreviations such as Ala., for Alabama. However, Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah are not abbreviated. Michigan is M.I. in regular text and NC with full mailing address.

- Gov. Jane Smith
- Dr. Tom Jones
- the Rev. Betty Williams
- He lives in Phoenix, Ariz.
- She lives in Dallas, Texas.

The address is:
 Rev. Betty Williams
 123 Main St.
 Dallas, TX 75202

Addresses:

Abbreviate street, avenue and boulevard only, and only with the full address. Abbreviate compass directions only with full address.

- 123 Cary Citye Blvd.
- Cary Citye Boulevard
- 123 Chatham St.
- Chatham Street
- 123 N. Harrison Ave.
- North Harrison Avenue
- 123 S.W. Maynard Road
- Southwest Maynard Road
- (Road, drive, court, circle, etc., are always spelled out)

Ages:

Always use figures. Hyphenate when used as adjective before a noun or as noun substitute.

He is 5 years old.

He is a 5-year-old boy.

The law is 8 years old.

The woman is in her 30s. (no apostrophe)

Composition Titles:

Put quotation marks around titles of songs, books, movies, plays and television shows.

Exceptions are the Bible and reference materials such as catalogues, handbooks, etc. Do not use quotes for newspapers. Capitalize “the” if it is part of the newspaper’s name.

“The Star-Spangled Banner”

“CBS Evening News”

“Gone With the Wind”

The Berkley News

The News & Observer

Courtesy Titles:

Refer to men and women by first and last name. Do not use titles such as Mr., Mrs., or Ms. except in direct quotations, when they are needed to distinguish among people of the same name, or for a woman who specifically requests it.

Susan Smith

Mrs. Susan Smith (only on request)

Days of the Week:

Abbreviate only when needed in tables.

Monday (usual form)

Mon (tabular form – three letters, no period)

Dimensions:

Use figures and spell out inches, feet, etc., for depth, height, length and width. Hyphenate as adjectives before nouns.

- He is 5 feet 6 inches tall.
- the 5-foot-6-inch man
- The car is 17 feet long, 6 feet wide and 5 feet high.
- The storm left 5 inches of snow.
- 5 acres

Figures or Words?

Spell out whole numbers below 10 in normal usage. Note exceptions such as ages, dimensions, etc. Spell out casual expressions and also numerals (except calendar years) that begin a sentence.

- two dogs, second dog
- 10 cats, 10th cat
- Seven is a lucky number.
- 2001 was a good year.
- He walked a quarter of a mile.

Governmental Organization:

Retain capitalization if context makes the name of city, etc. unnecessary. Lowercase further shortening of the name. Capitalize generic equivalents. Lowercase when plural or not referring to a specific body. Lower case city and state before the name. Lower case and spell out department used alone, but capitalize shorthand references to specific ones.

****EXCEPTION – City is capitalized when referring to Berkley municipal government.***

- City Council (shortened reference to specific City council, in Berkley or elsewhere)
- council (always lowercase when standing alone)
- The City council meets Friday. (lowercase when plural)
- the City (*when referring to Berkley municipal government)
- the City (when referring to Berkley)
- The City of Berkley is sending a delegation to the state legislature.
- city of Berkley
- state of Michigan

county of wake

Wake County

City Hall (specific location)

Citywide

Police Department

the department

Public Works (flip-flopped, shortened Department of Public Works)

All Cities have a police department, which is in City hall. (no specific location)

Governmental Titles:

Generally, confine capitalization to formal titles directly (without a comma) before the name. Lowercase occupational titles even directly before the name. Whether a title is formal or occupational depends on the organization's interpretation.

Council Member Jack Jones

the council member

City Manager John Smith

The City manager issued a statement.

The City manager, John Smith, issued a statement.

Internet Terminology:

An Internet section begins on page 125 of the stylebook.

Internet

website

Web page

webmaster (one word)

e-mail (hyphenated)

Money:

Spell out cents and use figures for amounts under a dollar. Numerals alone, with or without decimal points, are OK in tables.

5 cents

73 cents

\$1.50

Months:

Abbreviate Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec. with a specific date of the month. In tables, use three-letter forms without period.

January

January 1975

Jan. 7 (not Jan. 7th)

Jan (tabular form)

Percent:

Spell out percent. Use figures and repeat word with each figure. Include zero and decimal for amounts less than 1 percent.

between 10 percent and 20 percent

0.6 percent

Punctuation:

Use common sense. If punctuation does not help clarify, don't include it. Use ampersand (&) when part of a formal name, not simply to replace "and." Avoid overuse of exclamation points.

Telephone Numbers:

Use parentheses for area codes and Ext. for extension.

(919) 460-3900, Ext. 305

Times of Day

Use small letters with periods for a.m. & p.m.; no double zeros for times on the hour.

6 a.m.

6:30 a.m.

noon (not 12 noon)

4 o'clock (acceptable, but 4 a.m. or 4 p.m. preferred)

Weights:

Spell out pounds and use figures.

9 pounds, 7 ounces

9-pound, 7-ounce boy

Words that are Commonly Misspelled or Used Incorrectly:

Below are words or phrases that are commonly misspelled or used incorrectly. See stylebook entries on these and other commonly misused words for more information.

None *is* (when meaning no single one) None *are* (when meaning no two or no amount)

OK

People is preferred for plural uses rather than *persons*.

Principal means first in rank or importance. *Principle* means fundamental truth.

Realtor (real estate agent usually preferred)

T-shirt

TV is acceptable as adjective or as cable TV. Avoid as noun outside direct quotation.

under way

Who, whom for people and animals with names; *that, which* for inanimate objects.

Ensure means to guarantee. *Insure* refers to insurance.

time line (two words)

Lie or lay?

Lay is an action word that takes a direct object. *Lay* the book on the table. Other forms include *laid* and *laying*. *Lie* refers to reclining in a flat position. *Lie* on the couch and rest. Past tense is *lay*. Past participle is *lain*. Present participle is *lying*.

For references to making an untrue statement, the forms are *lie, lied* and *lying*. Chickens lay eggs; people lie down to sleep.

City of Berkley Public Access Channel Format for Submittals from Outside Agencies

Programming Requirements:

All programming submitted for use on the City of Berkley WBRK channel must be in the mpeg-2 / MPG2 video format and in standard definition. The video can be on any medium properly prepared (e.g. CD, DVD or thumb drive).

WBRK Underwriting Credit Agreement

City of Berkley
3338 Coolidge Hwy
Berkley, MI 48072

This Agreement between **City of Berkley Television (“WBRK”)** and _____
(the “**Sponsor**”) executed on the date written next to their names signed below, the latter of
which shall become the effective date of this Agreement and terminate on
_____.

1. Recitals

The Sponsor desires to underwrite the cost associated with the production of certain television
content broadcast on WBRK known as the _____ (the “Program”).

WBRK would like to offset the expense of providing content for broadcast and the Sponsor
would like to underwrite the cost for the show.

In consideration of the premises set forth above, the parties hereto agree as follows:

2. Conditions and Provisions

The sponsor shall receive underwriting credit, which shall be limited to the following:

- a. The visual and/or audio presentation of the name, address, location, phone number, website, logo, slogan and brief description of the underwriter(s) during the beginning and end of the Program.
- b. A maximum of 30 seconds is permitted for identification of each underwriter at the beginning and end of the program.
- c. All on-air underwriting credit shall conform strictly to the PBS guidelines found on their website at <http://www.pbs.org/producers/guidelines/>.
- d. WBRK will be the sole owner of all rights in and to the recording for all purposes and sponsor hereby relinquish any rights therein. WBRK shall have the exclusive right to use the recording including, without limitation, the use of the statements, songs and voiceovers contained therein (in whole or in part) in any and all media including, without limitation, on television, cable, in print, and/or on the Internet, worldwide in perpetuity without payment to Sponsor of any compensation therefore; including without limitation, for informational, publicity, advertising and institutional purposes in connection therewith. WBRK shall have the right to identify Sponsor by name and the city in which they reside, together with any other accompanying language of identification or description, and to use a photo or video of the Sponsor.

The visual and/or audio presentation to be used as the underwriting credit:

- e. The Sponsor may provide the visual and/or audio presentation and WBRK shall have the right of approval or
- f. WBRK will prepare the presentation of behalf of the Sponsor and the Sponsor shall have the right of approval.

Broadcast Duration:

- g. This Program shall air for a period of at least one week, which shall be known as one Episode. Each Episode will be broadcast at least three times each day.

Underwriting credit cost:

- h. The underwriting cost shall not exceed the cost of production of the Program, considering such things as labor, overhead, studio use, use of supplies, equipment charges, set design and construction, etc.
- i. The Sponsor agrees to pay in advance their share of the underwriting cost, which is estimated to be One Dollar (\$1.00) per episode.

IN W ITNESS WHERE OF, WBRK and the Sponsor have hereunto set their hands and seals in duplicate the day and year written below.

City of Berkley

Owner

Date: _____ By: _____
 Printed Name: Matthew Baumgarten
 Title: City Manager

 Sponsor

Date: _____ By: _____
 Printed Name: _____
 Title: _____



ART RELEASE

1. I, _____, the "Project Participant," and the City of Berkley agree that I will provide certain art work for possible use by the City of Berkley, and that the City of Berkley has provided me \$1.00 and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, including the educational opportunity to participate in this project, and I understand that upon submission of such work, I release all right, title, and interest in said work without additional consideration to be paid to me.

2. I hereby grant the City of Berkley, its licensees and agents, a non-exclusive, worldwide, royalty-free, perpetual license to use, reproduce, publish, display and edit all submitted artwork, tag lines, and logos in whole or in part ("Use"), with or without my name identification, in any and all media (whether now known of hereafter devised) for commercial, business, and trade purposes, as well as for advertising, marketing and/or publicity purposes. I acknowledge and agree that the City of Berkley may modify, crop, alter, retouch, or drastically adjust the original artwork, as the City of Berkley deems appropriate under the circumstances.

3. I hereby represent and warrant that (a) I am 18 years of age or older; and (b) the Use of the artwork will not, and this Art Release does not, violate any copyright, trademark, right of privacy, or any other right of any third party, nor be contrary to law, and no third party consent or permission is required for such Use of the artwork. If such permission is required, consent must be in writing at time of submission. I agree to release and indemnify the City of Berkley from any claims, actions, liabilities, losses, or expenses of any kind ("Claims") arising out of Use of the artwork or any breach or alleged breach of this Art Release.

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Address: _____



CITY OF BERKLEY
3338 Coolidge Highway
Berkley, MI 48072

MEDIA PERMISSION SLIP

Pictures, video and other written visual and/or auditory media produced by the City of Berkley may appear on the City’s public, educational and government channel (Time Warner Cable channel 11, AT&T U-verse channel 99), on the City of Berkley’s website and social media accounts, in newspaper articles or media/print publications. Any media produced will be used only to inform and educate the community about special events, programs, teaching/training or activities at or involved in the Berkley community, etc.

****Please circle the appropriate answer below and fill in the space to give (YES) or not give (NO) your consent to use your image, or your child’s image, in the media.***

YES

I, _____, give my permission for the City of Berkley to use my
(adult’s name)
photograph/image, or the photograph/image of my child,
_____, in the media or any media produced by the City of Berkley.
(child’s name)

NO

I, _____, DO NOT give my permission for the City of Berkley to use
(adult’s name)
my photograph/image, or the photograph/image of my child,
_____, in the media or any media produced by the City of Berkley.
(child’s name)

Signature **Date**

Along with the desire to include input from the City’s diverse community, the City of Berkley complies with all state statutes which guide its participation activities. All Berkley boards, commissions, and the City Council adhere to all laws of the State of Michigan that outline public participation requirements. These laws set forth a minimum standard that the City seeks to exceed in each area for which they are applicable.

Michigan Open Meetings Act

In accordance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act (PA 267 of 1976), all meetings of those bodies that have a governmental function (i.e., City Council, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Downtown Development Authority, etc.) will hold meetings in a public setting which is accessible to the general public. The following notice requirements will apply:

Meeting Type	Notice Type/Information	Timeline for Notice
Regular council, board and commission meetings	A list stating the dates, times and places of all such regular meetings	Within 10 days of the first meeting of a public body in each calendar or fiscal year
Change in regular council, board and commission schedule		Within three days of the meeting at which the schedule was changed
Special and irregular council, board or commission meetings		At least 18 hours before the meeting
A regular meeting of a public body which is recessed for more than 36 hours		At least 18 hours before the meeting reconvenes
Emergency sessions	No notice required if the public health, safety or welfare is severely threatened and if two-thirds of the body’s members vote to hold the emergency meeting	

Michigan Planning Enabling Act

In accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008) the following process applies:

1. **Intent to Plan.** Parties will be notified via first class mail, personal delivery or electronic mail by the Berkley Planning Commission of the intent to plan and request the recipient’s cooperation and comment:
 - The Oakland County Planning & Economic Development Division
 - The Oakland County Board of Commissioners
 - Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
 - Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART)
 - Road Commission of Oakland County
 - Michigan Department of Transportation
 - Royal Oak, Huntington Woods, Oak Park, and surrounding municipalities

2. **Review draft plan.** After a draft master plan has been submitted to the legislative body for review and approval for distribution, the draft plan will be submitted to the previously listed entities for review.

The period for review is no less than 63 days for a new master plan and no less than 42 days for an amendment to the plan.

- 3. **Public hearing.** The Berkley Planning Commission will hold not less than 1 public hearing on the proposed master plan.
 - The Planning Commission will give notice of the time and place of the public hearing not less than 15 days before the hearing by publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the local unit of government.
 - The Planning Commission will also submit notice of the public hearing by first class mail, personal delivery or electronic mail to the previously listed entities for review as identified above.
 - After the adoption of the master plan, a Planning Commission may publish and distribute copies of the master plan or of any report, and employ other means of publicity and education.

Michigan Zoning Enabling Act

In accordance with the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (PA 110 of 2006) the following process applies for amendments to the Zoning Ordinance:

- 1. Planning Commission sets a public hearing
- 2. Notice of Public Hearing for text amendments must appear in paper of general circulation **not less than 15 days before the public hearing date**. Notice includes
 - Short summary of amendment(s)
 - Zoning Ordinance citation
 - Date and location of public hearing
 - Date and location for written comments
 - Time and location where proposed amendment(s) are available for public review
- 3. Notice of Public Hearing for map amendments that include less than 11 adjacent properties (note: notice is not required to be given to the following when the proposed map amendment includes 11 adjacent properties or more):
 - a. Notice shall be given to the following, **no less than 15 days before the public hearing** (personally delivered or deposited within normal business hours for delivery with the USPS or other delivery service):
 - i. Owners of property that is the subject of the request
 - ii. All persons to whom real property is assessed within 300 ft of the property that is the subject of the request

- iii. Occupants of all structures within 300 ft of the subject property regardless of whether the property or structure is located in the zoning jurisdiction
 - iv. If a structure contains more than 1 dwelling unit or spatial area owned or leased by different persons, each owner and occupant shall be given notice (if name of occupant is not known, "occupant" is sufficient).
 - v. If a single structure contains more than 4 dwelling units or other distinct spatial areas owned or leased by different persons, notice may be given to the manager or owner of the structure, who shall be requested to post the notice at the primary entrance to the structure.
- b. The notice shall:
- i. Describe the nature of the request
 - ii. Indicate the property that is the subject of the request
 - 1. List all existing street addresses within the property (addresses do not need to be created and listed if they do not exist)
 - 2. If no street addresses, other means of identification may be used.
 - iii. State when and where the request will be considered
 - iv. Indicate when and where written comments will be received
4. Notice of public hearings for text and map amendments shall be given, as described in 5a above, to utilities (electric, gas, pipeline, telecommunication service providers), railroad operating within the district or zone affected, and airport manager of each airport, that registers its name and mailing address with the clerk for the purpose of receiving public hearing notices.
5. Public hearing at the Planning Commission, which will either recommend approval or denial of the proposed amendment(s) to the City Council or continue the hearing to a date certain (if public hearing is to remain open).
6. If approved, a Notice of Adoption must be **published within 15 days of the adoption**. This notice contains:
- Zoning Ordinance number
 - Short description of the amendment(s)
 - Effective date
 - Time and location where the adopted amendment(s) may be purchased and/or inspected