

CITY OF BERKLEY

Strategic Framework

Quarterly Report

Q1 2026





INTRODUCTION

Throughout 2024 and 2025, City Council and department directors met in work sessions to clearly define priority areas and the objectives that will help us reach them. Based on feedback from the community, discussions in the work sessions, and information from staff, the Strategic Framework was created as a plan for the next two years.

The Strategic Framework serves as a roadmap for the City of Berkley, helping us to define our goals and hone our focus on how to achieve them. It's a living document that helps us make decisions about how to allocate our resources for the best benefit of the community as well as track and report our progress.

The Strategic Framework Reports are an opportunity to highlight the activities that the City of Berkley has carried out in the previous three months in an effort to work toward our established objectives.



VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

Mission

Berkley will strive to enhance economic vitality, preserve neighborhoods, and foster progress to implement the City's vision and values.

Vision

Berkley will be a thriving 21st-century municipality, rooted in strong neighborhoods and a walkable design, supported by a caring community that helps every resident, business, and visitor to flourish.

Values

Caring, Innovative, Welcoming, Active



PRIORITY AREAS

Priority Area 1:

Organizational Effectiveness

Priority Area 2:

Economic Sustainability

Priority Area 3:

Community Assets

Priority Area 4:

Open Communications

Priority Area 5:

Fiscal Stewardship



2026 QUARTERLY REPORT

Priority Area 1: Organizational Effectiveness

Objective: Cultivate a strong organizational culture

- The first round of performance appraisals was completed, capturing employees with anniversaries within the past 6 months. The Human Resources Director sat in each department's first review and provided feedback to ensure performance appraisals are as effective as possible.
- A Michigan Employees' Retirement System (MERS) representative facilitated a retirement information session for staff in the City Council Chambers. The Human Resources Director encouraged staff to attend to learn more about their retirement benefits.
- Parks staff attended the annual mParks conference in Lansing. Each team member brought back multiple new ideas for better communication, new and different programming, and capital improvement ideas.
- The Clerk and Deputy Clerk attended Train-the-Trainer, an election training administered by the MI Bureau of Elections.
- The Deputy Clerk attended the virtual 2026 Master Academy for Civic and Public Affairs.
- The Clerk's office provided additional training for staff on the Civic Plus Agenda Management module. Everyone is now prepared and required to use Civic Plus to submit and approve agenda items.
- The Clerk and Deputy Clerk attended multiple SAVE Act implication trainings.
- The Clerk attended Hosting a Secure Midterm Election and USPS - Postmarks and Election Mail training.
- Election Specialist Amy Bessler received her Michigan Professional Municipal Clerk certification.



2026 QUARTERLY REPORT

Priority Area 1: Organizational Effectiveness

Objective: Optimize organization structure, staffing, policies/procedures, and level of service

- Community Development worked with the City Attorney to draft a new policy for the recently adopted code enforcement ordinance amendments, which was presented to the Council for approval in April.
- The Human Resources Director has been working with Manquen Vance to audit Medicare-eligible retirees and clean up insurance groups.
- Human Resources put together a Take Your Child to Work Day planning team with the Library, Parks and Recreation, and Communications. The Clerk's Office and Public Safety are also involved in activity planning for the day.
- The Human Resources Director released a Seasonal Sick Time Policy to ensure the city remains compliant with the Michigan Earned Sick Time Act. This policy provides coverage and clarity in the event that a situation arises for a seasonal employee in which earned sick time would be required.
- A cross-department team including the Department of Public Works, Community Development, Public Safety, and the City Manager's Office met several times to discuss policy changes for special and temporary events. Staff, with the City Attorney's assistance, will be editing the document to incorporate suggestions from the City Council work session and will move this forward in the next quarter.
- The Staff Parking Committee continued to meet and plan for the parking/sign project. An updated webpage with detailed information was created and communications, including postcards to homes on streets that will see parking changes, are planned for spring.
- The Clerk's Office continues to update its SOP manual.
- The Clerk's Office met with a GIS Specialist. This service will provide the data needed for cleaning up precinct boundaries and will allow the city to have a smart precinct map, linking needed documents and real-



2026 QUARTERLY REPORT

Priority Area I: Organizational Effectiveness

time information.

- During this quarter, the City received 52 general FOIA requests and 9 FOIA appeals. In comparison, the City received 30 General FOIA requests and 3 FOIA appeals in the first quarter of 2025. These requests and appeals are estimated to have utilized roughly 177 hours of staff time.

Objective: Foster stronger relationships with community and regional partners

- The Human Resource Director attended a roundtable meeting organized by the Great Lakes Water Authority to strategize how to fill in-demand technical positions.
- The Communications Director and City Manager attended the SEMCOG Oakland County Outreach meeting in January. The City Manager voted on behalf of the City for Executive Committee delegates and alternates.
- The Director of Public Safety attended a meeting at the Oakland County Sheriff's Office with law enforcement executives and state legislators from Oakland and Macomb Counties. The meeting focused on current events, law enforcement issues, and pending legislation. The session allowed for a strong exchange of ideas and information among regional partners.
- The Director of Public Safety delivered a presentation alongside an OakTac executive board member on achieving multi-disciplinary and multi-jurisdictional collaboration.

Objective: Identify and implement innovative operational solutions

- Parks and Recreation started to utilize Trello, a project management/communications application. Trello will be used for interoffice communications and will be extended to working in collaboration with the Department of Public Works for field and park maintenance information.
- Community Development has installed Bluebeam, an electronic plan



2026 QUARTERLY REPORT

Priority Area 1: Organizational Effectiveness

review software, to be utilized for plan review. The department will begin training and software set-up in the coming months.

- The Clerk's Office rolled out the Civic Plus Agenda Management software to complete and publish City Council agendas and packets. Work with Civic Plus is ongoing to continue to refine the process. QR codes placed at the sign-in table before each meeting are being utilized for meeting packets and agendas
- The Clerk's Office partnered with IT and Public Safety to comply with new ballot box video monitoring retention schedules.



2026 QUARTERLY REPORT

Priority Area 2: Economic Sustainability

Objective: Identify, prioritize, and deploy economic development tools

- Community Development held a work session led by Carlisle Wortman to receive final input on the Payment in Lieu of Parking program before ordinance changes are presented to the Planning Commission and City Council for implementation.

Objective: Identify development opportunities and focus area

- Development of the Economic Development Strategy is underway with a final draft expected in early summer. Stakeholder meetings/focus groups have been held with the pertinent parties and priority development sites have been identified. The Community Development Director has reached out to all property owners of priority development sites.

Objective: Expand economic recruitment and retention efforts strengthening the City's economic portfolio

- A new restaurant, The Beverly, opened in January.
- Building plans are under review for the Berkley Theater.

Objective: Implement Master Plan updates and development process improvements

- BS&A met with Community Development and Finance. The new escrow program has been implemented, allowing for more seamless processing and return of escrow payments.
- Community Development worked with Spalding DeDecker to update the residential grading review process, allowing more accountability for finish grades and more transparency for contractors and residents.
- Community Development completed a number of "clean-up" City Code amendments to match ordinances with established policies and processes, as well as to address inconsistencies between ordinances.



2026 QUARTERLY REPORT

Priority Area 2: Economic Sustainability

Objective: Improve City/DDA strategic alignment

- The Community Development Director gave a presentation to the Downtown Development Authority highlighting elements of the City-wide and Downtown Master Plan that they could include as part of their upcoming strategic planning process.
- Community Development has been assisting the DDA with the expansion of the BOSS Social District to the west portion of 12 Mile and along Coolidge.
- Community Development assisted the Downtown Development Authority with the creation of a new bistro table policy that complements the existing outdoor service area permitting program.



2026 QUARTERLY REPORT

Priority Area 3: Community Assets

Objective: Complete comprehensive asset needs inventory and management plan

- The Parks and Recreation 5-year plan was submitted for approval and ultimately approved by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The process is complete.
- The Department of Public Works is working on the final round of lead service lines verifications and analysis for the TMF grant. The initial analysis indicates the need for continued verifications.
- The Department of Public Works reached out to residents who have confirmed lead service lines to get them on board for the spring replacement program. This will aid in the projected replacement of 60 lead service lines.
- Staff submitted a TMF grant reimbursement request, bringing the total reimbursement requested to \$434,000 of the total \$570,900 available. Lead service line replacement field work continued over the winter and the city expects to utilize the remaining funds prior to the new fiscal year.

Objective: Develop sustainable asset investment strategy that supports funding for the City's capital improvement plan

- Sidewalk repair and replacement strategy has been incorporated into the FY 26/27 Capital Improvement Plan. Spalding DeDecker has provided a proposal to assist in the creation of a more defined program.

Objective: Improve facility/staff security and safety

- Security upgrades were approved by Council, with implementation beginning in the coming months.
- The Clerk's Office is working with Emergency Manager Jack Blanchard to update and revise its Elections Security Plan for the upcoming midterm elections. Updates will be made to address real and



2026 QUARTERLY REPORT

Priority Area 3: Community Assets

perceived security situations resulting from the proposed SAVE Act and various executive orders.

- The Clerk is working with the school district to ensure safety and compliance at all precincts within the district. The East Gym will be unavailable for the August election.
- The Department of Public Services helped transport election storage containers for recertification. All 36 containers were examined and are now ready for the mid-term elections.



2026 QUARTERLY REPORT

Priority Area 4: Open Communications

Objective: Identify community audiences and most effective City “voice(s)”

- The Clerk’s Office met with the Communications Department to outline the 2026 elections communications plan. Together, they determined messaging for various audiences, including solutions to a myriad of unique issues already at the forefront. Challenges addressed include dis- and misinformation, disenfranchised voters, and finding willing workers.

Objective: Identify and implement priority communication strategies within human and financial resources

- The Communications Department created a monthly internal newsletter to keep all staff members informed of City updates regarding events, projects, and meetings.
- The Communications Director has continued ADA compliance research. Website updates continue to be a timely priority.
- As part of rolling out the new Boards and Commissions process, the Clerk’s office began posting all meeting agendas, packets, and minutes. This was formerly a function of the Communications Department.
- Communications sent three press releases to media lists (Public Safety information updates, economic development strategy partnership with Better City) and secured media coverage on Local 4, Fox 2, CBS Detroit, Crain’s Detroit, Oakland County Times, and Woodward Talk.
- The Communication Director and Deputy City Manager of Public Services were interviewed by Fox 2 and CBS Detroit about water main breaks, why they happen, and the work our crews do to fix them.



2026 QUARTERLY REPORT

Priority Area 4: Open Communications

- Parks and Recreation, the Library, and Communications collaborated to put together the Spring-Summer 2026 Program Guide. A postcard will be sent to each resident with a direct link and QR code to the program guide.
- Social media and email outreach was shared for a wide variety of community events and information:
 - WinterFest
 - Winter safety information
 - Car seat safety check opportunities
 - Water main breaks
 - Road closures
 - Yard waste and chipper service information
 - Parks and Recreation Master Plan engagement/public hearing
 - Bacon Ave. construction information and town hall
 - City Council meeting recaps/updates
 - FY 26-27 budget documents and meeting information
 - Job opportunities
 - Oakland County's hardship assistance program
 - Public safety priorities statement

Objective: Foster meaningful community engagement and genuine relationships

- Public Safety conducted the first Citizen's Public Safety Academy since 2018. Participants were highly interactive, asked thoughtful questions, and enjoyed the class structure and the information. Department



2026 QUARTERLY REPORT

Priority Area 4: Open Communications

presenters expressed appreciation for the opportunity to engage directly with community members in this setting.

- The Clerk's Office booked a Q&A session at the Library where staff will be discussing how to make a voting plan.
- The Clerk's Office held its first Board and Commission member orientation. They also coordinated the first board and commissions applicant interviews meeting.
- A town hall meeting was held at the Berkley Community Center to address questions and concerns about the Bacon Avenue Water Main and Pavement Replacement project.
- Phase two of the Board and Commissions Ad Hoc Committee began this quarter. The committee continues working toward making the process more robust, compliant, and meaningful for residents.
- Parks and Recreation hosted volunteers from AARP to provide free tax assistance to anyone over the age of 50.
- The Library hosted a craft supplies swap event, which had a big response from the community.
- The Library hosted a wedding and the mayor officiated!



2026 QUARTERLY REPORT

Priority Area 5: Fiscal Stewardship

Objective: Clearly define and articulate the City's long-term fiscal realities

- The budget document was completed thanks to hard work from all departments. The Finance Department and Communications Department put together a draft document with clear information and educational graphics about how we prioritize and allocate our budget

Objective: Identify additional funding strategies and partnerships

- The City Manager's Office submitted FY27 budget requests to both the state and federal government for three infrastructure projects.
- The Parks and Recreation Sponsorship Guide is now available and being utilized for 2026 event sponsorship. Parks and Recreation has already had success in reaching new sponsors and working with existing sponsors to contribute more financially to events.
- The Parks and Recreation Superintendent attended a webinar about DNR grants in preparation to apply in future cycles.