

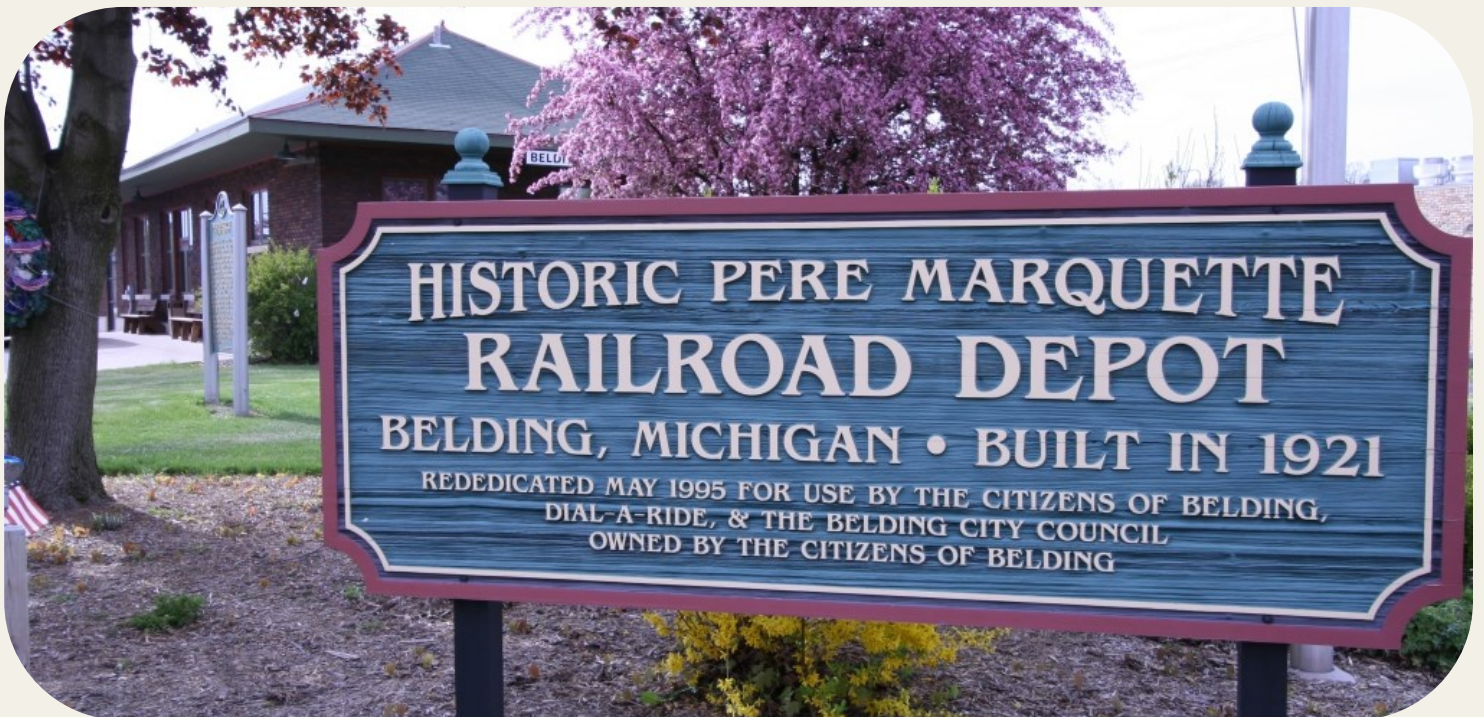


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# EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

## City of Belding

### City Manager



# City of Belding

The charming City of Belding, Michigan, has a great opportunity for a new city manager. Located in northwest Ionia County, Belding has a small-town feel while being in the larger Grand Rapids metropolitan area in west-central Michigan.

Belding's five-member city council, excellent department heads, and city employees are committed to providing and supporting a great career opportunity for a community-minded city manager who wishes to join this tight-knit community. The current city manager is retiring from Belding at the end of 2024 after a three-year stay and will end a respected municipal management career of more than 40 years.

The City of Belding is a progressive, full-service city of 5,980 residents living within a 4.91 square mile area. The FY 25 general fund balance is \$3.3 million, with a general fund balance of \$2.6 million.

The city has over \$60 million in capital improvement projects underway, and the new city manager will be expected to become familiar with them quickly.



The new city manager will develop and maintain relationships with elected officials, department heads, and city employees and will respect and value city residents and city businesses. Important and desirable qualities include proven communication, interpersonal, and human relations skills and the ability to interact with a wide variety of citizens and business owners. City residents expect a transparent city government and open communication between the city manager, mayor, mayor pro tem, council members, and citizens.

The City of Belding will offer a competitive compensation and benefits package, with a salary range of \$100,000 to \$120,000 and a defined contribution plan in which the city contributes 10 percent and the employee 6 percent.



# The Organization

The City of Belding has a council/manager form of government. The city council consists of five members, all elected to four-year terms; the mayor and mayor pro-tem are elected from among the council members every two years for two-year terms. The four-year terms are alternated on each even-year general election. Three council members will be up in 2026. The council has a history of professionalism, and the members work well together.

The city council appoints the city manager, sets policy and direction, approves capital and operating budgets and major expenditures, and serves as the legislative authority through the approval of ordinances and major planning initiatives.

The mayor, mayor pro tem, and city council are rightfully proud of the city's solid financial health while delivering a high level of services to residents and businesses. They have a solid history of working collaboratively with the city manager and department heads.

The City of Belding has exceedingly professional and dedicated department directors who report to the city manager. They include the police chief, fire chief, DPW, finance/treasurer, city clerk, and dial-a-ride.

The police department includes eight officers plus the chief; the fire department includes three full-time firefighters plus the chief, augmented by 14 on-call firefighters; and the DPW has nine full-time employees.

The city has two unions: Local #2541 of the International Association of Firefighters and the police officers' labor council. Both union contracts were recently negotiated and expire June 30, 2027. The city and both unions have a history of solid professional relations.

The city has a well-run housing commission, offering 140 rental opportunities to senior citizens, families, and disabled and disabled individuals under income-based and flat-rent options.

The city has a strong and active Downtown Development Authority and planning commission.



## Selected financial information for the city:

- Full-time employees – 35
- Part-time employees – 24, plus 14 on-call firefighters
- FY 23 total all fund revenue \$9,606,817; expenses \$6,899,620
- FY 23 total unrestricted cash \$7,901,749
- FY 23 total restricted cash \$2,193,068
- MERS defined benefit plan closed to new employees
- MERS unfunded liability of \$1,629,094 (as of Dec. 31, 2022)
- Total OPEB liability \$481,484 (as of June 30, 2023)
- Fiscal year July 1 to June 30
- Total long-term debt/governmental \$2,140,710
- Total long-term debt/business \$819,496
- Total short-term debt (wastewater prel. eng) \$1,980,000
- Sewer fund FY 25 budget \$20,128,000 (\$18,956,000 grant funds)
- Taxable value \$128,160,929
- Millage rate 18 mils

## Selected census information:

- Households 2,148
- Person per household 2.148
- 2022 median household income \$52,083
- 2022 median property value \$131,400
- 2022 median age 36.8
- Persons 65 years and over 15.4 percent
- Owner-occupied housing units 64 percent
- Poverty rate 18.6 percent
- Per capita income \$23,720

We love where you live.

# The Community

The City of Belding is located in northwestern Ionia County along state highways M-44 and M-91, 30 miles northeast of Grand Rapids, 20 miles west of Rockford, and just south of Greenville.

Belding was first known as Broas Rapids, named after Levi Broas, who settled the area in 1838. Later, it was called Patterson Mills and Hog Wallow during the logging days. Belding was chosen in 1871 to honor the family that made the town one of America's major silk manufacturing centers.



The City of Belding is located in Ionia County, with a population of 66,804. Ionia County has three cities, seven villages, and 16 townships. Belding was incorporated as a town in 1873 and became a city in 1964.

The city and adjacent land have significant industrial and manufacturing firms and a diverse employment base. During the 1970s, the city received urban renewal funds and tore down much of the old core downtown, leaving significant public parking available and offering several new development options, including mixed-use retail and housing projects. Downtown is home to the city-owned historic library, museum, city hall, and the Pere Marquette railroad depot.

Many recreational opportunities abound, including hiking, fishing, cross-country skiing, mountain biking, and golfing. The Flat River runs through the city, and the Fred Meijer Midwest Michigan non-motorized trail connects it.

An abundance of natural areas surround the city. Four city parks are situated along the scenic Flat River, available for canoeing, kayaking, and tubing. The city's Veterans Freedom Park pays tribute to area residents who served their country.

The Belding Area Schools, which serve about 13,000 residents, have a reputation for excellence and enroll about 2,000 students. The district has one high school, one middle school, and two elementary schools. It also operates an early childhood center, which includes the Great Start Readiness Program.



# Projects, Opportunities, & Challenges

## Projects

- Construction of a new \$45 million wastewater treatment plant, 30 percent completed to date, scheduled to be complete in 2026
- \$9 million water service lead removal project; project under contract to be completed in 2026
- The city has purchased a two-story building to renovate and relocate city hall operations
- Currently undertaking master plan update with community input and with the assistance of a professional consultant

## Opportunities

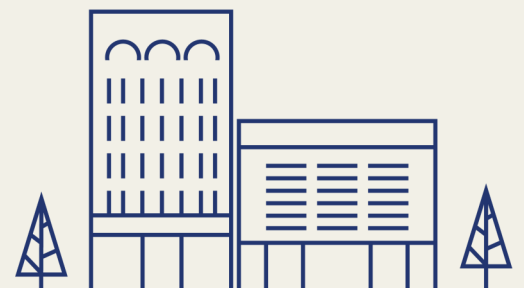
- History of sound fiscal management of the city
- Vibrant and strong K-12 school system
- Strong industrial and manufacturing base
- City is pro-business
- Strong single-family and apartment demand
- Excess water capacity and soon to have excess wastewater capacity for growth
- Land available for new growth and existing industrial buildings for reuse
- One marijuana grow and provisional license still available

## Challenges

- Explore the advantages of becoming a Redevelopment Ready Community
- Complete work on golf cart ordinance
- Work with Covered Village Mall condominium owners to identify future redevelopment or increased occupancy
- Undertake a business retention plan for the city
- Work closely with the Ionia County economic alliance to provide the city with new development projects
- Work with the housing commission to identify additional housing opportunities and grant funding



We love where you live.



# The Ideal Candidate

The City of Belding will consider applicants who value the small-town way of life, have a history of community involvement, and possess an innate drive to involve partners and residents in fashioning the next steps for a successful and prosperous community. To be considered a qualified applicant, respondents should have:

- A bachelor's degree in a relevant field of study such as business, finance, accounting, or public administration (an MBA or master's degree in a related field is preferred)
- Minimum of three years experience as a city, village manager, or assistant manager
- An understanding of Michigan's local government and economic tools available to the city, such as the Brownfield Authority, tax exemptions, etc.
- Residency is preferred
- Salary range of \$100,000 - \$120,000 dependent upon qualifications
- Defined contribution, 10 percent employer contribution, 6 percent employee match

Any applicant who moves to the level of candidate will be a talented communicator possessing demonstrated leadership, interpersonal skills, finely honed public presentation capabilities, and the ability to construct and deliver the City of Belding's message. Among the other skills that are to be illustrated in a resume and letter of introduction are these:

- Solid financial and budgeting and understanding of the requirements and strategies for infrastructure improvement financing.
- Experience in human resources development, including hiring, mentorship, performance measurement, evaluation, and professional development.
- Experience in labor relations and in labor negotiations
- Successful acquisition and management of grant funds
- Demonstrated ability to exercise facilitative problem-solving techniques
- An understanding of the precepts of economic development and community development in the areas of housing, placemaking, and branding
- Code enforcement experience



- Open-door policy to respectfully interact with residents, city council, city employees, and department heads
- History of inter-governmental relations and collaboration
- An understanding of chart of accounts, municipal accounting software, and daily, monthly, and year-end accounting functions. Experience with B&SA software a plus

The new city manager will be approachable and outgoing, a person who truly enjoys a diversity of personalities with an instinctive interest in connecting with others. This new leader must be:

- Capable of challenging processes
- Able to build shared visions
- A role model for appropriate behavior and professionalism
- Encouraging other people's success and ability to take action
- Honest with a high level of personal integrity
- Transparent in decision-making processes
- An active listener
- An innovative and creative problem solver
- Adaptive and resilient
- Self-confident with a secure sense of self
- Committed to volunteerism and community participation
- Tolerant of diverse opinions
- Support the department head's judgement and professionalism History of inter-governmental relations and collaboration

# Application Process

**Apply by close of business: January 6th, 2025**

Please submit resume, cover letter, consent form, and five professional references to:

**Email:**

[execsearch@mml.org](mailto:execsearch@mml.org)

Subject Line: Belding Search

**Questions** can be directed to MML Executive Recruiter Glenn Anderson at [ganderson@mml.org](mailto:ganderson@mml.org).

Candidates desiring confidentiality of their interest, as allowed for and provided by Michigan law, must indicate such in a separate subject line above the body of the cover letter.

This search is conducted by an Equal Opportunity Employer.



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