



## City of Hartford \* County of Van Buren \* State of Michigan

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### City Manager's Monthly Update Staff Update

**January 26, 2026**

I have been spending a lot of time at the counter taking property tax and utility payments. This experience has shown me that the front counter can become extremely busy. It has also given me the opportunity to meet citizens and address their complaints. Unfortunately, I have been struggling to keep up with my work, and I have been working late into the evening.

I would like to let the mayor and city commission know how much I appreciate the dedication RoxAnn has shown me during this time of short staffing. She has not complained to me about the additional work; instead, she has given me her opinion on how to make things easier. It was RoxAnn who advised me to close City Hall on Wednesday until we hire someone.

To reduce payroll time, I have changed the payroll frequency from weekly to biweekly. I am also creating two spreadsheets to streamline staff time entry in the Public Works Department. They need to keep track of their hours, the tasks they perform, and the equipment they use daily. This information must be transferred from the spreadsheets to their timesheets in BS&A. While it sounds simple, assembling the spreadsheets with dropdown options is a considerable amount of work. Although it will take additional time for the staff to enter their hours in BS&A, it will save Rickey and me time reviewing them, as they should now be entered correctly.

Quentin and I have been discussing his upcoming contract renewal and the necessary changes at the WWTP to ensure the plant operates without violations. We may need to seek a new engineer for the WWTP since the wastewater specialist at Wightman is no longer with the company. Quentin will present a proposal at the retreat.

We are currently interviewing candidates for the Utility Billing Clerk/Administrative Assistant position in the administrative office. My goal is to have someone hired by mid-February, with training to begin immediately. This position is intended to take over the functions of the utility clerk and billing, which have been transferred from the city clerk. I met with the city clerk about earning credentials to become the city's zoning administrator, and she will start training next month through the Michigan State Extension Program.

I plan to post the treasurer's position on the MML job classified site for at least four weeks. I would also like to explore posting the position on LinkedIn, though I have never used the site for this purpose. My aim is to avoid receiving applications from individuals who lack the necessary experience. On Indeed's website, we have been receiving many applicants who do not meet the minimum qualifications.

I continue to manage daily tasks, including returning phone calls and emails, filing when possible, reviewing and processing construction payment requests, and preparing quarterly project updates for the Master Plan and the Spark grant.

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**Audit:**

The audit has been completed and submitted to the state. The city received several recommendations from the audit. We have started implementing some of the audit recommendations. The resolution to accept the audit is on the city commission's business meeting agenda.

**Spark Grant/DNR/Council Michigan Foundations:**

A resolution is on the city commission's business meeting agenda to approve the change order request to include the addition \$19,795 granted from CMF.

**Master Plan:**

A draft copy of the master plan was presented to the planning commission. The planning commission will review the master plan and suggest changes at the February meeting. A draft was sent to the mayor and city commission. Please take the time to review the draft.

**Treasurer's Department:**

A resolution is on the city commission's business meeting agenda to approve 90 additional hours for L&A. Joe's 60-day assessment is included in the cover letter. The Treasurer's position will be posted on MML and Indeed this week.

**Mayor and City Commissioners Retreat/Workshop:**

The retreat was canceled due to the inclement weather. The next available date that I would like to propose is February 21<sup>st</sup>. The items that will be discussed are:

1. City Manager's goals.
2. Update the Treasurer's Department and discuss the future plans.
3. Update on the Waste Water Treatment Plant and discuss the future plans.
4. Discussion on better communication

**5 W. Main Street – VBCLB:**

The Van Buren County Landbank went out to bid, and the feedback received was that the stairwell needed to be designed first. Contractors did not feel comfortable without an architect's drawings.

Based on that feedback, the Land Bank is working with WLP to design the stairwell. The board will discuss combining the lots at the next Land Bank meeting. Since the stairs will be located on the side of the building adjacent to 1 W Main,

The goal is to prevent further deterioration and eliminate safety hazards. A few of the main items included in the RFP include:

- Masonry & Tuckpointing
  - Repair deteriorated brick and mortar
  - Tuckpoint cracked or missing mortar joints to match existing color and profile
  - Repair parapets, windows and door openings, and foundation walls
  - Ensure exterior masonry is structurally sound and watertight
- Asbestos Abatement
  - Abatement only as necessary to allow stabilization work

- **NOT** abating the entire building
- Openings
  - Removing and disposing of nonfunctional doors
    - New commercial storefront door at street level
    - New steel insulated exterior doors
    - New energy-efficient replacement windows
  - Ensure all openings are secure, weather-tight, and code-compliant
- Structural Stabilization & Access
  - Per the structural assessment:
    - Secure second-floor framing to exterior masonry walls
    - Install new beams, supports, posts, and footings as needed
    - Repairing/replacing damaged basement support posts
    - Making the second floor walkable and structurally sound
  - Rebuilding framing at the basement stair opening
  - New gutters and downspouts

**Drinking Water Sewer Revolving Fund Project (Lead Service Line Replacement & Water System Improvements) Update:**

See Wightman's update

**West Main Street Improvements – W. City Limits to Center Street:**

See Wightman's Report

Respectfully Submitted,



Nicol Pulluian  
City Manager