



Community Development Authority Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 24, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Columbus City Hall – 105 N. Dickason Boulevard

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:32pm.

Determination of Quorum

A quorum in attendance consisted of Hackman, Meier, Decker, Meyers, Weinberger, Elling, and Lawson. Staff liaisons Kornmann and Bennett were present.

Notice of Open Meeting

The meeting was noticed according to law.

Approval of Agenda

Meier motioned to approve the meeting agenda as presented with a second by Decker. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of minutes from February meeting

Lawson motioned to approve the meeting minutes from February 16, 2026, as presented with a second by Meier. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Regular Business

2. Consider and take action regarding a feasibility report on the development opportunities for 1149 W. James Street

Kornmann presented the Council's decision to task the CDA with creating a feasibility report for development opportunities of the 1149 W. James St. Kornmann suggested on-site visits to the location and presented a map of the location, utilities, and neighboring parcels. Site conditions included: potential environmental issue, particularly minor asbestos in the building. Uses: former car dealership, current storage that's being shifted to other City-owned locations. Other options: potential purchases of adjacent properties and issues were noted. Options are based on acreage and require stormwater. Kornmann presented a few options for CDA to discuss.

The CDA asked about the possibility of purchasing neighboring lots and about open-ended development. Kornmann would rather put together an RFP that's based on a vision for the final product using community feedback and mentioned the approach is used by other communities. Demolition would make the property more attractive for developers. The CDA did not show interest in remodeling the building. Kornmann highlighted comparable properties for possible value and noted that CDA will need to suggest an expectation for value. The CDA discussed a possible vision of a 2-3 story mixed-use development and would like to save any demolition for after property acquisition if needed. Alternatively, if limited to just the current parcel, it would still be mixed-use.

Staff will get more information for a more focused option(s) and address possible public input. Staff will coordinate a site visit with interested CDA members by next meeting.

3. Consider and take action regarding revising the facade grant requirements

Kornmann and Bennett presented updated facade grant requirements. Elling noted: #1(b)(4) Painting of Exterior Surfaces – Add before painting / repainting exterior surfaces. Any prior project should be completed before new applications. #10: up to 1 6-month extension. Applications can be submitted year-round. Program Process: #2(a): internal staff review & recommendation. Other suggestions related to the process such as mandatory staff meetings and CDA review and approval as separate steps.

Staff will address changes according to suggestions and bring back to next meeting for approval.

4. Consider and take action regarding facade grant recognition

Staff and CDA clarified recognition of completed facade grant application projects through highlighting before and after comparisons. The newspaper article about the 2025 facade grant results from late January made the front page. Staff also noted the grant results in what was the first of continuing annual reports. There was discussion of doing follow-ups every few years after successful projects.

5. Consider and take action regarding alternate funding sources for the façade grant program

Kornmann presented some opportunities and programs as alternative funding sources for the facade grant program. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Small Business Development Grant can fund additional items beyond facade and model on other communities to add flexibility. Excess Tax Increment Finance District (TID) funds could be used to help fund projects in the downtown TID. A Business Improvement District (BID) could be created to aid in development along with using additional City levy funds. Meier didn't recommend BID or using additional City funds but supported the other options. Kornmann highlighted fund transfers to blighted TID. The CDA will discuss future sustainability of the program at a future meeting.

Meier motioned to direct staff to pursue all alternatives to funding the facade grant program with exception of creating a business improvement district. Lawson seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote.

6. Community and Economic Development February Monthly Report

Kornmann presented the monthly Community Development report highlighting various projects and accomplishments from staff. The CDA members expressed interest in continuing to receive these monthly reports. Lawson asked about the Tower Drive project in which Kornmann noted there have been multiple drafts, but getting close to a final agreement. There was additional discussion about the relocation of the community garden.

7. Consider and take action regarding resolution addressing city support for WEDC CDI grants

Kornmann presented the revised resolution template for the City's support for applicants of Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Community Development Investment (CDI) grants.

Meier motioned to approve the resolution template as presented with a second by Decker. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Future Agenda Items

Staff noted the following items for future agenda topics:

Adjourn

Decker motioned to adjourn the meeting with a second by Meier. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26pm.

** These minutes will be approved at a future meeting and may be amended. These minutes are respectfully submitted by David Bennett, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator **