



APPROVED MINUTES
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, January 27, 2026, City Council Chambers
400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801

Call to Order: Chairperson Anne Heinze Silvis called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Roll Call: The roll was called by Executive Assistant, Hillary Ortiz. A quorum was in present.

Commission Members Present: Anne Heinze-Silvis, Chris Diana, Rachel Harp, Alex Womack, and Patricia Jones

Commission Members Excused/Absent: N/A

Others Present: Nick Olsen, Interim Grants Manage; Eric McCann, Grants Specialist; Hillary Ortiz, Executive Assistant; and Chad Hoffman, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity.

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Jones moved to approve the minutes of the CD Commission Meeting that was held on October 28, 2025. Commissioner Womack seconded each motion. The motions carried unanimously.

Petitions and Communications: There were no petitions and communications.

Audience Participation: Chad Hoffman, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity, stepped forward to introduce himself. He explained that Habitat for Humanity applied to receive CHDO funds this year, which would allow the organization to continue bringing affordable housing to the community. Mr. Hoffman informed the Commissioners that Habitat homeowners are required to complete 300 hours of service and participate in extensive financial education classes. He emphasized that Habitat for Humanity not only builds homes but also helps build long-term stability and better futures for participating families. If approved, the CHDO funds will assist with the development of five new builds slated for construction in Champaign County this year.

Staff Report: Mr. Olsen introduced and welcomed the new Community Development Commissioner, Rachel Harp, as well as Eric McCann, who recently joined the City of Urbana as the Grants Specialist.

Mr. Olsen provided the Commissioners with updates regarding the Annual Action Plan (AAP) timeline. He explained that the AAP is the one-year implementation component of the five-year Consolidated Plan. Staff are currently drafting the Year 2 plan and anticipate having a draft published by the end of February. A public hearing and 30-day public comment period are tentatively planned to coincide with the February Community Development Commission meeting,

with the final version of the plan returning to the Commission in March for their recommendation of approval.

Mr. Olsen noted that the annual Social Service Funding Grants application period is open from February 3 through April 6. This funding opportunity supports organizations that provide programs and services benefiting low-income Urbana residents across a range of eligible service categories. Information on eligibility criteria and service categories has been shared through the City's social media accounts, a recent press release, and the City's website. Mr. Olsen encouraged Commissioners to share the information within their networks to help increase awareness.

Mr. Olsen also provided a procedural update for the upcoming year, explaining that all funding recommendations will be forwarded directly to the City Council for approval because these are Community Development Special Funds (General Funds). As a result, they do not require a recommendation from the Community Development Commission, unlike prior years when Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds were used. He noted that staff will continue to keep the Commissioners informed as the process moves forward. Mr. Olsen added that any Commissioners interested in serving on the review committee for these grants should contact him directly for more information.

Lastly, Mr. Olsen updated the Commissioners on the status of the annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count, a survey conducted by shelters and volunteers to estimate the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Champaign County. This year's count took place on Thursday, January 22, 2026. Staff do not yet have the results, but once the data is officially released, they will provide an update to the Commission. Mr. Olsen noted that Katie Harmon, Director of the Continuum of Service Providers to the Homeless (CSPH), will make the data publicly available on the CSPH website.

Old Business: There was no Old Business to discuss.

New Business: Mr. Olsen brought two resolutions before the Commissioners for their recommendation for approval:

1. A Resolution Certifying a Community Housing Development Organization for the Urbana HOME Consortium (Habitat for Humanity, PY 2026).
2. A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of an Urbana HOME Consortium Community Housing Development Organization Funding Agreement (Habitat for Humanity, PY 2026).

Mr. Olsen explained that the City receives HOME funds through the Urbana HOME Consortium, which includes the City of Champaign, Champaign County, and the City of Urbana. For Program Year 2026, the City intends to certify Habitat for Humanity as the CHDO eligible to receive these funds. Habitat for Humanity submitted an application proposing the construction of five homes within the Consortium geography. Mr. Olsen stated that the first Resolution would certify Habitat as the CHDO for the year, and the second Resolution would authorize execution of the associated funding agreement.

Mr. Olsen further stated that Habitat for Humanity was the only organization to apply for CHDO funds this year. Their request included \$197,500 in development funds (\$39,500 per project for five projects, three of which will be in Champaign and two will be in Urbana) and \$30,000 in operating funds (\$6,000 per project). Mr. Olsen clarified that if the Commission recommends approval, staff will forward the resolutions to the City Council for final consideration. He stated that staff recommends approval, noting that the proposed projects align with Council goals related to affordable housing and are consistent with the FY 2025–2029 Consolidated Plan.

Following the overview, Commissioners engaged in discussion. Chairperson Silvis expressed appreciation for the value these projects bring to the community. Commissioner Diana raised concerns regarding the potential downside of Habitat homes, particularly related to property tax impacts for the homeowners. Commissioner Jones asked for clarification regarding the full cost of each build and the other funding sources contributing to the projects.

Mr. Hoffman responded that the \$37,500 per unit in CHDO funding represents only a portion of the total development cost, and that homeowners secure private loans in addition to donor contributions and government funding provided through CHDO and other sources. Mr. Hoffman further acknowledged that rising property taxes are a broader challenge throughout the city but noted that Habitat continues to work with homeowners to support long-term stability. He explained that Habitat works with homebuyers to maintain affordability, including offering 0% interest mortgages and adjusting loan terms as needed.

Mr. Olsen informed the Commissioners that the required project pro forma documents were included in the meeting packet, directing them to the specific page numbers. Mr. Hoffman added that five prospective homeowners have already been identified. Two homes are expected to begin construction soon, with completion anticipated in fall 2026. The remaining three homes are expected to begin construction in fall 2026 and be completed in spring 2027. He also provided additional details regarding Habitat’s mortgage structure, affordability calculations, and private donor sponsorship model.

Upon conclusion of the discussion, Commissioner Jones called for a motion on each resolution. Commissioner Jones moved to forward both resolutions to the City Council with a recommendation for approval. Commissioner Diana seconded. The motions passed unanimously.

Study Session: There were no Study Session items to discuss.

Adjournment: Seeing no further business, Chairperson Heinze-Silvis adjourned the meeting at 6:29 p.m.

Recorded by

Hillary L. Ortiz
Executive Assistant