



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION Community Development Board - Meeting Minutes

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### Regular Meeting of the Community Development Board August 5, 2025

**Board Members Present:** Erica Doornek, Ali Pistora, Donny White, Jim Corson, Kathleen Candelaria

**Board Members Excused:** None

**Board Members Absent:** Joe Stockburger, Hans Abbey

**City Council Representative:** None

**Staff Present:** Brenda Beckett, Carly Collins, Tam Rodier, Jordan Langton, Wyeth Friday

**Guests:** Mike Yakawich

**Welcome / Introductions:** The Community Development (CD) Board met in the 5<sup>th</sup> floor Pryor Conference Room of City Hall, 316 N. 26<sup>th</sup> Street. Board Vice Chair Ali Pistora called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**Announcements:** Brenda announced that Board member Adam Toland has resigned due to personal reasons. There are two (2) vacancies on the Board to be filled.

**Public Comment:** No public comments were heard.

**Meeting Minutes:** Board member Erica Doornek made a motion to approve the May 6, 2025 minutes as written and distributed. Board member Donny White seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. A vote was taken, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

#### Staff Reports:

- **First Time Home Buyer Program (FTHB):**

- Tam shared details of compliance reviews completed for outstanding FTHB loans. We have 409 loans outstanding at an average amount of \$12,500 bringing the total estimated outstanding FTHB loans to \$5,112,500. All outstanding loans are now in compliance with the terms and conditions of their agreements.
- Jordan shared that program funding was made available as of July 1, 2025, on a first-come, first-served basis. Nine (9) applications have so far been received, with about half of the applicants being preliminarily approved already. She designed a program slide to display on the City Hall and Library television screens and shared the slide on the City's Facebook page, as well as the Planning and Community Service Department's Facebook page. She created a program information sheet and emailed to approximately 160 lenders and realtors. VISTA member, Cole Reisdorf, dropped off program brochures and applications to HomeFront, Native American Development Corporation (NADC), District 7 Human Resources Development Council (HRDC) and the Native American Achievement Center located on the Montana State University – Billings and City College campuses. She asked for any outreach ideas that Board members may have.

- **Affordable Housing Development (AHD):**

- **Mitchell Court:** Jordan reported that Mitchell Court has received \$1.2 million in reimbursement draws. She continues to monitor construction progress and on-site monitoring will begin after leasing.
- **LB Lofts:** The LB Lofts affordable housing development funding application is pending final budget details and firm funding commitments from Homeword. HUD reviewed the recently completed Environmental Assessment and authorized funding for the project. Wyeth shared that Code Enforcement received ongoing complaints from the neighborhood and they will continue to monitor the site. He asked to be alerted to any complaints Board members may hear. The project will be presented at a future City Council meeting when the necessary details and firm funding commitments are obtained from Homeword.

- **Foreclosure Acquisition / Housing Rehabilitation Program:** Tam shared the following updates:

- **1709 St. Johns Avenue:** Tam reported no offers have been received since December 2024. A new yard sign with staff contact information and a QR code has been placed at the property. The listing has been shared with the Billings Association of Realtors (BAR) and local mortgage lenders. An advertisement for the property is currently being displayed on television screens at City Hall and the Library. It was also posted on the City of Billings' and Planning & Community Services Department's Facebook pages. City assistance is limited to \$100,000. This limit is designed to reduce the risk to the City and the borrower. The home will be sold to an income-eligible first-time home buyer. The price is \$356,000, which is HUD's current purchase price limit.
- **1302 Parkhill Drive:** Tam shared construction progress photos, as well as the challenges the contractor has encountered to date. She said most of the new windows have already been installed, the stucco siding is being repaired, plumbing work is complete, a lot of the interior painting has also been completed, the overhead electrical lines have been replaced with underground lines to the house, etc.
- **Other:** Tam confirmed that the resolution for the Foreclosure, Acquisition / Rehabilitation Program allows staff to purchase vacant land for the placement of modular homes. She reached out to Majestic Homes (who placed the Steffanich home) to discuss affordable modular housing options. The purchase of land and modular homes can be utilized to meet affordable housing development goals and meet expenditure timelines, if other projects fall through.

- **Housing Rehab Loans:** Tam shared details of the annual compliance review recently completed. Forty-eight (48) housing rehab loans are outstanding at an average amount of \$20,985; total loans outstanding \$1,007,265. All outstanding loans are now in compliance with the terms and conditions of their agreements. Staff recently met with HRDC staff to discuss developing a housing rehab loan program to supplement their existing weatherization program. HRDC would need to apply for funding during the annual application process in December 2025 / January 2026.

- **Lead Water Line Replacement Assistance Program:** Tam is developing a Lead Water Line Replacement Assistance Program. The 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan allocates \$200,000 in funding for the program, but this amount is subject to change. She researched the list of potentially impacted properties provided by the City's Public Works Department to determine how many properties are occupied by a tenant. The list was narrowed down to 151 owner-occupied properties. She designed a survey that may be sent to identified owner-occupied homeowners to gauge interest in this loan program to replace lead water lines from the street to the house. She is currently drafting program policies and procedures. Staff is also exploring options for how we might assist homeowners in dealing with lead pipes within the home as well. Staff will present additional details during the next Board meeting and will ask for the Board's guidance on proceeding.

- **Billings Metro VISTA Project (BMVP):** Carly reported that two (2) members completed their year of service this week. Six (6) new VISTAs start on August 25, 2025. New VISTAs will serve at Montana State University – Billings, Alternatives, Inc., Native American Development Council (NADC), Eagle Mount, Lutheran Family Services, and

the State of Montana. Carly confirmed the BMVP Program is the last remaining AmeriCorps Program in the state.

- **HOME-ARP Projects Status:** Carly completed reviews of third quarter reporting in July. To date, \$500,000 has been allocated and subrecipients have expended the following amounts:
  - Alternatives, Inc. expended \$139,728 to assist 66 households.
  - HRDC expended \$141,231 to assist 132 households.
  - NADC expended \$32,584 to assist 203 households.

**Board & Commission Annual Report to City Council:** Board members reviewed the Annual Report drafted by staff. Staff recapped challenges regarding CPTED projects in parks and meetings that have taken place with the Parks, Recreation & Public Lands (PRPL) staff. Wyeth informed PRPL that CD staff will research alternative projects to utilize CPTED funding. Board member Jim Corson made a motion to accept the Annual Report to City Council as written by staff. Board member Kathleen Candelaria seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. A vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved.

**September Meeting:** A brief discussion took place amongst Board members and it was determined that a September meeting is necessary for updates on important projects. The next Board meeting is scheduled for September 2, 2025.

**Neighborhood Concerns & Happenings:** Wyeth discussed consultants working on a growth policy for the City. He discussed yesterday's meeting with community housing stakeholders. He also provided an update on the two-way street conversion and indicated the conversion is nearly complete. Wyeth provided updated information regarding the sale of City-owned land. Councilmember Rupsis is leading a committee to make recommendations for the land. Brenda clarified that properties owned by the Community Development Division are not complicated by the use of federal funding. The property at 802 Yellowstone is set to be demolished this month for redevelopment.

**Next Meeting:** Board Vice Chair Ali Pistora adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:30 p.m. The next regular in-person meeting will be held at 3:00 p.m. on September 2, 2025 in the 5<sup>th</sup> floor Pryor Conference Room in City Hall, 316 N 26<sup>th</sup> Street.