



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION Community Development Board - Meeting Minutes

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Regular Meeting of the Community Development Board September 2, 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, Wyeth Friday

Guests: Debi Mehling, City of Billings Public Works Director

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

Announcements: None

Public Comment: No public comments were heard.

Meeting Minutes: Board member Jim Corson made a motion to approve the August 5, 2025, minutes as written and distributed. Board member Kathleen Candelaria 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):**
 - Carly shared updates on behalf of Jordan. Fifteen (15) applications have been received since the FTHB program re-opened July 1, 2025. The first sale closed August 27, 2025, and another closing is scheduled for later this month. Four (4) applicants are preliminarily approved and the remaining ten (10) are pending.
- **Affordable Housing Development (AHD):**
 - **LB Lofts:** Carly reported that an updated project budget and implementation schedule were received from Homeward. The project developers are currently estimating construction to begin in April 2026, which means no reimbursements would be requested from the City of Billings until the Summer of 2026. To meet the May 1 expenditure deadline, other projects will need to be pursued quickly.
- **Foreclosure Acquisition / Housing Rehabilitation Program:** Tam shared the following updates:
 - **1709 St. Johns Avenue:** Staff continues efforts to sell the property. Staff has received a few inquiries, but has not received a viable Buy-Sell Agreement yet.
 - **1302 Parkhill Drive:** Construction continues and it is looking really good. Tam shared the following construction progress highlights:
 - All the new windows have been installed.
 - Stucco repair and coloring is nearly complete; new shutters have been painted and are ready to be installed.
 - Insulation has been added.

- Plumbing has been replaced throughout home.
 - Interior painting is almost done.
 - Lower kitchen cabinets have been installed; waiting for uppers to be built.
 - Flooring and baseboards will go in soon.
 - New historical-looking exterior doors should arrive and be installed this week.
- **Lead Water Line Replacement Assistance Program:** Tam deferred program development updates until the presentation later in the meeting.
 - **Billings Metro VISTA Project (BMVP):** Carly reported that six (6) new VISTA members completed Orientation and training activities the week of August 25. Today is their first day at their Host Sites. Carly shared the member bios with Board members. Host Site Proposals for agencies interested in a VISTA placement in February 2026 are now available. Staff can provide technical assistance with proposals through October 3, and the deadline for submittals is Friday, October 10.
 - **HOME-ARP Projects Status:** The next quarterly reports are due October 10. To date, \$500,000 has been allocated to Alternatives (\$200,000), District 7 HRDC (\$200,000), and the Native American Development Corporation (\$100,000). Alternatives just requested an additional \$100,000 allocation and provided the required compliance documents. The extension agreement is currently being routed for review and signatures from the CEO of Alternatives, City attorney, and City Administrator.

Foreclosure Program – 1709 Saint Johns Avenue Discussion: Tam shared slides explaining the Foreclosure Program background, previous sales data, decision points, and options for maximum City 2nd mortgage assistance associated with the sale of the 1709 Saint Johns property. She asked for the Board's recommendations. For now, the Board recommended that staff reduce the selling price to \$349,000 to attempt to make the property more desirable. Other potential suggestions that staff will consider are hiring a realtor and listing the home on websites like Zillow.

Foreclosure Program – Vacant Lots / Modular Homes Discussion: Tam said the purchase of vacant lots is allowable under the current Foreclosure Program resolution, she shared pictures and information about three (3) currently available vacant lots, and gave rough estimates of the cost to site a modular home on the lots. She asked for the Board's recommendations regarding pursuing this type of affordable housing on one or more of the lots. The Board reviewed the pros and cons of each property including zoning, cost, tree removal, lot size, etc. The Board recommended that staff NOT pursue the 724 N 17th Street property because of its NX1 – Mixed Residential Zoning. The Board directed staff to pursue making offers on one or both of the other properties (328 Viceroy; 520 South 32nd Street) based upon available funding. Staff agreed to also work on the Request for Proposals for the placement a modular home, with single attached garage, or the purchased property(ies).

Lead Water Line Replacement Program Discussion: Debi Meling, Public Works Director, attended to help provide an overview of program, what has been done to date, and potential next steps. Public Works will be sending out letters in October to properties identified as having lead water lines from the curb to residential structures. CD staff will provide postcards to be inserted with the letters, which include a QR code to an online survey. The survey has been designed to gauge interest in a zero interest, deferred loan program to fund the water line replacements for income-qualified homeowners. Based upon survey responses, City staff will finalize the program design, loan amounts, develop and advertise a Request for Qualifications for construction, and other details. She asked for the Board's thoughts about moving the program forward. The Board liked the program and encouraged staff to continue pursuing implementation.

Neighborhood Concerns & Happenings: Donny asked for suggestions for potential businesses in need of vending machines. Wyeth shared that he attended the first meeting planned by Council Member Rupsis to begin the process of getting the City involved with housing solutions. Representatives from several organizations attended the meeting including HomeFront, Continuum of Care, Billings Association of Realtors, Billings Chamber of Commerce, Big Sky Economic Development, and RiverStone Health. During the meeting, they reviewed existing data and current analyses,

including information provided by Beckett. The next step will be to research and assess how other communities have developed and implemented similar programming that works well.

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 October 7, 2025 in the 1st floor Yellowstone Meeting Room in City Hall, 316 N 26th Street.