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**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
WORK SESSION  
Tuesday, January 17, 2023 | 1:00PM  
Sky Commons  
AGENDA**

1. Approve Agenda and May 17, 2022 Minutes
2. Welcome and Introduction
3. Facilitated Discussion:
  - a. 2022 Review
  - b. Department priorities
  - c. Committee Structure

Note: The location of the meeting will be held at Sky Commons (207 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street). Parking can be found to the west of City Hall (accessed from 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave N., between Civic Center and City Hall). Sky Commons is located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Fargo Civic Arena. The room is formally known as the previous City Commission Chambers.

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People with disabilities who plan to attend the meeting and need special accommodations should contact the Planning Office at 701.241.1474. Please contact us at least 48 hours before the meeting to give our staff adequate time to make arrangements.

Minutes are available on the City of Fargo Website at [www.FargoND.gov/communitydevelopmentcommittee](http://www.FargoND.gov/communitydevelopmentcommittee).

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**Regular Meeting:**

**Tuesday, May 17, 2022**

The Regular Meeting of the Community Development Committee of the City of Fargo, North Dakota, was held in the Commission Chambers at City Hall at 2:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 17, 2022.

The Community Development Committee Members present or absent were as follows:

**Present:** Commissioner John Strand, Mayor Tim Mahoney, Michael Redlinger, Samantha McDonald, Ken Enockson, Rocky Schneider (Fargo Planning Commission), Jennifer Benson (Fargo Board of Education), Chris Brungardt (Fargo Housing & Redevelopment Authority), Thomas Hill (United Way), Cindy Graffeo (Downtown Community Partnership)

**Absent:** Linda Klebe

Chair Strand welcomed Members to the meeting and introductions were made.

**Item 1. Approval of Agenda & Minutes of February 15, 2022 meeting**

Member Brungardt moved the Agenda be approved as presented. Second by Member McDonald. All Members present voted aye and the motion was declared carried.

Member Mahoney moved the minutes of the February 15, 2022 Community Development Committee meeting be approved. Second by Member Hill. All Members present voted aye and the motion was declared carried.

**Item 2. Approval of Minutes of March 2, 2022 Subcommittee**

Member Hill moved the minutes of the March 2, 2022 Subcommittee meeting be approved. Second by Member Mahoney. All Members present voted aye and the motion was declared carried.

**Item 3. Public Comment**

No public comment was provided.

**Item 4. Staff Report and Work Plan Overview Discussion**

Planning and Development Director Nicole Crutchfield gave an update on the Core Neighborhoods Plan, highlighting the two highest priorities as the Neighborhood Reinvestment Program and proactive code enforcement.

Ms. Crutchfield stated there have been meetings held with the CZB Consultants regarding the Neighborhood Reinvestment Program. She noted extensive discussion has been had on the Community Land Trust, and also spoke on an economic tool incentivizing residential reinvestment.

Discussion was held on the updates given regarding the CZB Consultants findings.

Planning Coordinator Tia Braseth reported on the 2022 HUD (Department of Housing and Urban Development) Action plan's 30-day public comment period, stating it is finished, and no comments were received. She also spoke on the Home Allocation Plan for the American

Rescue Plan money, and stated this is a special one-time grant given due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and it will go out for public comment.

Assistant Planner Catlyn Christie presented the Impediments to Fair Housing report. She stated the data shows the disproportionate housing needs at different levels in the city.

Further discussion was held regarding impediments to fair housing report.

Ms. Crutchfield shared that the HR&A Advisors, Inc. has been chosen to perform a study on housing needs in the metro area and also gave a quick update on social service funds.

Discussion continued on social service funds.

Member Hill absent.

**Item 5. Recap of Maxfield Study: Affordable Housing Needs Analysis for Downtown Fargo**

Ms. Crutchfield gave an update on the Maxfield study report. She stated the study showed the need for affordable housing is going to outpace the building of affordable housing.

**Item 6. Recap and Update of Last Year's Partner Presentations**

Ms. Crutchfield spoke on the communication process of the community partners and the Planning Department to the Board.

**Item 7. Discussion on Housing Ad-Hoc Subcommittee and Future Goals**

Chair Strand asked if there is still a desire to have a group to focus on housing on behalf of the Community Development Committee.

Member Schneider stated he would like to know where the City could step in and be helpful, and he would encourage discussion on the data provided by the studies conducted. He stated he is unsure who should be tasked with this.

Member Brungardt shared he thinks those who are familiar with this process could be used to narrow the data down so it would be easier to understand.


Member Graffeo suggested the Ad Hoc Subcommittee could serve as a workgroup that takes in all the data, plans, and puts it into a cohesive set of priorities.

Member Mahoney suggested three elements the Ad-Hoc Subcommittee could address as being; bylaws of the Community Development Committee, low income housing, and blight caused by poor maintenance of rental properties.

Discussion was held regarding the purpose and future of the Ad-Hoc Subcommittee.

**Item 8. Adjourn-Next Meeting August 16, 2022**

The time at adjournment was 3:42 p.m.

**TO:** Community Development Committee  
**FROM:** Nicole Crutchfield, Planning Director   
**DATE:** January 11, 2023  
**RE:** Proposal for Restructuring Community Development Committee and 2023 Work Plan

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Dear CD Committee members;

This memo provides a staff report and a framework for the upcoming work session. There are many topics built within this report that I look forward to facilitating with the full committee in more detail. The work session will be held at the Sky Commons (former City Commission chambers at the Civic Center).

The memo summarizes: 1) Year in review; 2) Priority topics for 2023; and 3) Restructured committee suggestions. The goal of the work session is to have an informal discussion on your perspectives and thoughts related to these topics and the work of the City's Community Development division in general.

**Year in Review:**

As we begin 2023 and reflect on 2022, thank you for your patience. As you know for the past several years the planning staff have been in considerable transition since the department reorganized in 2019. Even through much of this year, the CD Division has continued to work on the pandemic and associated aftermath which didn't allow much time for extra strategic planning efforts.

As you know, all of the Community Development staff completely reframed and reprioritized their work based on the pandemic. First in 2020 for emergency response, second in 2021 and 2022 for managing CARES funding and Red River Task Force responses as we built and operationalized homeless emergency shelters and programs, and third in the distribution of HOME ARP funds for new programs and projects specific to rent relief. The monitoring and requirements by the federal government and the administrative load cannot be underestimated. The good news however, is that the staff distributed 6x their usual allocation, and are continuing that work today and will continue that work for the next few years.

Coincidentally, during the pandemic time period, the City was audited by HUD both for CBDG and separately for the environmental review regulations by HUD (generally a once per seven years type of review). Unfortunately there were findings in the environmental review audit, but the good news is that we now excel in this work based on training and coordination with HUD.

At the January 17th meeting, Tia will present a short summary on the projects and accomplishments of the CD Division, which will also introduce our HUD 2023 timelines and project goals.

**Department Budget Update:**

As we reflect on the past five years of Community Development there has been quite a change in the role of the CD Committee as it relates to the administration of HUD funds and the City's General Funds Social Service allocations, especially when we compare today's operations to the late 1990s. In general due to audit and other local governance regulations, the administration of Social Service funds as historically been distributed in past years is no longer an operational program. Instead, the City defers to the FM Area Foundation and United Way, through their grant programs, where some additional city funds have been allocated.

In addition, since our community partnerships have become more solidified we've further predefined partnerships with community members as part of the Mayor's Budget process. This can be shown with budget allocations to First Link, Indigenous Association, Cass Clay Community Land Trust, the City's Special Assessment Assistance Program, and the City's Winter Snow Removal Assistance Program.

We continue to look for ways to partner with United Way and FM Area Foundation as granting and community programming and service needs. At this point the City Commission has allocated American Rescue Plan funds for distribution in 2023. Our partnership with SENDCAA, High Plains Fair Housing and other similar organizations are still supported through HUD Program Administration dollars since they qualify to be recipients of federal dollars.

Additionally, with the onset of the City's Diversity Equity and Inclusion Department and the enhancement of the Public Health HARM reduction (Mobile Outreach, Engagement Center and Gladys Ray) some internal budget changes have moved from Social Service general funds to public health budgets or new line items in City Administration, in order to support these city sponsored community development activities. In summary, the distribution of any funds (historically done by the CD Committee) has been relegated to the City Commission as part of the City's purchase policy.

**2023 Work Plan Priorities;**

For the work session I would like to discuss methods for confirming prioritized focus areas; and deeper policy work. Based on current City of Fargo sponsored activities and community outreach, staff believes we need to narrow in on three focus areas for upcoming work. Aligning our Land Development division, Community Development division, Public Health's Harm Reduction, with our federal, state and NGO partner agencies for deeper technical gap analysis and resource focus that will help us move to more strategic solutions.

**Prioritized focus areas:**

1. Neighborhood communications and supporting the implementation of the Core Neighborhood Plan
2. Housing policies
3. Homeless sheltering and coordination for chronic homeless – resulting in permanent supportive housing projects



There are many more community needs and priorities; however, it is my opinion the department is staffed and engaged to work on the items above over the course of 2023-2024. Further explanation of these topics are listed below.

**Topic 1: Neighborhood Development and Communications:**

On the heels of the recently adopted Community Neighborhoods Plan (CNP) and the priorities set forth, over 20 needs and goals have been identified. We are partnering with the Neighborhood Coalition, City Code Enforcement Task Force and Neighborhood Associations to develop a communication framework and advocacy network. Our primary need is to bring forward the other city departments who are also working in neighborhoods for improved information flow and navigation of various programs within the city organization. Currently staff planners are attending neighborhood meetings and advocating for enhanced communications among city departments.

**Goal: Develop a more robust neighborhood coalition, with a multi-department streamlined communication approach identifying neighborhood champions and advancing priorities in the CNP.**

**Example outcome: This could look like sponsoring neighborhood leaders to hold facilitated conversations to listen, learn and advance priorities of the CNP.**

**Topic 2: Housing Policies**

Upon the completion of the Metro Housing Study, the primary goal would be to create a metro wide workgroup to help coordinate policies and conflicting goals amongst jurisdictions. Recommendations would be further coordinated at the conclusion of the housing study which is expected April 2023. The initial findings of the plan thus far are that the entire metro has a shortage of all housing types, and this shortage is limiting the metro's potential. Upon completion of the study, the plan will need to be disseminated and further broadcasted to affirm shared goals in order to create methods to streamline and remove barriers to creating more housing in the market.

**Goal: Develop a metro-wide champion advocacy group to help communicate and outreach with factual data and shared goals to affirm shared understanding of priorities and goals.**

**Example outcome: A data dash board and speaker tour to share information and stay coordinated post housing study.**

**Topic 3: Homeless Sheltering & Permanent Supportive Housing for Chronic Homeless**

Staff agents and practitioners in behavioral health, public housing, public health, federal policy, and emergency services need to come together to solve for more sustainable approaches for permanent supportive housing success stories in our region. This will require creative and collaborative work. The barriers to housing are too great. If we solve for chronic homeless we solve for the other pieces in our social service housing supports systems. Currently the Harm Reduction Division in Public Health, the Planning Department and City Administration are working towards trying to solve for crisis management.

**Goal: Find partners to map the gaps in the system from the chronic homeless perspective.**

**Example outcome: Community strategic plan for resourcing hard to house populations**

**Questions for discussion:**

- 1. Are these the highest priority goals and needs to be solved for within the community? And is this what the City of Fargo Planning Department should be prioritizing resources? Is anything missing?**
- 2. How would you like to spend your time volunteering or would you want to be involved in these topics? What can you offer or what do you need to fully participate? To what level do you want to participate?**

**New Governance Structure:**

Beginning in August 2022 I began discussions with Commissioners, then Interim City Administrator, and the CD Committee Ad Hoc Committee (which was set up in April 2022 in response to Affordable Housing needs) to learn more about what works and does not work in the operations of the Community Development Committee as we know it today and to reflect on the history of the work. I believe some changes to modernize are needed. In simple terms these changes would allow for:

- 1) Ability for deeper discussion and shared knowledge and resources between board members and staff
- 2) Collaborative strategic planning efforts to include efficient and productive ways to share information
- 3) Garner more transparent processes and advice on priorities and programs

You may ask, *“Why are we bringing these topics to the Community Development Committee?”* And what exactly does the Community Development Committee spend time on? And what exactly does the Community Development division within the Planning Department spend time on?

As background, the CD Committee was established approximately in 1994. Bylaws and a resolution or ordinance was not established. Since 1994, HUD has reformatted their regulations and in 2017 increased reporting standards. In addition the city financial policies have been modernized to meet enhanced governance structures which shifted the city’s purpose on sponsorships and grants, and the complexity of the community issues have become more difficult and complex requiring more technical staff. The division of two staff members has grown into a division of five. Two of these five positions are partially funded by HUD. In addition, the rest of the staff are in position to manage the federal grant funding and provide oversight to HUD funded programs. I personally believe the current structure of the CD Committee is not in alignment with how the City of Fargo Planning Department is operationalized.

Based on the above frameworks I’d like to propose a couple of different options for governance structures for further discussion:

**Option 1: Recess the Community Development Committee and instead retire or refocus current volunteers to one of the three priority topics if they desire to stay involved. Three policy topics above**

would be divided between technical operational coordination meetings and policy development meetings. Staff would reach out to those interested in the topic matters above and coordinate directly with you on the organizational setup appropriate for the 3 topics (Each topic area is envisioned to have its own governance structure.) In essence 3-4 work groups would be created to address the issues above at deeper policy levels.

*If Option 1 is too bold, my suggestion would be to consider Option 2:*

Option 2: If time is needed to think through policies or governance structures, a different option would be to continue to meet quarterly with preset agenda topics directly related to departmental city operations for vetting with liaison commissioner (but removing staff agency members).

Quarter 1: March 21st – 1:30 – 3:30 PM

Topic: Work plan and budget discussion - this would align with the 2024 budget request.

Quarter 2: June 20th – 1:30 – 3:30 PM

Topic: Strategic Planning – 5 year outlook and goals; this would align with potential governance change requests

Quarter 3: September 19th 1:30 – 3:30 PM

Topic: Community needs assessment review, partnership development, status; this would align with coordinated work projects and goal development, resulting in community learning lessons.

Quarter 4: December 19th 1:30 – 3:30 PM

Topic: Project review and evaluation, work plan development for the following year.

In summary of this report, the upcoming working session agenda will be informal discussions on:

- 1) Updates on 2022 work plan and lessons learned from the pandemic
- 2) Work priorities for 2023 and onward
- 3) Governance and board structure changes

We thoroughly enjoy working with the Community Development Committee and we look forward to hearing from you on these questions and suggestions. We value your dedication, knowledge, expertise and feedback.