



## Columbia Community Development Committee Meeting Minutes Tuesday, May 19, 2026

---

### Call to Order

The Columbia Community Development Committee conducted a Meeting on Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at City Hall (Mayor's Conference Room), 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201. The Honorable Tina N. Herbert, Chair called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. and The Honorable Will Brennan and The Honorable Sam P. Johnson were present.

### Committee Discussion

Upon a motion made by Ms. Herbert and seconded by Mr. Johnson, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the agenda subject to the addition of a brief overview of Contract Amendment No. 3 for Program Management of the Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Program as **Item 3**.

1. 2026/2027 Annual Action Plan — Ms. Felicia Kilgore, Community Development Director

Councilor Herbert said this is a continuation from our last meeting. Since then, staff has had additional conversations.

Mr. Jeff Palen, Assistant City Manager of Development and Finance / CFO reported that the Annual Action Plan remains unchanged from the version originally presented. He noted that committee members had identified a few items that were not being funded and requested further review. Additional funding in the amount of \$20,000 has since been identified for the expansion of workforce development opportunities for low-to-moderate income individuals experiencing homelessness. Although this is not federal funding, it has been approved, and staff are now working with Homeless Services to move that effort forward. He also addressed questions regarding the \$267,000 allocated to the TN Development Corporation for Pendleton Street, confirming that the project is potentially proceeding toward demolition of the property rather than redevelopment. The outcome of that decision will determine if there needs to be an amendment to how the funds are utilized.

Councilor Herbert inquired about the demolition process, noting her awareness of another historic property, the Lutheran Seminary, which cannot be demolished due to its historic designation. She asked staff to look into the available options regarding the property.

2. Five-Year Residential Development Strategy — Ms. Ashley Jenkins, MPA, Special Projects Coordinator / Office of the City Manager

#### *City of Columbia Vacant Lots for Redevelopment*

Ms. Ashley Jenkins, MPA, Special Projects Coordinator presented an overview of underused residential lots and the City's affordable and workforce housing strategy. She outlined the keys to the Dream program, noting that a 2025 professional services contract is guiding a

comprehensive plan for developing vacant lots in targeted neighborhoods. Originally focused on workforce housing, the effort has expanded to broader community needs. She highlighted planned home quality, including a partnership with US Brick, and shared a spreadsheet identifying 63 vacant lots and their proposed uses. She added that staff are also surveying employees about their housing interests and current living situations.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager outlined the City's development framework and how Project Dream and Project Growth support current housing and commercial efforts. She said data from earlier work with DreamKey and the Integral Group now guides updated residential and multifamily projects. An upcoming Procurement solicitation will let pre-identified partners propose work.

Ms. Felicia Kilgore, Community Development Director reported that the department offers a monthly homebuyer education course and noted that a staff member recently completed financial credit counseling training, enabling the department to provide more hands-on assistance to residents seeking to improve their credit while financing their homes.

Mr. Henry Simons, Assistant City Manager of Operations described the program as a game-changer, noting that several Parks and Recreation employees have participated, with one employee currently having a home under construction. He highlighted that participants now have the opportunity to finance and follow the development of their own homes.

Councilor Johnson requested that the materials provided include council district information, noting that the identified properties appear to span Districts 1, 2, and 3. He emphasized the importance of recognizing housing needs citywide.

Councilor Herbert requested that the materials provided also chart which addresses and/or individuals qualify for housing assistance.

Ms. Ashley Jenkins, MPA, Special Project Coordinator also shared that there are nine additional lots that they are looking to purchase in the Booker Washington Heights neighborhood. The City currently owns seven and all 16 lots will be utilized to invest in that neighborhood.

Mr. Tony Lawton, President and CEO of The CeBa Group, LLC reported on progress within the contracted areas, noting that the block-by-block approach is generating community excitement. He thanked Code Enforcement staff for identifying structures ready for demolition and stated that efforts are underway to bring Housing Authority properties back online. He highlighted plans for approximately 15 new builds per year, including potential opportunities for Section 8 voucher units, and stated that the overall goal is achievable within four years.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said the strong quality of current projects is attracting more contractors and developers, though some will need vetting. She noted related Public Safety Committee work to address overlooked properties, including transitional housing. She emphasized that these efforts will help create the right conditions for reputable developers to invest and support the City's broader goals.

There was discussion about properties with a homeowner in progress; explanation of under-contract; identifying those in need of wraparound services; homebuyer training; getting participants into the homeownership pipeline; district-wide housing needs; public

service entity partnership; ensuring residents with similar housing needs are also able to participate; and the cost of builds.

3. Overview of the Contract for Providing Professional Services — Ms. Felicia Kilgore, Community Development Director

Ms. Felicia Kilgore, Director of Community Development reported that the department is seeking to renew its contract with ICF Incorporated, LLC, which has supported the City's CDBG Disaster Recovery Program over the past several years. She explained that additional funds are needed for more hands-on support from subject-matter experts. She emphasized the importance of completing these projects successfully while maintaining compliance with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements and federal funding standards.

Councilor Brennan asked if this would essentially involve third-party auditors.

Ms. Missy Caughman, Assistant City Manager / Strategic Initiatives & Innovation stated that it concerns grant management.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:57 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Erika D. Moore Hammond, MMC, CPM  
City Clerk