



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

AGENDA

Monday, February 19, 2024

Noon-1:00 p.m.

This meeting includes in-person and virtual participation.



333 Broadalbin Street SW

Or join the meeting here:

<https://council.cityofalbany.net/groups/cdc/zoom>

You can use your microphone or dial in using your phone.

Phone: 1 (253) 215-8782 (Long distance charges may apply)

Meeting ID: 894 5923 3401; Passcode: 498781

1. Call to Order (Chair)
2. Roll Call (Staff)
3. Election of 2024 Chair and Vice Chair positions
4. Approval of Minutes (Chair)
 - February 5, 2024 [Pages 2-5]
5. Scheduled Business (Staff)
 - Application Evaluation [Page 6]
 - Fair Housing Goals and Actions [Page 7-8]
6. Business from the Public (Chair)

Persons wanting to provide comments may:

 1. *Email written comments to cdaa@cityofalbany.net, including your name, before **noon on the day of the meeting.***
 2. *To comment virtually during the meeting, register by emailing cdaa@cityofalbany.net before **noon on the day of the meeting**, with your name. The chair will call upon those who have registered to speak.*
 3. *Appear in person at the meeting and register to speak.*
6. Business from the Commission (Chair)
7. Next Meeting Date: March 18, 2024, in Council Chambers
8. Adjournment

This meeting is accessible to the public via video connection. The location for in-person attendance is accessible to people with disabilities. If you have a disability that requires accommodation, please notify city staff at least 48-hours in advance of the meeting at: cdaa@albanyoregon.gov or call 541-917-7550.

Testimony provided at the meeting is part of the public record. Meetings are recorded, capturing both in-person and virtual participation, and are posted on the City's website.





COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES

February 5, 2024

12:00 p.m.

Hybrid – Council Chambers

DRAFT

Call to Order

Chair Robyn Davis called the meeting to order at 11:59 p.m.

Roll Call

Members present: Alex Johnson II (arrived 12:06 p.m.), Jim Cole, Robyn Davis, Larry Timm, Bessie Johnson, Skylar Bailey, Courtney Stubbs

Members absent: John Robledo, Emma Deane (excused)

Approval of Minutes:

12:02 p.m.

Motion: Commissioner Jim Cole moved to approve the January 22, 2024 minutes as presented. Commissioner Skylar Bailey seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

Scheduled Business:

12:03 p.m.

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Applicant Presentations

Beth Frelander, Planner introduced the presentations, but noted for the record that Emma Deane had recused herself from discussion of Albany Helping Hands and CHANCE presentations because of a Conflict of Interest.

Albany Helping Hands, Don Sparks, Executive Director of the non-profit presented their grant request to assist in their mission to work with the homeless on housing assistance, meals, and connecting with social services and health resources. This grant request is to help them design enrichment programs to help residents deal effectively with life's challenges and give them the tools to improve their lives. They intend to add recovery and sobriety assistance through organizational partnerships serving clients in-house. In answer to a question about being a faith-based organization, he said they have no faith requirement for their services, and they do not deny anyone care.

Commissioner Bessie Johnson asked whether residents could stay forever or if at some point they must move out. Sparks responded that some residents have been there a decade, hence the need to provide a better motivational model. Sparks wants the shelter to be a pipeline but will not kick residents out.

Commissioner Alex Johnson II asked if residents are contributing anything to offset the costs of their care. Sparks answered that they do not ask for contributions at this time. Officially, they require 30 hours per week of volunteer work when able for their stay, but they don't currently manage that process.

Commissioner Bailey asked what percent of clients are being served because of addiction related issues. Sparks responded a lot. As a high barrier shelter, residents are not actively using drugs.

CARDV (Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence), Mary Zelinka, Facilities Manager and Tia Daversa, Grants Coordinator presented for the CARDV application. Daversa described CARDV as a survivor services agency for those experiencing domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, or trafficking in Linn and Benton Counties by providing emergency shelter, crisis support, 24/7 confidential hotline, basic needs, housing assistance, and prevention-based curriculums. They applied for CBDG funds to build a fence around their latest confidential shelter

home for security and privacy shelter, which is vital to the clients and potentially to install keypad entry deadbolts on the bedroom doors for personal safety. Zelinski reiterated that the safety of the clients is vital and if the shelter is not secured with fencing it will not be safe to operate.

C.H.A.N.C.E. (Communities Helping Addicts Negotiate Change Effectively), Jennifer Thelander, Grants and Fundraising Specialist presented an overview of C.H.A.N.C.E. Formerly it was just a monthly recovery center but since 2021 they have been providing expanded services for those experiencing substance abuse disorders, mental health and homelessness in Linn/Benton/Lincoln Counties. They are a low barrier service so there are people in active use and recovery. The grant funding ask is for work on the historic Episcopal Church in Albany which has been donated to C.H.A.N.C.E. but has needed extensive restoration work and construction for ADA compliance. Thelander noted that they are seeking other funding as well.

Commissioner Cole asked whether there would be any anticipated income from the facility. She shared that they have been a venue for community meetings and recovery events that provide small fees for facility use. And the church space will provide an opportunity to expand as a community venue for those in recovery. Anne Catlin wanted clarification on how the building would serve the clients directly, which Thelander addressed.

DevNW, Luis Mendoza, Asset Building Manager presented their application for CBDG Funds. DevNW provides resources and programs to low- and moderate-income families, like homeownership education and HUD led counseling, foreclosure work, downpayment assistance programs, and development and rehab work on homes for low-income residents who are financially unable to do major home repairs that are necessary to keep their home safe and livable.

Commissioner Timm asked about the amount in their revolving funds. Mendoza didn't have an exact figure but Frelander added that any available funds would automatically be applied and spent down for ongoing repair projects.

Commissioner Johnson II asked how many homes are under this project. Frelander replied it is for DevNW Low-Income Homeowner Rehab Program as a whole. Mendoza shared that the normal repairs range between \$35,000 to \$40,000 for each family.

Commissioner Davis asked whether the homeowners repay the program. Mendoza said it is a 'silent second' and a lien is put on the property and repaid when it is sold. The loan may incur a low interest rate depending upon the amount but no monthly payment is required. They do a preliminary assessment of the home's equity to prevent the homeowner from going into increased debt.

Family Connections, Bryan Steinhauser, Business Liaison/Childcare Accelerator spoke about the grant application for Family Connections, a regional childcare referral agency serving Linn/Benton/Lincoln Counties. Their Growing Care Recruitment program goal is to increase the number of registered home-based childcare services in the community by providing incentives to overcome the financial barriers of starting these businesses. The start-up grants will include business training and long-term mentoring.

Fair Housing Goals and Actions

12:55 p.m.

Beth Frelander shared a draft of potential fair housing impediments and goals and actions to remove these barriers.

Regarding the lack of affordable housing impediment, Commissioner Johnson said she was unsure of the City's ability to create more affordable housing. Staff replied that for receiving CBDG funding HUD requires that we affirmatively address barriers to fair housing. Freeland noted that she has tried to leverage other planning efforts the City is doing outside of the CBDG program to advance these goals.

Commissioner Davis surmised that this Commission has not only a role in the allocation of these funds but the formation of public policy to support affordable housing efforts. The Commission can recommend that the City raise additional revenues to support the effort. Commissioner Cole noted tax incentives, or city fees reduced for certain types of housing.

Commissioner Timm asked if the City had re-development authority. Staff explained that the city has an Urban Renewal Agency that is very focused but is at the end of their cycle; their focus is not necessarily on housing. But the City has been removing obstacles to housing development and increasing the variety of housing choices through modifications of development standards to encourage re-development as well as expanding mixed-use zones in accessible locations.

Freeland continued the discussion with what they saw as the second impediment, Lack of Housing Choice and the draft actions are to pursue strategies in the housing implementation plan to reduce barriers to needed housing types and to leverage climate friendly areas to increase housing density and diversity. Commissioner Timm asked if apartments could be added to the list of needed housing types.

Commissioner Cole asked about complimentary strategies like making housing clusters more livable with increased transportation options, such as with vouchers, so those areas aren't segregated. Catlin noted that there are efforts to improve accessibility across the spectrum of housing, transportation, and land use. Freeland suggested focusing investment in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods to improve the facilities and amenities in those areas.

Freeland reviewed the next impediment, the Lack of Understanding of Fair Housing Laws and Resources and suggested actions to reduce discriminatory practices through training to increase awareness of how actions may affect fair housing choice and marketing resources.

The final impediment is Cultural and Linguistic Barriers. Freeland suggested that the City continue building partnerships with organizations that serve diverse communities and ensure that services are available to non-English speakers and to ensure services are accessible to all including the disabled.

Commissioner Bailey asked about programs geared to Spanish-speaking communities. Catlin said that Casa Latinos Unidos serves the Spanish-speaking community, but we can encourage agencies to have bilingual staff and translate materials for better access to resources.

Business from the Public

None.

Business from the Commission

Staff asked about the meeting room preference of the Commissioners. Commissioner Davis asked about the Annual Commission Training. Staff confirmed that it is scheduled for February 15, 2024. Reminders will be sent out.

Next Meeting Date

The next regularly scheduled meeting is February 19, 2024.

Adjournment

Chair Davis adjourned the meeting at 1:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by,

Susan Muniz
Recorder

Beth Frelander
Planner II

**Documents discussed at the meeting that are not in the agenda packet are archived in the record. The documents are available by emailing cdaa@cityofalbany.net.*

Funding Decision Method Options

Historically, the CDC has used the evaluation criteria to determine a percentage of the amount requested that will be awarded. This method favors applicants that apply for larger sums. For example, if the top scoring applicant receives 80% of their funding request and asked for \$25,000, they would receive \$20,000. Meanwhile, a lower scoring applicant who is awarded only 50% of their funding request but requested \$50,000 will receive \$25,000 just by virtue of applying for more funding. The amount of the funding request should be weighed as a part of the evaluation and funding decision making process, but not more so than the quality of the application and fulfillment of evaluation criteria. As such, the CDC may want to consider other methods for determining how funding is awarded. Below are a variety of options to consider. Examples are based on 6 applications and roughly \$50,000 in public service funds to allocate.

Concept: All applicants are awarded the same amount.

Examples:

1. All applicants receive \$8,300.
2. Applicants applying for less than \$8,300 receive their full amount and the remaining applicants split the rest evenly.

Concept: Top 3 applications receive more than bottom 3 applications.

Example: Top applicants receive \$12,000 each and other applicants receive \$4,000 each.

Concept: Applications are ranked and top gets most with each subsequent getting less.

Example: The strongest applicant receives \$18,000, and subsequent applicants receive \$14,000, \$10,000, \$6,000, and so on.

Concept: Top applicant(s) is fully funded up to a cap and rest is split among remaining applicants.

Example: A cap is set at \$20,000 and the top applicant receives \$20,000. The remaining applicants receive \$6,000 each.

Concept: Applications below a set scoring threshold are not funded. Funds are awarded among those above the threshold using one of the methods above.

Examples:

1. A threshold is set at 90 points, 2 applicants fall below the threshold. The top applicant receives funding up to the cap of \$25,000 and the remaining 3 applicants receive \$8,300.
2. A threshold is set at 75 points, 2 applicants fall below the threshold. The 2 top applicants receive \$15,000 each and the remaining 2 receive \$10,000 each.

These are potential options. The CDC may decide to use any method it sees fit so long as decisions are made based on the applications and evaluation criteria.

Draft impediments, Goals, and Actions

Impediment 1: Lack of Affordable Housing

- Goal: Explore options for growing the City’s capacity to support the development of long-term affordable housing
 - Action: Explore potential revenue sources or other City resources for affordable housing including grants, CET, surplus property policy, and tax abatement program.
- Goal: Use existing resources to support creating or maintaining affordable housing in Albany
 - Action: Continue to support housing rehabilitation of Albany’s older housing stock.
 - Action: Allocate CDBG funds to affordable housing developments, if possible.

Impediment 2: Lack of Housing Choice

- Goal: Amend the Albany Development Code to allow for a greater variety of housing types and sizes across the city
 - Action: Pursue strategies outlined in the HIP to reduce barriers to the development of needed housing types including small homes, single room occupancy, middle housing (townhouses, duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, and cottage clusters), apartments and accessible housing.
 - Action: Leverage CFEC requirements to allow more housing density and diversity in key areas of the City.
- Goal: Encourage affordable housing distribution throughout the City
 - Action: Identify areas for new development or redevelopment suitable for LMI affordable housing.

Impediment 3: Lack of Understanding of Fair Housing Laws and Resources

- Goal: Reduce discriminatory practices in the housing market.
 - Action: Work with Fair Housing Council of Oregon, Legal Aid, and rental and realtor associations to provide training for “mom and pop” landlords, rental property managers, shelter providers, and agency staff.
 - Action: Schedule fair housing training for elected and appointed officials to increase awareness among policy and decision makers to avoid making decisions that may have an unintended impact on a protected class.
 - Action: Market fair housing resources and fair housing law campaigns using other media platforms, including social media.
- Goal: Improve resident awareness of housing rights and fair housing resources.
 - Action: Work with FHCO, Legal Aid and local partners to provide fair housing and training resources to residents.
 - Action: Market fair housing resources and fair housing law campaigns using other media platforms, including social media.

Impediment 4: Linguistic, Cultural, and other Barriers to Access

- Goal: Reduce linguistic and/or cultural barriers to fair housing information, social services, and CDBG program information.

- Action: Continue building partnerships with agencies that serve the Hispanic/Latino community, residents with disabilities, and seniors and for guidance on how to remove barriers to housing and access to resources.
- Action: Ask future applicants how they ensure their services are accessible to non-English speakers and people with disabilities as part of the application process.
- Goal: Make services and resources more easily accessible for people with disabilities, including mobility impairments, cognitive disability or neurodivergence, and hearing or vision impairments.
 - Action: Use plain language in program information
 - Action: Use CDBG resources to support accessibility, as possible.
 - Action: Ask future applicants how they ensure their services are accessible to non-English speakers and people with disabilities as part of the application process.

Impediment 5: Unequal distribution of housing, opportunities, and amenities

- Goal: Invest in LMI neighborhoods
 - Action: Use CDBG funds to support neighborhood improvements in predominantly low- or moderate-income census tracts
- Goal: Encourage affordable housing distribution throughout the City
 - Action: Identify areas for new development or redevelopment suitable for LMI affordable housing.