

Donovan Smith  
Chairperson  
Melanie Markowicz  
Vice Chair/Secretary

Marcell R. Todd, Jr.  
Director  
Christopher Gulock, AICP  
Deputy Director

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Adrian-Keith Bennett  
Kenneth R. Daniels  
David Esparza, AIA, LEED  
Ritchie Harrison  
Gwendolyn Lewis, MBA  
Frederick E. Russell, Jr.  
Rachel M. Udabe

## City Planning Commission Meeting Special Meeting

MINUTES  
February 27, 2025  
5:00 P.M.

### I. Opening

A. Call to Order – Chairperson Donovan Smith called the meeting to order at 5:29 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Attendees: Adrian-Keith Bennett, Kenneth Daniels, David Esparza, Ritchie Harrison (5:34 p.m.), Melanie Markowicz, Frederick Russell (5:44 p.m.), Donovan Smith and Rachel Udabe

A quorum was present.

C. Amendments to and approval of agenda

**Commissioner Markowicz moved to approve the Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Udabe. Motion Approved.**

### II. Meeting minutes of October 17, 2024.

**Commissioner Daniels moved to approve the Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Markowicz. Motion Approved.**

### III. Public Hearings, Discussions and Presentations

A. **5:15 PM PRESENTATION** – The 2025-26 Community Development Block Grant Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (CDBG/NOF) overview and public service funding recommendations. **(HRD and CPC Staff) (RECOMMEND APPROVAL) 60 min**

Director Marcell Todd explained this is an annual presentation and review of the 2025-26 Community Development Block Grant Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (CDBG/NOF) program, and he introduced virtual participants Housing Revitalization Department (HRD) Director Tamra Fountain Hardy and Program Analyst Kayla Perrin. Also, he expressed

gratitude to all Commissioners who formally addressed potential conflicts of interests.

Deputy Director, Chris Gulock, presented via PowerPoint and based on CPC Report dated February 24, 2025, the Public Service section of the fiscal (FY) 2025-2026, Neighborhood Opportunity Funds (NOF) as a part of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). He stated that CDBG /NOF federal funds are awarded and monitored through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the amount allocations are usually released nationwide in spring (May). Each year out of the awarded grant funds (estimated total \$30 million) not more than 15% or approximately \$2.4 million is permitted to be spent on Public Service. Deputy Director, Chris Gulock reviewed the Office of Contracting and Procurement and HRD application process, 13 threshold criteria, and guidelines for applicants to score above 80 points for recommendation to receive funds. The CDBG/NOF grant is divided and dispersed in the following five categories: Public Safety, Education, Health, Senior, and Recreation. There were 53 applications received this year. Deputy Director Gulock explained CPC Commissioner public disclosures, recusals, deliberations, and voting standards of CPC Commissioners for CDBG /NOF grant.

Also, the slide showing City Councils' CDBG/NOF timeline was described as follows:

- ❖ March 3, 2025 - 1:00pm-Overview; 1:15pm-Public Hearing; 1:30pm-Appeals Hearing
- ❖ March 5, 2025 - March 10, 2025 – City Council Deliberations 2:00pm
- ❖ March 11, 2025 - City Council Vote

*Conflict of Interest Disclosures from CPC Commissioners:*

*Commissioner Markowicz stated, “At this time I am going to disclose that I do need to step out of the Education section. I do have a conflict of interest to one of the applicants with Greening of Detroit, which is a nonprofit organization on which I serve on their Board of Directors.”*

*Commissioner Bennett stated, “I want to disclose at this time that I need to recuse myself from the Recreation section. As my company is actively bidding on the Detroit Horsepower project which is one of the applications before us today.”*

Deputy Director Gulock reviewed each category of the FY 2025-2026 CDBG/NOF Public Service Proposal Ranking Summary Chart with CPC.

First, Deputy Director Gulock gave an overview on the Public Safety category, naming each applying group. The results for Public Safety were five groups submitted proposals, three recommended for funding, and two not recommended.

Deputy Director Gulock mentioned that the unrecommended organizations are free to review the Chart FY 2025-2026 CDBG/NOF, and they are able to appeal the decision before City Council in response to Commissioner Russell's question.

Deputy Director Gulock mentioned that the groups may ask for more money during the City Council Public Hearing in response to Commissioner Daniels' questions.

**Commissioner Markowicz moved to approve the Public Safety section of the CDBG with recommended award to First Step, Neighborhood Legal Services, and Jefferson**

**East, Inc., seconded by Commissioner Russell. Motion Approved.**

*Note: Commissioner Melanie Markowicz left the table and did not participate in the CPC vote for the Education section.*

Deputy Director Gulock gave an overview on the Education category, naming each applying group. The results for Education were 23 groups submitted proposals, 16 recommended for funding, and seven not recommended.

Deputy Director Gulock confirmed on the record that the Southwest Economic Solutions Corporations submitted an appeal. This will be reviewed by CPC Staff, HRD, and provided to City Council. Further, Director Tamra Fountain Hardy stated that HRD reviewed Southwest Economic Solutions application again and found that they did not submit the proper documentation. Therefore, according to the application rules they will not be allowed to resubmit. She explained that once the application is closed applicants cannot be let back in to add a document or make a correction. This rule ensures that the application process remains equitable and fair to all applicants. Once the application process is closed the only recourse for a non-recommended group is to participate in City Council's appeals process. These statements were in response to Commissioner Esparza's concerns and questions.

**Commissioner Bennett moved to approve the Education section as is with all proposers that are recommended for funding and those that are not receiving a recommendation, seconded by Commissioner Daniels. Motion Approved.**

Commissioner Esparza commented for the record that although he supports the motion, he does not agree with the position that has been stated regarding the circumstance with Southwest Economic Solutions Corporation.

Deputy Director Gulock gave an overview on the Health Section category, naming each applying group. The results for Health were six proposals submitted, five groups recommended for funding, and one not recommended.

**Commissioner Markowicz moved to approve the Health section as FY 2025-26 CDBG schedule seconded by commissioner Harrison. Motion Approved.**

Deputy Director Gulock gave an overview on the Senior category, naming each applying group. The results for Senior were seven submitted proposals, five groups recommended for funding, and two not recommended.

**Commissioner Russell moved to approve the Senior section as FY 2025-26 CDBG schedule as presented, seconded by Commissioner Harrison. Motion Approved.**

*Note: Commissioner Adrian-Keith Bennett left the table, and he did not participate in the CPC vote for the Recreation section.*

Deputy Director Gulock gave an overview on the Recreation category, naming each applying group. The results for Recreation were 12 groups submitted proposals, six recommended for funding and six not recommended.

**Commissioner Markowicz moved to approve the Recreation section as FY 2025-26 CDBG schedule as presented, seconded by Commissioner Udabe. Motion Approved.**

#### **IV. Public Comment –**

Norell Hempfield commented and asked for clarification on what time the CPC meeting officially starts.

Commissioner Smith responded the CPC meeting start time officially is 5:00 p.m.

Orande Williams commented concern regarding dog excrement being left out and which department handles this type of issue.

Director Marcell Todd responded the Department of Public Works (DPW) or Detroit Animal Care and Control.

#### **V. Unfinished Business –** There was no Unfinished Business.

#### **VI. New Business –** There was no New Business.

#### **VII. Committee Reports –** Director Marcell Todd stated that due to the current water main break issue, the Special Committee meeting with HRD is postponed to March 26, 2025, at 3 p.m. It is expected that Citizen Review Committee (CRC) will be discussed.

#### **VIII. Staff Report –** Director Marcell Todd asked Commissioners to notify him if any need to obtain their 1099 tax form. Also, he stated that Commissioner Udabe and Commissioner Bennett have upcoming reappointment interviews with City Council.

Commissioner Melanie Markowicz announced that she has recently accepted a new position as Executive Director of Midtown Detroit, Inc. She submitted an inquiry to the City's Board of Ethics (BOE) for advisement on any conflicts of interest with her new job and service as Commissioner. The BOE hearing is scheduled for March 19, 2025. She stated that City Council President Mary Sheffield's office is aware of this matter.

#### **IX. Member Report –** All CPC Commissioners and Staff congratulated Commissioner Markowicz on her new career accomplishment.

#### **X. Communications –** There were no Communications.

#### **XI. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.