

**MINUTES
TOWN CENTER COMMUNITY
REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
MARCH 18, 2026 - 5:30 PM
DESTIN CITY HALL ANNEX CHAMBERS**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Wernet called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM on Wednesday, March 18, 2026, at the Destin City Hall Annex Council Chambers with the Pledge of Allegiance immediately following.

2. ROLL CALL:

Members Present

Lockwood Wernet

Corlene Ziegler

Kyle Davis

Preston Green

Members Absent

Margie Avery

Iris Bethea

Staff Present

Kim Montgomery Deputy City Clerk

Daniel Butler Principle Planner

Kimberly Kopp City Attorney

3. AGENDA APPROVAL:

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Committee member Davis with Committee member Ziegler proving the second. The motion passed 4-0.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

➤ **January 21, 2026 Minutes**

Motion by Committee member Green, seconded by Committee member Ziegler to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2026 meeting. There was a brief discussion regarding the status of the lighting that needs to be replaced in both the Town Center and the Harbor CRA districts. The motion passed 4-0.

➤ **February 18, 2026 Workshop Minutes**

Motion by Committee member Ziegler, seconded by Committee member Davis to approve the minutes of the February 18, 2026 Workshop meeting minutes. The motion passed 4-0.

5. CURRENT BUSINESS:

➤ **Long-Term Financial Projections & Available Funding - Finance Director Krystal Strickland.**

❖ **Key Points:**

- Projected year-end CRA fund balance: ~ \$2.5 million
- Approximate available funding: \$16-17 million across various sources

- Council requested CRA committees to:
 - Review available funding
 - Align recommendations with CRA Master Plan priorities

❖ **Major Funding Sources Discussed:**

- CRA TIF funds
- Okaloosa half-cent sales tax (infrastructure improvements)
- Gas tax
- Transportation impact fees
- TDC (tourism-related, limited applicability)
- Electric franchise fees (restricted to undergrounding)

❖ **Priority Projects Identified:**

- Linear Trail (top priority in Master Plan)
- Crosstown Connector (beautification, landscaping)
- Undergrounding utilities deeper into the district with Electric Franchise Fees
- Mattie Kelly connector (transportation improvements)
 - Linear Trail delayed pending easements
 - ~\$1.6 million CRA funds currently uncommitted
 - \$1 million annually committed to debt service
 - 324 Construction Loan funds:
 - Approximately \$600,000 remaining
 - Must be expended (cashed out) by November 7, 2026 to avoid IRS penalties
 - Committee member Green suggested high friction asphalt be installed at the reworking of the pedestrian crosswalk at Airport Road and future Linear Trail.

➤ **Development & City Projects Update – Daniel Butler Principle Planner**

❖ **Active Projects:**

- Destin Linear Trail (awaiting easements)
- Chase Bank redevelopment (former Burger King site)
- Storage facility (237 Main Street – permitting updates)

❖ **Additional Notes:**

- Former Chick-fil-A site demolished as a condition of the sale of the property
 - New buyer unknown; no application submitted yet
- HarborWalk Village Phase II, scheduled for April 13th as a Special City Council meeting at 6:00 P.M.

6. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS:

A. CRA Funding Recommendations (Major Action Item)

The Committee developed and approved a comprehensive list of funding recommendations to present to the CRA Board:

➤ **Annual Report – Chairman Wernet**

- Annual Report finalized for submission to CRA Board
- Includes updated work plans:
 - Mattie Kelly Connector
 - Linear Trail
 - Multi-use Park Green Space

❖ **Publix Area Green Space / Town Center Multiuse Park**

- Use: \$1.6 million CRA funds
- Purpose:
 - Feasibility study
 - Conceptual design
 - Public-private coordination (Publix)
- Goal: Accelerate project from FY2027 to FY2026

❖ **Mattie Kelly Boulevard Connector (North–South)**

- Funding Sources:
 - Half-cent sales tax
 - Gas tax
- Scope:
 - Roadway improvements
 - Sidewalks
 - Bike lanes

❖ **Airport Road & Commons Drive Intersection**

- Funding Source: 324 Construction Loan funds (~\$600K)
- Scope:
 - High-friction paving
 - Safety improvements
- Note:
 - Must be completed before November 2026 deadline

❖ **Undergrounding Study (FPL Engineering)**

- Funding Source: Electric franchise fees (307 Electric Franchise Agreement Fund)
- Highly Restricted funds
- Estimated Cost: ~\$30,000
- Purpose:
 - Engineering estimate for undergrounding utilities within CRA district
 - Help protect Destin Water Users Utility Infrastructure

❖ **Jewel Melvin Park Improvements**

- Funding Source: Park impact fees (estimated ~ \$70,000 Item 313)
- Scope:
 - Design plan (not full construction)
 - Includes:
 - Pavilion(s)
 - Picnic tables
 - Playground equipment
 - Includes opinion of probable cost

Motion by Chairman Wernet to present the discussed list to the CRA Board for their consideration for funding at the April 7, 2025 CRA Board Meeting, with Committee member Ziegler providing the second. The motion passed 4-0.

❖ **CRA Board Presentation Preparation**

- Mr. Butler stated that he would prepare the staff report and develop a PowerPoint presentation for their presentation and distribute materials to them in advance of the meeting so they can prepare.
- Committee member David to present on behalf of CRA-AC

Motion by Committee member Green, seconded by Committee member Davis to remove the Jewel Melvin Park from the current Annual Report since no formal work plan has been created for this project to present with the Current Annual Report. Mr. Butler reminded the members that this is not going away, it just will proceed with separate funding recommendations and be added to their 2027 Annual Report. The motion passed 4-0.

- ❖ **Committee member Ziegler** - Asked about the status of the sign for streetlight at Main Street to alert the public to pull up to activate the light. Mr. Butler stated that he would meet with the Public Works Director and have a status report at their next meeting in April.
- ❖ The members briefly discussed the need for uniformity in streetlight fixtures across city when they are replaced by Florida Power & Light.

❖ Staff Update:

- New Community Development Director (Tina Dieter) returning March 30
- Previous director, David Prichard has resigned.

7. **PUBLIC COMMENT: None**

8. **NEXT MEETING: April 15, 2026**

9. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Having no further discussions, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM.

Adopted and approved 15th day of April 2026.

Carlene Ziegler
Lockwood-Werrett Chairman

Kim Montgomery
Kim Montgomery Deputy City Clerk

Carlene Ziegler, Interim Chair