

**MINUTES
TOWN CENTER COMMUNITY
REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
JULY 9, 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, July 9, 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
Iris Bethea

Members Absent

Preston Green

Staff Present

Kim Montgomery Deputy City Clerk
Jesse Hernandez Senior Planner
Krystal Strickland Finance Director
Mayor Bobby Wagner

3. AGENDA APPROVAL:

Motion to approve the agenda as amended to add nomination of a Vice Chair was made by Chairman Wernet with Committee member Davis proving the second. The motion passed 4-0.

4. VICE CHAIR NOMINATIONS:

Motion to nominate Kyle Davis as Vice Chair was made by Committee member Ziegler. With no other nominations, Kyle Davis accepted the nomination.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: None

6. CURRENT BUSINESS:

➤ **Long Term Financials – Krystal Strickland Finance Director**

❖ **Town Center CRA Fiscal Year 2027 budget and five-year financial projection.**

- Currently, the Town Center CRA fund balance surpasses \$25 million.
- Uncommitted funds are invested in:
 - Certificates of Deposit (CDs)
 - Money Market Funds
 - U.S. Treasury investments
- Investments are currently earning approximately 4%.
- Approximately 90 days of operating cash is maintained in Trustmark Bank.
 - Currently earning approximately 3.1%.

❖ **Operating Expenses**

Recurring operating costs funded by the CRA, include:

- Streetlight electricity
- Median maintenance
- Utility expenses
- Staff administrative time
- CRA Board and Advisory Committee administration
- Annual audit
- State reporting requirements

❖ **Existing Debt**

➤ **2005 Loan**

- Originally financed infrastructure improvements including:
 - Main Street widening
 - Legion Drive improvements
 - Airport Road improvements
 - Underground utilities
 - Decorative streetlights
- Refinanced in 2014.
- Annual payment approximately \$733,000.
- Scheduled payoff in 2037, coinciding with CRA sunset.

➤ **2024 Loan**

- Annual payment is approximately \$268,000.
- Loan funds underground utility conversion from Airport Road toward the Harbor CRA boundary.

❖ **Proposed Capital Projects**

➤ **Mattie Kelly Boulevard Improvements**

★ Staff recommends funding approximately \$1.5 million for:

- North-South sidewalk improvements
- Bicycle lane improvements
- Connector roadway
- Network connectivity enhancements

Ms. Strickland informed the members that the City Engineer recommended expanding the project beyond the originally proposed improvements to provide better connectivity.

➤ **Main Street Beautification Project**

Public Works proposed approximately \$333,000 for improvements including:

- Irrigation upgrades
- Landscaping
- Sidewalk improvements
- ADA compliance improvements
- Streetscape enhancements

Staff advised the project will be funded through the General Fund, not CRA funds.

➤ **Discussion: CRA Master Plan Limitations**

The members discussed why Main Street Beautification was not proposed as a CRA-funded project.

Ms. Strickland explained the following:

- The current Town Center CRA Master Plan does not specifically authorize spending CRA funds on Main Street beautification.
- State law requires projects to specifically be identified within the adopted CRA Master Plan in order to use Town Center Funds.
- Generalized language is insufficient.

The members discussed:

- Revisiting the CRA Master Plan.
- Creating broader project categories.
- Balancing flexibility while maintaining sufficient specificity to satisfy statutory requirements.
- Considering amendments later in the year.

➤ **Mattie Kelly Project Clarification**

Committee discussed the proposed Mattie Kelly Improvements.

Staff clarified the proposal consists of two distinct projects:

- Sidewalk and bicycle lane improvements.
- Connector roadway linking north and south segments.

Staff confirmed that both projects were incorporated into the proposed budget.

➤ **Future Work Plans**

❖ Discussion included:

- Future amendments to CRA work plans.

- Importance of prioritizing projects.
- CRA Board preference for clear project rankings.

❖ Ms. Strickland recommended to the members to make two separate motions:

- A motion recommending the overall budget.
- A separate motion specifically prioritizing the Mattie Kelly project.

➤ **Future Project Discussion Priorities**

❖ Topics included:

- Main Street intersection improvements.
- Airport Road intersection enhancements.
- ADA improvements.
- Traffic safety.
- Feasibility review process.
- Coordination with the City Engineer.

★ The members expressed interest in exploring these projects during the coming year.

Staff advised new feasibility review forms would soon be distributed.

Motion by Vice Chairman Davis to recommend the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Town Center CRA Budget to the CRA Board. Committee member Ziegler provided the second. The motion passed 4-0.

➤ **Mattie Kelly Boulevard Work Plan**

Chairman Wernet introduced the actions for the Mattie Kelly Work Plan Improvements to the roadway, sidewalks, and bike lanes project.

Mr. Hernandez requested committee formally designate the project as its top priority.

Motion by Committee member Ziegler to recommend to the CRA Board allocating \$1.5M in Town Center CRA Funds to the Mattie Kelly Boulevard improvements as the committee's top priority, with Vice Chairman Davis providing the second.

Mayor Wagner discussed several impacts with the extension of Mattie Kelly to Hwy. 98 and the northern end to Airport Road. He spoke of conversations he has had with the TPO and how they have advised that FDOT might require these two connections to have traffic lights at each end, especially one at the Highway 98 connection.

Both Committee members Ziegler and Davis discussed the advantages of having one installed on Airport Road on a safety prospective which may help prevent the following concerns that take place daily, such as:

- Increased pedestrian safety.
- Airport Road speeding concerns.
- Improved access for nearby businesses.
- Safer turning movements.
- Reduced crashes.
- Improved circulation.
- Potential impacts on traffic flow.

With no further discussion on the motion, Chairman Wernet called for the vote and the motion passed 4-0.

➤ **Upcoming Meetings**

Mr. Hernandez informed the members of upcoming meetings.

❖ **July 13 Budget Workshop**

- Public workshop.
- Committee attendance is optional.

❖ **July 20 CRA Board Meeting**

The members discussed representation. Vice Chairman Davis volunteered to attend. With no objections being raised, the Vice Chairman will present:

- Budget recommendation.
- Mattie Kelly priority recommendation.

➤ **Sign Ordinance Update**

Mayor Wagner provided an update regarding proposed citywide sign ordinance revisions. Topics discussed included:

- Reducing visual clutter.
- Billboard regulations.
- Digital signage.
- Sign height.
- Murals.
- Allow non-commercial wording.
- Continue prohibiting commercial advertising.

He encouraged the Committee members to identify possible mural locations within the Town Center CRA now that the language has changed in the Code.

❖ **Business Impact Review**

Council requested advisory committees gather feedback from local businesses.

Staff requested information regarding:

- Financial impacts.
- Compliance costs.
- Operational concerns.
- Digital sign issues.

American Legion digital signage was discussed as one example.

Development Update

Completed Projects

- Pickleball courts are now open and receiving significant public use.

Current Development

- Design Collective submitted application for minor deck addition.
- Destin Water Users reclaimed water facility approved outside CRA boundaries.

❖ Shores at Tarpon Beach

- Ribbon cutting scheduled for July 15 - 7:30 a.m.

❖ Clement Taylor Park Update

The project is delayed due to:

- Prefabricated restroom building manufacturing delays.
- Units being constructed in California.
- Shipping delays.
- Crane installation scheduling.
 - Restrooms arrive October-November.
 - Final completion anticipated during winter.
 - The sidewalk adjacent to the park will open before the completion of the project.

❖ Chase Bank Redevelopment

Chairman Wernet asked about Chase Bank project.

Mr. Hernandez confirmed:

- Existing building will be demolished.
- Complete rebuild planned.

❖ Mobility Fee Discussion

Mr. Hernandez provided detailed explanation of recently adopted mobility fees.

- Replacement of transportation impact fees.
- Fees based upon transportation demand.
- Higher costs than previous impact fee system.
- Significant burden on redevelopment.

Examples discussed:

- Restaurants.
- Retail.
- Redevelopment projects.

He explained that there is concern that current fee structure discourages redevelopment within CRA districts.

❖ **Proposed Mobility Fee Credits**

Staff advised recommendations are being prepared to:

- Reduce fees inside CRA districts.
- Encourage redevelopment.
- Provide redevelopment incentives.
- Present ordinance revisions before:
 - Local Planning Agency
 - City Council

Committee discussed importance of encouraging redevelopment while maintaining infrastructure funding.

❖ **Member Comments**

Chair encouraged members to:

- Review new CRA work plan process.
- Review feasibility assessment procedures.
- Begin identifying future priority projects.
- Consider revisions to the CRA Master Plan.
- Evaluate opportunities for broader project language.

Possible future priorities discussed included:

- Intersection improvements.
- Beautification.
- Additional infrastructure projects.

❖ **Board Vacancies**

Chairman Wernet reminded members:

- Committee currently has a vacancy following Margie Avery's resignation.
- Interested residents should apply through the City Clerk.
- Discussion also included member appointment terms and possible reappointment.

❖ **Public Comment**

Chairman Wernet opened the meeting to the public, with no public present, he closed the public portion of the meeting.

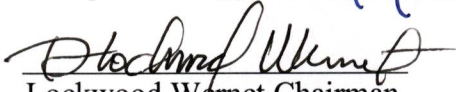
❖ **Next Meeting**

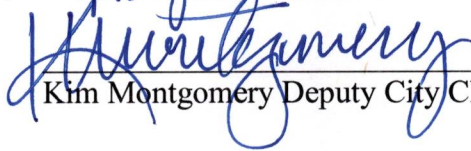
August 19, 2026 - Vice Chairman Davis advised he would be absent due to travel.

7. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Having no further discussions, the meeting was adjourned at 6:20 PM.

Adopted and approved 19th day of August 2026.


Lockwood Wernet Chairman


Kim Montgomery Deputy City Clerk