

City of Blair Community Development Agency
April 28, 2026

The Community Development Agency members of Blair, Nebraska met in regular session in the City Council Chambers on April 28, 2026, at 6:30 PM. The following were present Chairman Rump, Gary Banner, Brent Clark, Kirk Highfill, Kent Long, Rick Paulsen, and Frank Wolff. Absent: James Letcher, and Kevin Willis. Also present were City Administrator Green, Deputy City Administrator Barrow, Deputy City Administrator Heaton, Deputy City Administrator Scott, City Attorney Talbot, Library Director Lukert, Community Development Director Beiermann, IT Director White, Public Safety & Communications Coordinator Dunn, and Police Chief Kinsey.

The Chairman publicly stated to all in attendance that a current copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was available for review and indicated the location of such copy posted in the room where the meeting was being held. Notice of the meeting was given in advance thereof by publication in the Washington County Enterprise as shown by the affidavit of publication filed in the City Clerk's office. Notice of the meeting was simultaneously given to the Chairman and all Agency members of the Community Development Agency, and a copy of their acknowledgement of receipt of notice and the agenda is filed in the City Clerk's office. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice and in the notice to the Chairman and Agency Members of this meeting. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the attendance of the public.

Agenda Item #1 – Chairman Rump called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Agenda Item #2 – Motion by Rick Paulsen, second by Brent Clark to approve the minutes from the November 26, 2024, meeting. Agency members voted as follows: Gary Banner: Yea, Brent Clark: Yea, Kirk Highfill: Yea, James Letcher: Absent, Kent Long: Yea, Rick Paulsen: Yea, Kevin Willis: Absent, Frank Wolff: Yea. All Agency members voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 2. Chairman Rump declared the motion carried.

Agenda Item #3 – Michael Sands, 1700 Farnam St, Omaha, Special Counsel for the City on Tax Increment Financing matters, presented a detailed overview of the proposed redevelopment plan. Sands explained that the site lies within a designated blighted and substandard area, making it eligible for TIF assistance. The proposed development includes a multi-phase residential complex totaling approximately 198 apartment units, three commercial pad sites along a major arterial corridor and an initial phase consisting of 22 units, including workforce housing units. He emphasized the plan incorporates Workforce Housing TIF provisions, allowing assistance for units meeting statutory construction cost thresholds. He clarified that the total development cost is projected at approximately \$50 million. The requested TIF amount of \$4,427,000 would be used primarily for public infrastructure improvements, including streets, utilities, and site preparation. The City would not be immediately obligated by approval of the plan, as final commitments would be addressed in a future redevelopment agreement. Sands described the public-private partnership structure, noting the developer would transfer ownership of land for a pump station and the City would construct improvements to Maple Drive and 12th Street. Infrastructure costs along 12th Street would be recouped through an improvement district with special assessments. He concluded that the redevelopment plan meets all requirements established under Nebraska TIF statutes. The

following residents expressed concern regarding the project, particularly focusing on density, increased traffic, the need for transitional housing for seniors over the need for two-bedroom apartments, uncertainty regarding the proposed uses of commercial lots, uncertainty that apartment development would meaningfully address population or workforce challenges, and against the use of TIF for workforce housing: Ron Madsen, 1057 S. 13th St., Eunice Scheffler, 1324 Maple Dr., Jennifer Reyzlik, 1347 Baronage Dr., Paul Buckingham, 1217 Fairview Dr., Janet Nielsen, 13476 Spring Ridge Lp, Margaret Hanson, 511 S. 23rd St., Kathy Clough, 12080 S. Hwy 75, Robert Warrick, 650 Skyline Dr., and Shawn Cooper, 2300 College Dr. Brian Knutson, 1824 Colfax St., spoke in favor of mixed-use and higher-density development, referenced concepts such as “missing middle housing”, and encouraged long-term planning for sustainability and growth. While Knutson was generally supportive, he did express some caution regarding TIF structure and usage. Andrew Tupin, 3568 Innate Lane, Suite 1, Grand Island, representing the developer emphasized compliance with all requirements, noted that a traffic study had been completed and submitted to the State and contended that apartment housing is critical to attracting young professionals and workforce population. Mike Rooks, 162 N Linden Ave, Council Bluffs IA, Gateway Development Director, spoke in support of additional housing opportunities referencing the 2021 Housing Study. He stated Blair needs a variety of housing types noting that apartment units currently have waiting lists. He expressed that both the residential and commercial components of this development would benefit the community and noted developers often pass over communities that do not offer incentives. Agency member Paulsen inquired about the intended use and market viability of the commercial parcels, as well as whether an apartment market study had been conducted. He expressed concern about potential oversupply given existing apartment developments in Blair. Agency member Banner raised multiple concerns, including the limited number of accessible parking spaces proposed in early phases, whether the project could later transition to Section 8 or subsidized housing and the long-term character of the development and compatibility with surrounding areas. Andrew Tupin, representing the developer, stated the project complies fully with ADA standards and there are no plans to pursue Section 8 Housing. That type of program has not been a part of their business model. The development is designed to meet demand for workforce and market-rate housing. Agency member Highfill asked for clarification on the process and implementation of TIF approval including what authority the Agency has versus the City Council. City Administrator Green explained the Agency’s role in recommending redevelopment plans as a conceptual framework, but the City Council will ultimately approve the plan. Sands, TIF Attorney for the city, emphasized that approval allows the project to proceed procedurally but does not finalize financial obligations. He noted that if the item were postponed, no further action could be taken on this plan. Chairman Rump noted that the citizen-led Housing Advisory Committee had identified apartments as a community need and the city does not have the authority to regulate rental rates or pricing. Growth pressures and housing demand are ongoing issues facing the community. Mayor Rump closed the public hearing. Council member Highfill introduced Resolution No. 2026-001, approving a tax increment financing redevelopment plan entitled: "Redevelopment Plan for SJAV Tenet Redevelopment Project." Motion by Kirk Highfill, second by Gary Banner to adopt Resolution No. 2026-001 as presented. Agency members voted as follows: Gary Banner: Nay, Brent Clark: Yea, Kirk Highfill: Yea, James Letcher: Absent, Kent Long: Nay, Rick Paulsen: Nay, Kevin Willis: Absent, Frank Wolff: Yea. All Agency members voted: Yea: 3, Nay: 3, Absent: 2. Chairman Rump voted Yea, breaking the tie and declaring the motion carried.

Agenda Item #4 – Motion by Kirk Highfill, second by Gary Banner to adjourn the meeting 7:28 pm. Agency members voted as follows: Gary Banner: Yea, Brent Clark: Yea, Kirk Highfill: Yea, James Letcher: Absent, Kent Long: Yea, Rick Paulsen: Yea, Kevin Willis: Absent, Frank Wolff: Yea. All Agency members voted: Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 2. Chairman Rump declared the motion carried.

Melinda K. Rump, Chairman

ATTEST:

Brenda Wheeler, Secretary