



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

BIANCA L. TIRADO, CITY CLERK

PERSONNEL & FINANCE

SEPTEMBER 12, 2024 5:30 P.M.

Committee Members Present:

Sheila Niezgodski, Canneth Lee, Angela Smith*, Ross Deal, Karen White

Committee Members Absent:

Troy Warner, Rachel Tomas Morgan

Councilmembers Present:

Ophelia Gooden-Rodgers

Councilmembers Absent:

Sharon McBride, Sherry Bolden-Simpson, Dr. Oliver Davis

Others Present:

Bianca Tirado, Matthew Neal, Samuel Turck, Talia Thorton, Bob Palmer

Agenda:

Community Investment Budget Presentation

Members marked with an asterisk (*) are in virtual attendance.

Please note the attached link for the meeting recording:

<https://docs.southbendin.gov/WebLink/0/edoc/385561/Department%20of%20Community%20Investment%20Budget%20Hearing%20Part%20One.mp4>

<https://docs.southbendin.gov/WebLink/0/edoc/385562/Department%20of%20Community%20Investment%20Budget%20Hearing%20Part%20Two.mp4>

Please note the attached link for the meeting presentation:

[https://docs.southbendin.gov/WebLink/0/edoc/385540/DCI%202025%20Budget%20Presentation%20\(Filed\).pdf](https://docs.southbendin.gov/WebLink/0/edoc/385540/DCI%202025%20Budget%20Presentation%20(Filed).pdf)

Committee Chair Sheila Niezgodski called to order the Personnel & Finance Committee meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Committee Chair Sheila Niezgodski provided information regarding the 2025 Budget Overview process. City Residents can access the City Budget Survey to provide their input using the following link: <https://southbendin.gov/budget/>. Additional questions pertaining to this meeting or the budget hearing can be emailed to the Personnel and Finance Committee Chair, Sheila

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Niezgodski, at sneizgodski@southbend.in.gov and they will be directed to the appropriate department. The Final Budget Hearing is scheduled for October 14, 2024.

2025 Community Investment Budget Presentation

Caleb Bauer, Executive Director of Community Investment (DCI), with offices on the 14th floor of the County-City Building presented the 2025 budget proposal for DCI. Caleb Bauer introduced Director of Engagement and Economic Empowerment Mary McAfee, Director of Neighborhood Services and Enforcement Kenisha Wells, Coordinator on Homelessness Carl Hetler, Property Development Manager Erin Michaels, Deputy Director of Growth and Opportunity Joseph Molnar, Director of Growth and Opportunity Erik Glavich, Building Commissioner Randy James, Director of Sustainability Alex Bazan, Deputy Executive Director of Community Investment Sarah Schaefer, Director of Department Finance Rosa Thomas, Chief Neighborhoods Officer Elizabeth Maradik, and Chief Planner Tim Corcoran.

The agenda for the presentation is as follows, an overview on the DCI, a breakdown of the DCI organizational structure, DCI's 2024 accomplishments, the proposed 2025 expenditures, an overview of the redevelopment funds, and goals for 2025. There are six (6) divisions within DCI. The Sustainability team is a two (2) member team including a Project Manager and the Director of Sustainability. The Coordinator on Homelessness Carl Hetler was added early into 2024 and is currently not in a specific division. Caleb Bauer stated the importance of having a City staff member dedicated to helping the homeless in the City. The Chief Planner Tim Corcoran runs Planning and Community Resources. This team handles the zoning needs of the City, as well as the creation and adoption of neighborhood plans. The Downtown Neighborhood Plan is currently being developed. Building Commissioner Randy James runs the Building Department. The Building Department serves multiple jurisdictions both the City of South Bend and areas in St. Joseph County. The Engagement & Economic Empowerment (EEE) division is in the community attending neighborhood association meetings, hosting quarterly neighborhood consortium meetings, and managing the Innovation Grants for Neighborhood Information, Transformation, and Enhancement (IGNITE) Grant program which provides funding for neighborhood selected projects. Mark McAfee leads the EEE. The Growth & Opportunity team manages all the tax abatements which come before the Council and loan portfolios. The Manager - Property Development was recently moved into Growth & Opportunity and manages any real estate transactions that involve City-owned property. The Neighborhoods division is led by Elizabeth Maradik the Chief Neighborhood Officer. This division has multiple teams within it. Neighborhood Health and Housing oversees the Rental Safety Verification program, the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Lead Hazard Reduction Grant implementation, and housing counseling services. Two (2) Federal Grant Manager positions manage several entitlement grants received by the City and by St. Joseph County. These two (2) staffers also serve as staff to St. Joseph County Housing Consortium, which represents all of the County. They also receive and administer home fronts, which are affordable housing development funds. Neighborhood Services and Enforcement (NSE) is overseen by Kenisha Wells. NSE manages both environmental code enforcement and building law matters. There are ten (10) inspectors in this team. The South Bend Animal Resource Center (SBARC) is tasked with enforcing the Animal Care and Control



Ordinance in the municipal code. Caleb Bauer stated that the work that SBARC does is incredibly important. There will be adjustments made to salaries in SBARC.

Caleb Bauer stated that there will be two (2) new Assistant Director positions, one (1) in Neighborhoods, and one (1) for the planning team. Both of those positions will be funded by the elimination of some currently vacant positions in those teams. There will be one (1) new full-time position after the restructuring. The Neighborhoods division contains four (4) different teams, and the Chief Neighborhoods Officer currently has double the amount of direct reports than any other division leader. Adding an Assistant Director to assist with the management of those direct reports is vital. The removal of a Senior Planner and creation of an Assistant Director position would directly oversee the zoning and historic preservation teams. Two (2) Building Commercial Combination Inspectors will be added to the department. There are currently two (2) types of building inspectors working for DCI, the traditional Building Inspector who is specialized in one (1) field. The other is the Commercial Building Inspector that has multiple licenses for inspecting. The goal of these two (2) new positions is to help existing inspectors increase their experience and certifications. This will in turn allow for more flexibility within the inspections team. The new position will be funded by new permit revenues which have increased significantly in the last few years. There will be one (1) part-time Veterinarian for the SBARC. As of now, those services are contracted with the Elkhart County Humane Society. This hire will save money and time due to the reduced need to travel for the animal's healthcare. This hire will allow for lost cost spay and neuter services to the residents of the City. One (1) part-time Engagement Specialist is also being proposed. There has been a significant growth in neighborhood associations in the City, this position would assist with outreach to these organizations. The EEE staff attends every other meeting for all of the neighborhood associations in the City. All the positions being eliminated are currently vacant. They are a Neighborhood Admin Assistant One (1), Property Inspector, Senior Planner, and a Building Inspector.

All the higher-than-standard salary cap increases are in the Neighborhoods division with the exception of one (1). Senior Inspectors will receive a cap increase, there are two (2) Senior Inspectors on the NSE team. Code Inspectors will receive a cap increase of five-point seven percent (5.7%). All three (3) types of Inspectors will be encompassed under this job title. There is a salary cap increase of thirty-three percent (33%) for the Executive Assistant – Neighborhoods, which will include a title change with an increase in responsibility. The Hearing Secretary will see a six-point eight percent (6.8%) increase. This position handles all paperwork pertaining to code enforcement hearings. The last four increases are all in the SBARC. The shelter is frequently full. The City is well below the mark of other Indiana municipalities of similar size when it comes to Animal Welfare Officer pay. The SBARC Manager will receive a cap increase of seven-point nine percent (7.9%). The SBARC Assistant Manager will receive a ten-point seven percent (10.7%) cap increase. The Animal Welfare Assistant will receive a twelve-point seven percent (12.7%) cap increase. The Animal Welfare Officer position will receive a cap increase of sixteen-point five percent (16.5%). These increases are intended as a one-time correction. There will be a cap increase for the Manager – Business Development of four-point six percent (4.6%). This position manages the revolving loan portfolio which doubled in 2021 to about sixteen million dollars (\$16,000,000).



Committee Chair Niezgodski asked when raising the salary cap, are all the employees in those positions going to be brought up to the cap.

Caleb Bauer stated no. New employees will not be brought up to the cap immediately.

Committee Member Lee asked what is the currently salary for the Executive Assistant – Neighborhoods.

Caleb Bauer stated that the current cap is forty-nine thousand dollars (\$49,000) and the new cap will be sixty-nine thousand dollars (\$69,000).

Councilmember Ophelia Gooden-Rodgers asked if DCI is eliminating an Inspector position.

Caleb Bauer stated that they are eliminating an Inspector position that is currently vacant.

Committee Member Karen White asked if the new positions were offset by the elimination of other positions.

Caleb Bauer stated that DCI will net (1) full-time employee after this transition period.

Committee Member White asked how long those positions had been vacant.

Caleb Bauer stated that most of them were recently staffed, but the Property Inspector has been vacant for some time, as the department did not have a use for that position.

Citizen Member Ross Deal asked why increase the salary caps all at once instead of spreading it out throughout several years.

Caleb Bauer stated that DCI has a structural problem with its salaries. Specifically, at the SBARC Animal Welfare Officers have been assaulted and had to call the Police. These same officers are being paid less than the same position in different municipalities in the State.

Committee Chair Niezgodski asked if DCI eliminated the Building Inspector position, and where is the person currently in that title going to move.

Caleb Bauer stated that the individual has the qualifications to become a Commercial Combination Inspector.

Caleb Bauer stated that the Mayor has laid out the five (5) pillars of strategic priorities for the City. DCI is unique in that it touches all five (5) of those pillars. DCI has completed more than seven hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars (\$725,000) of repairs for fifty-four (54) homeowners through the Home Repair Program. There are twenty (20) homes still in the process. DCI has awarded eight-one thousand dollars (\$81,000) to neighborhood associations through the IGNITE Grant. This has resulted in projects such as small neighborhood scale playgrounds, new neighborhood signage, and has resulted in the creation or revival of four (4) neighborhood associations across the City. DCI has increased the maximum grant award, as well as allowing for joint applications from two (2) neighboring neighborhood associations. The implementation of the Neighborhood Improvement Bonds started in 2024. Out of the thirty-four million dollars (\$34,000,000) in the bonds more than nine million four hundred thousand dollars (\$9,400,000) has been expended and nine million two hundred thousand dollars (\$9,200,000) has been encumbered,



meaning that it is part of an ongoing contract. DCI received four (4) National Historic Register nominations, which can unlock federal tax credits for redevelopment or restoration of historic landmarks.

Caleb Bauer stated that DCI has helped significantly in creating robust, sustainable infrastructure in the City. DCI has done this through programs like the Energy Assistance & Solar Savings Initiative (EASSI) which provides matching grant funding for non-profits and businesses for energy efficient improvements. EASSI has provided support for ten (10) non-profits and six (6) businesses. DCI has provided five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) in public and private investment for energy efficiency and solar projects. DCI is in the process of installing sixteen (16) vehicle charging stations throughout the City in the next (5) years. The Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG) was awarded Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) round one (1) funding which comes from the Department of Transportation to cover the installation costs of the vehicle charging stations. DCI has conducted energy assessments at fourteen (14) homes as part of the Greener Homes program pilot. South Bend was the only city in the State to receive the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Cities Gold Designation.

DCI continued and expanded the Vibrant Places matching grant program which provides matching funds for façade improvements Citywide. Since the program launched more than two hundred (200) businesses have applied. Forty-two (42) businesses have proceeded to the grant phase, with six hundred and thirteen thousand, seven hundred and ninety dollars (\$613,790) in City funds invested. More than seven hundred thousand dollars (\$700,000) in private investment has been leveraged through this grant. DCI issued eleven (11) new low-interest revolving loans totaling one million, six hundred and forty thousand dollars (\$1,640,000) through two (2) new revolving loan programs. They are the Revolving Business Enterprise Fund (RBEF) and the other is the Revolving Loan Fund Two (RLF II). These loans have added sixty-three (33) jobs and retained twenty-eight (28). DCI collected principal payments of one million six hundred thousand dollars (\$1,600,000) and interest & fee payments of four hundred thousand dollars (\$400,000). Ninety-one percent (91%) of the loan recipients are minority owned and forty-five percent (45%) are women-owned. The average number of employees per loan recipient was two-point six (2.6). DCI issued a request for proposals for the Opportunity Fund which will provide low-interest microloans and business coaching to small businesses and entrepreneurs. The Near Northwest Neighborhood is working with DCI for the implementation of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) of funding towards setting up financial empowerment centers. This will allow for free one-on-one financial counseling for any resident of the City over eighteen (18) years old.

The Pathways program provides training to increase the skills of the workers but also give them a pay increase and more responsibility. More than one hundred and eighty-eight (188) people participated in 2024 with two (2) classes left in the year. Upskill SB has thirty-six (36) participants in 2024. DCI hired a full-time Workforce Development Coordinator to support the strategic use of workforce development funds, enhance partnerships with employers and job seekers, and strengthen relationships with Community partners. As private investment is coming to the City through major employers this position will continue that relationship to keep the City's businesses



competitive. DCI assisted with the opening of the downtown YMCA, preserving gym access for downtown residents and employees.

Demolition at the Drewrys Brewery site is ongoing, fourteen thousand (14,000) tons of debris has been removed. DCI completed the demolition of the Fun F/X after fire damage and the delay of the project due to litigation with the property owner who was unwilling to resolve public safety issues. Eighteen (18) other properties have been demolished in 2024. The Neighborhood Enforcement Action Team (NEAT) crew assisted with twenty-one (21) neighborhood cleanups and provided the Bend trailer which removed four hundred and sixty-six (466) tons of trash. The HUD Lead Grant provided the funding for lead remediation work at five (5) homes in 2024. Nine (9) more households are in various stages of the grant process. DCI completed six hundred and sixty-one (661) inspections through the Rental Safety Verification Program (RSVP). There is new software to streamline inspection and compliance reporting. Six hundred (600) residents were sheltered at least one (1) night through the Weather Amnesty program. Two hundred and ninety-nine (299) animals were adopted from the SBARC in 2024. Four hundred and five (405) interactions with unsheltered individuals to provide connections to services and resources in 2024. DCI assisted unsheltered individuals and seniors with more than four thousand three hundred and twenty-seven (4,327) loads of laundry in 2024.

Some key performance indicators from this past year include three hundred and sixty-two (362) new jobs in the city and one hundred and sixty-three (163) jobs retained. Most of these jobs are from Memorial Hospital. Private investment increased from four hundred and four million dollars (\$404,000,000) in 2023 to four hundred and thirty-two million, five hundred thousand dollars (\$432,500,000) in 2024. There were six hundred and sixty-one (661) RSVP inspections, fifty-three (53) Housing Counseling services, seven thousand six hundred and fifty-seven (7,657) environmental violations, eighty-two (82) certificates of appropriateness were issued, and one thousand seven hundred and twenty-six (1,726) construction permits were issued totaling one hundred and sixty-nine million, eight hundred thousand dollars (\$169,800,000).

Funds spent or committed from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) totals fifty-two million dollars (\$52,000,000). The part of programming that has been identified and is being implemented includes Home Repair programs, Housing financing which has fostered new development across the City, and affordable and market rate housing. Home buying assistance will accelerate in 2025. The City-Wide Comprehensive Plan and Plan Implementation is ongoing. Land Bank startup costs include the new land bank for properties in St. Joseph County. There have been several demolitions funded in part by ARP dollars. Neighborhood Development Assistance has used ARP funds. Vacant Building Development Financing is a financing opportunity to assist with the redevelopment of vacant buildings in the City. Almost all the funds in Green Infrastructure have been expended with the exception of a small Revolving Solar Loan Program. The Small Business Assistance program is the primary driver for the Vibrant Places Grant. After those ARP funds are spent, the Vibrant Places Grant will be a budget expenditure. Immigration Support has been expanded as a part of the High Skill Immigration Fund. The Workforce Development project also expanded as a part of the Pathways project and other workplace development programs. The Martin Luther King Jr. Dream Center was a huge partnership with the Public Works Department, Venues Parks & Arts



Department, and community leaders. Pre-K Centers provided funding for the Southeast Community Center, the remainder of this fund is for a new neighborhood center in the Far Northwest Neighborhood.

Caleb Bauer stated that the total DCI budget increase will be one-point four percent (1.4%). The Building Department budget will be increased by eight-point one percent (8.1%). Building permit fee increases fund the Building Department. When those revenues exceed the operating cost of the department the extra dollars go into a rainy-day fund. The primary reason for the budget growth is salaries and wages which will increase nine-point three percent (9.3%) in 2025. This is due to the new full-time position in the department along with cost-of-living increases for the rest of the staff. Repairs and maintenance also will increase by twelve thousand dollars (\$12,000). Repairs and maintenance in all subdivisions will be increasing. In Community Investment (Legacy) there will be an overall decrease of one-point two percent (1.2%). Salaries and wages will increase by four-point nine percent (4.9%). Fringe benefits will increase by six-point one percent (6.1%). Professional Services and Education & Training will both decrease slightly. The Neighborhoods subdivision will see a five-point seven percent (5.7%) increase in 2025. The Office of Sustainability will see a decrease of sixteen-point three percent (16.3%).

DCI has purchased two (2) sports utility vehicles for the Building Department, three (3) trucks for the Neighborhoods Department, and one (1) NEAT Crew dump truck for one hundred and ninety thousand dollars (\$190,000). These vehicles are normally not leased, they are bought with cash from the capital fund. One (1) SBARC van cage will be purchased and installed. There will be a fuel site allocation. The total Capital expenditures will be four hundred and seventy-three thousand dollars (\$473,000).

Caleb Bauer stated that the Strategic Initiatives funding will decrease slightly by 2025. The budget for Homelessness Strategy Implementation will remain the same from 2024 which was one million one hundred thousand dollars (\$1,100,000). The Home Repair Program will decrease to two hundred and eighty thousand dollars (\$280,000) for 2025. This is due to the remaining ARP funds that need to be spent. Caleb Bauer stated that the Home Repair Program will increase significantly after the ARP funds are expended. Demolitions will be decreased by fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) to five hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$550,000). Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) will receive roughly the same amount of funding from the federal government.

Caleb Bauer stated that the new Neighborhood Housing Initiative has been very successful. This program includes a partnership with the Public Works department overseeing the Sewer Lateral Reimbursement Policy, which can save homeowners by as much as twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000). The System Development Charge has been waived for infill projects. Pre-approved housing plans have been made available at no cost, which is up to five thousand dollars (\$5,000) of savings. The Kinder Institute analysis of appraisal gaps by Census tract was completed which has informed the housing strategy of the City moving forward. Housing funding was awarded with ARP allocation for workforce and affordable housing. DCI signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Housing Authority to allocate one million dollars (\$1,000,000) in



assistance for vacancy reductions at units throughout the Housing Authority portfolio. Caleb Bauer thanked the Council for approving that allocation to the Housing Authority.

Securing Affordable Housing has been a key concern for DCI. Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) have been the best tools for getting affordable housing. There are two (2) projects currently under construction, the Diamond View Project, and the SB Thrive Project. There are two (2) projects announced by construction has not commenced, The Monreaux Project and the Advantix Development Core Project which will supply fifty (50) low-income units across the City, but primarily the Northwest Neighborhood. More than seven hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars (\$725,000) has been invested in repairs to fifty-two (52) homes and nineteen (19) other homes are still in process. The Climate Action Plan 2.0 has reached over one thousand (1,000) people at different events across the City. DCI is in the drafting phase of the Climate Action Plan update, which will be shared with the Council by the end of 2024. Downtown Plan 2045 has kicked off, which saw over two hundred (200) people attend. Over one hundred and eighty (180) people attended the workshops. There are three (3) neighborhood plans currently in progress for 2024, LaSalle Park, River Park, and Potawatomi Park. Neighborhood plans for 2025 include a small project in the Twyckenham Hills neighborhood. There are seven (7) economic development areas in the City, the River West Development Area being the largest in footprint. The Southside Development Area has the City's one percent (1%) stake of the Pokagon Gaming revenues which is used for specific workforce development, education and poverty reduction. Revenues in these economic development areas have increased which allows DCI to reinvest. It is also evidence of ongoing economic growth within the districts. The 2024 revenues are projected, DCI will know the true number in December 2024.

Redevelopment Funds were used for large projects spread throughout the City in 2024. Union Station was recently purchased, the City is planning to reconnect Amtrak services to that location. DCI has also been part of an eight million five hundred-thousand-dollar (\$8,500,000) investment to build one hundred and twenty-two (122) income-qualified homes in the Lincoln Park and Southeast neighborhoods. A one hundred and two-million-dollar (\$102,000,000) investment was made into the Madison Lifestyle District. There was a two hundred and thirty-two million dollar (\$232,000,000) investment into the Memorial Hospital Patient Tower. The Coal Line Trail expansion is ongoing. The Four Winds field expansion has been funded through an expansion of the Professional Sports Convention Area. The Neighborhood Improvement Bonds are being processed.

Upcoming projects include the Redevelopment of River Glen and the old YMCA riverfront properties. Completing the Drewrys Brewery demolition and pursuing full redevelopment of that site. Additional funding for street paving will be needed. The continued restoration of Downtown historic buildings. The Colfax Avenue Streetscape will be started. The Mishawaka Avenue Streetscape project was part of the Neighborhood Improvement Bond. The Kennedy Park Revamp received a fifteen million dollar (\$15,000,000) federal grant.

Caleb Bauer stated that there are several grant opportunities in DCI. Chief among them being the Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI 2.0). This is the economic development program run by the State. The DCI staff has supported and provided letters of support



for seven (7) projects that if awarded would total one hundred and thirty-seven million dollars (\$137,000,000). Funds from Lilly Endowment Inc. would fund two (2) projects, the Riverfront West project would bring four hundred and forty (440) housing units and one hundred and fifty-four million dollars (\$154,000,000) in private investment. The Westside Housing Revitalization would supply over five hundred (500) housing units and one hundred and fifty million dollars (\$150,000,000) in private investment. The Lilly Endowment Inc. has separate funding for community foundations. Two (2) of those projects have included ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) for the Western Avenue Transformation District, and twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) for the regional land bank and affordable housing investment fund. There are several federal grants in process. In the EPA Community Change Grant passed threshold review, if awarded the City could receive twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) to complete the Drewrys Brewery demolition. The application is being prepared for the Department of Transportation Reconnection Our Communities Grant. The City has received the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service Grant which is going to be implemented by the end of 2024. The HUD Pathways to Removing Obstacles (PRO) Housing Grant application is due October 15, 2024.

Caleb Bauer presented the DCI goals for 2025. Increasing the supply of quality housing remains a priority, including preserving affordability and revitalizing neighborhoods through targeted public subsidy. Advance specific redevelopment projects at sites of priority such as the Rabbi Shulman block, the Drewrys Brewery site, and the YMCA site. Reducing homelessness by increasing shelter, permits for housing options, and improved outreach. Developing a plan to return Union Station to public use as a passenger rail stop. Adopting and implementing the Downtown Plan, LaSalle Park, River Park, and Potawatomi Park plans. Improving access to capital for small businesses through our loan programs, including through the Opportunity Fund. Strengthen the financial capacity of residents through the Financial Empowerment Center. Continue the partnership with the University of Notre Dame on investments downtown. Provide resources to build strong neighborhood associations. Implementing software for the Neighborhoods division Inspectors. Promoting greater density within the urban core and surrounding neighborhoods. Maximizing the impact of the different grants managed in DCI.

Committee Member White thanked Caleb Bauer for the presentation and asked what the salary increase is for the employees not receiving a higher than standard increase.

Caleb Bauer stated that it will be three percent (3%).

Committee Member White asked about a position that would help manage the environmental issues in the City.

Caleb Bauer stated that the position already exists, it will receive a new job description, and it was moved somewhere else in the reporting structure.

Committee Member Lee thanked Caleb Bauer for the presentation and asked how residents can apply for the Home Repair Program.

Caleb Bauer stated that the areas in the City that the census tracks have identified more than thirty percent (30%) of households living below the poverty line, qualify for the Home Repair Program.



For the next round would be Citywide, but there would still be eligibility criteria. Caleb Bauer stated that it can be difficult for some residents to do a full income verification. DCI will use the Utility Assistance Program as the income qualification. The best way to receive the Home Repair Program is to apply to the Utility Assistance Program if that resident qualifies.

Committee Member Lee asked when the next application period for the Home Repair Program will open.

Caleb Bauer answered early in 2025.

Committee Member Lee asked for clarification on the CDBG program.

Caleb Bauer stated that the City asks for proposals from nonprofit organizations for CDBG funds. CDBG funds are used primarily for affordable housing development, but have been used for rental assistance, and substance abuse counseling.

Committee Member Gooden-Rodgers thanked the DCI staff for their work and asked if the sidewalk is going to be replaced between College Street and Orange Street adjacent to the Martin Luther King Jr. Dream Center.

Caleb Bauer stated the Coal Line Trail phase three (3) which is in the planning phase, will replace the sidewalks in that area.

Committee Member Gooden-Rodgers asked for clarification regarding the Home Repair Program application process.

Caleb Bauer stated that a resident can either complete a full income verification or be accepted into the Utility Assistance program to qualify. A household making eighty percent (80%) of the median household income will qualify depending on the size of the household.

Citizen Member Angela Smith asked about future funding of the Vibrant Places grant.

Caleb Bauer stated that in the next year, there will be modifications to the Vibrant Places Grant language to make it more accessible to the residents.

Citizen Member Angela Smith asked for the Request for Proposal (RFP) statistics to be updated.

Caleb Bauer stated that the statistics have not been updated in the past two (2) years, and DCI will provide those figures in writing.

Committee Chair Niezgodski asked if the new software to streamline compliance reporting will be integrated with landlord registration.

Caleb Bauer stated that DCI is currently working to integrate those two (2) databases. That process will be complete by the summer of 2025.

Committee Chair Niezgodski asked for the remaining balance in the Lead Remediation Fund and when it will expire.

Caleb Bauer stated that he will provide it in writing.



Committee Chair Niezgodski opened the public hearing.

Sue Kesim, 4022 Kennedy Drive, South Bend IN 46614 stated that the City should consider the Potawatomi Conservatory and would like the total dollar amount of abated taxes for 2024.

Caleb Bauer stated that there is an annual presentation to the Common Council reviewing all the tax abatements for that year. The Potawatomi Conservatory may be part of the Potawatomi Neighborhood Plan, but it is still being created.

Jorden Giger, 302 S. Falcon Street, South Bend IN 46619 asked about the LaSalle Park Neighborhood Plan, how many Black contractors are currently participating in the Home Repair Program, and who participates in the land bank project.

Caleb Bauer stated that every neighborhood plan has an implementation metric, balancing short-term and long-term goals for the community. The LaSalle Park Plan has not been drafted yet, but it will include an implementation metric. DCI works with the Neighborhood's residents when creating a neighborhood plan. Caleb Bauer stated that DCI has been in contact with Black contractors about the Home Repair Program and they are in the application process. Funds are never attached to a neighborhood plan due to the plan being for a twenty (20) year period. Caleb Bauer stated that attaching funds from one (1) budget year to a neighborhood plan would not make sense. The land bank project is pursuing a joint grant opportunity through the three (3) Community Foundations of Elkhart County, Marshall County, and St. Joseph County. If awarded it would allow for the development of a land bank serving all three (3) counties. That land bank would be managed by MACOG.

Henry Davis Jr., 5117 Idlewood Drive, South Bend IN 46614 stated that the City should implement participatory budgeting when making neighborhood plans, and that a section of Western Avenue was supposed to be repaved during the summer of 2024 but it was not.

Caleb Bauer stated that the paving on Western between Walnut Street and Olive Street will start on October 1, 2024. Citizens' input on the budgeting process has increased and the City appreciates and values that input.

Caleb Bauer stated that the DCI team is working hard in the field to provide services and improve the lives of the residents of the City.



With no further business, Committee Chair Niezgodski adjourned the Personnel & Finance Committee meeting at 7:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sheila Niezgodski".

Sheila Niezgodski, Committee Chair

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