



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

BIANCA L. TIRADO, CITY CLERK

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

MARCH 23, 2026, 4:05 P.M.

Committee Members Present:

Ophelia Gooden-Rodgers, Sherry Bolden-Simpson, Tom Gryp, Kevin Upton*, Karen L. White, Troy Warner

Committee Members Absent:

None

Other Council Present:

Dr. Oliver Davis, Canneth Lee, Rachel Tomas Morgan

Others Present:

Bianca L. Tirado, Matthew Neal, Jasmine Jackson, Veronica Pitt-Payne, Bob Palmer

Presenters:

Erik Glavich, Joe Molnar, Tim Corcoran

Agenda:

Bill No. 11-26 - Ordinance Authorizing Payments in Lieu of Taxes for Heritage Trails South Bend, LP (*Substitute*)

Bill No. 26-10 - Resolution Establishing a Local Fund Pursuant to Indiana Code Section 5-20-5-15.5

Bill No. 26-09 - Resolution Approving the Interlocal Agreement Between the City of South Bend, the County of St. Joseph, and the Michiana Area Council of Governments Establishing a Land Bank Pursuant to Indiana Code Section 36-7-38 et seq.

Bill No. 26-08 - Resolution Approving and Adopting the Downtown 2045 Plan

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

Please note the attached link for the meeting recording:

INTEGRITY | SERVICE | ACCESSIBILITY

Jasmine Jackson
CHIEF DEPUTY CITY CLERK / CHIEF OF STAFF

Matthew Neal
DEPUTY CITY CLERK / DIRECTOR OF POLICY

Veronica Pitt-Payne
DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL PROJECTS

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<https://docs.southbendin.gov/WebLink/browse.aspx?dbid=0,0,0,0,0&mediaid=406196>

Committee Chair Troy Warner called to order the Community Investment Committee meeting at 4:05 P.M. He stated that Bill Nos. 11-26 and 26-10 will be heard jointly, with separate votes for each bill. He congratulated Joe Molnar for his recent promotion to Deputy Director of Community Investment.

Bill No. 11-26 - Ordinance Authorizing Payments in Lieu of Taxes for Heritage Trails South Bend, LP (*Substitute*)

Bill No. 26-10 - Resolution Establishing a Local Fund Pursuant to Indiana Code Section 5-20-5-15.5

Citizen Member Tom Gryp moved to accept Substitute Bill No. 11-26, which was seconded by Committee Vice Chair Karen L. White and carried via a vote by voice.

Erik Glavich, Director of Growth and Opportunity, with offices on the fifth (5th) floor of City Hall, South Bend, IN 46601, presented the bill. He said the developer of Heritage Trails, an affordable housing project, is seeking to enter a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreement with the City. The agreement would exempt the property from four-point-six million dollars (\$4,600,000) in property taxes over a fifteen (15) year term. Instead, the developer would pay six-hundred-seventy-thousand dollars (\$670,000) directly into the City's Affordable Housing Fund over the PILOT term. Heritage Trails housing units will be rented out to households earning less than sixty percent (60%) of the area median income (AMI).

Cole Caress, Petitioner, 8902 North Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46260, spoke on behalf of the developer, Birge & Held. He shared the project timeline and unit rent prices. He described the planned amenities, including free Wi-Fi, utilities, and solar-powered electricity.

Committee Member Ophelia Gooden-Rodgers commented on the rental prices and asked who will be maintaining the program.

Erik Glavich said the fund will be managed by the Executive Director of Community Investment. He added that there are a limited number of state-approved uses for the fund.

Committee Member Gooden-Rodgers asked about property maintenance.

Cole Caress noted that the rent cost includes all utilities. He said Birge & Held maintains two (2) different accounts to fund maintenance expenses

Citizen Member Gryp asked how the amount of the PILOT payments was determined.

Erik Glavich explained the methodology for determining PILOT payments.

Citizen Member Gryp asked about provisions in the bill stating that PILOT payments are subordinate to the developer's other creditors.

Erik Glavich said this is a standard provision for similar agreements across the state. He added that this does not prevent the City from going after delinquent tax payments.



Citizen Member Gryp expressed concerns about potential risk incurred by the City under the subordinate agreement.

Committee Member Bolden Simpson asked about allowable uses of the fund.

Erik Glavich said the fund must be used to support residential projects that target households at eighty percent (80%) AMI or lower. He said direct financial support and financial literacy programs are examples of allowable uses.

Councilmember Rachel Tomas Morgan asked if PILOT will be the primary tool to support affordable housing moving forward.

Erik Glavich said the state typically prefers this type of tax incentive over tax abatements. He added that the payment amounts are not subject to fluctuating tax assessments, providing some predictability for both the City and the developer.

Joe Molnar, Deputy Director of Community Investment, with offices on the fifth (5th) floor of City Hall, South Bend, IN 46601, explained that the City enters PILOT agreements after a project has already been awarded an IHCD low-income tax credit, streamlining the Council approval process. He said it is likely this will be a preferred incentive moving forward.

Councilmember Sheila Niezgodski asked about the definition of “technical assistance” and the City Controller’s role in managing the fund.

Tom Everett, Barnes & Thornburg, 201 South Main Street, South Bend, IN 46601, said the “technical assistance” language is what allows the fund to be used to support programs such as the previously mentioned financial literacy programs. He said this term is intentionally broad.

Committee Chair Warner said the City could use these funds to subsidize building costs for affordable housing developers, providing the City’s partnership with Four-Six-Six (466) Works as an example.

Tom Everett said the Department of Community Investment is responsible for administering the fund, but it would be the City Controller’s responsibility to invest the funds.

Council President Canneth Lee asked about property maintenance standards.

Cole Caress said a high standard of property maintenance will be ensured through ongoing investment in the property, on-site maintenance staff, and security cameras.

Councilmember Dr. Oliver Davis asked about marketing strategies.

Cole Caress said they use online marketing platforms and word-of-mouth marketing.

Councilmember Dr. Davis asked why Birge & Held stands out among other affordable housing developers.

Cole Caress said the included utility costs and solar installations are unique and competitive offerings.

Citizen Member Gryp asked about their expected timeline for renting out all units.

Cole Caress said they expect to be at capacity within one (1) year.

Citizen Member Gryp expressed concern about the number of new affordable housing units outpacing demand, creating an affordable housing “bubble”.

Erik Glavich spoke about the other affordable housing projects in progress. He said the City’s affordable housing study shows there is sufficient demand to fill the new units.

Committee Chair Warner said the City needs an additional five-thousand (5,000) units of affordable housing, according to the study.

Committee Chair Warner held the public hearing, and nobody spoke.

Committee Member Gooden-Rodgers moved to send Bill No. 11-26 to the Committee of the Whole with a favorable recommendation, which was seconded by Committee Member Bolden-Simpson and carried by a vote of five (5) ayes with one (1) abstention.

Committee Chair Troy Warner – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Vice Chair Karen L. White – <i>Aye</i>
Committee Member Ophelia Gooden-Rodgers – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Member Sherry Bolden-Simpson – <i>Aye</i>
Citizen Member Tom Gryp – <i>Abstain</i>	Citizen Member Kevin Upton – <i>Aye</i>

Committee Member Bolden-Simpson moved to send Bill No. 26-10 to the Full Council with a favorable recommendation, which was seconded by Committee Vice Chair White and carried by a vote of six (6) ayes.

Committee Chair Troy Warner – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Vice Chair Karen L. White – <i>Aye</i>
Committee Member Ophelia Gooden-Rodgers – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Member Sherry Bolden-Simpson – <i>Aye</i>
Citizen Member Tom Gryp – <i>Aye</i>	Citizen Member Kevin Upton – <i>Aye</i>

Bill No. 26-09 - Resolution Approving the Interlocal Agreement Between the City of South Bend, the County of St. Joseph, and the Michiana Area Council of Governments Establishing a Land Bank Pursuant to Indiana Code Section 36-7-38 et seq.

Joe Molnar, Deputy Director of Community Investment, with offices on the fifth (5th) floor of City Hall, South Bend, IN 46601, presented the bill. He spoke about the population history of South Bend and explained the City’s challenges with vacancy and blight. He described the current tax sale process for vacant properties and said that it is an inefficient way for the City to acquire land. He explained land banks and how they streamline the process of gaining control of vacant properties that are stuck in a tax sale loop. The land bank would be a joint endeavor with the Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG), who would provide staff. The City’s financial commitment would be five-hundred-thousand dollars (\$500,000) in start-up costs, and three-hundred-thousand dollars (\$300,000) annually for the next four (4) years. The project has received a Lilly Grant for one million dollars (\$1,000,000) to support operations, with an



additional three million dollars (\$3,000,000) of funding in an endowment.

James Turnwald, Executive Director of MACOG, with offices on the eleventh (11th) floor of the County Building, South Bend, IN 46601, spoke about what MACOG does and the history of the organization. He described the land bank as an “off ramp” for vacant and abandoned properties stuck in the tax sale loop.

Lisa Slomka, MACOG Director of Regional Housing Collaborative, with offices on the eleventh (11th) floor of the County Building, South Bend, IN 46601, spoke about giving more people the opportunity to own homes.

Committee Chair Warner opened the public hearing.

Anne Mannix, 724 West Washington Street, South Bend, IN 46601, spoke in favor of the bill. She urged passage of the bill and thanked everyone for their work on it.

Committee Chair Warner closed the public hearing.

Councilmember Gooden-Rodgers asked about the timeline for demolishing blighted structures on abandoned properties under the land bank’s control.

Lisa Slomka said MACOG will take over maintenance, including potential demolition, once the property is in the land bank.

Committee Member Bolden-Simpson asked about the legal mechanism for acquiring land.

James Turnwald explained how abandoned properties become stuck in a “tax sale loop” and how the land bank is able to take ownership of these properties.

Committee Vice Chair White requested that the presenters send a copy of the presentation to Councilmembers.

Council President Canneth Lee asked if this would prevent investors who do not intend to maintain their properties from coming in from outside of the community.

Lisa Slomka confirmed that is correct. She said the acquisition disposition committee will be made up of locals.

Council President Lee asked about sale prices for these properties.

Lisa Slomka said they are priced based on market rates, and they will consider one (1) proposal at a time for each property.

Committee Member Bolden-Simpson moved to send Bill *No. 26-09* to the Full Council with a favorable recommendation, which was seconded by Citizen Member Gryp and carried by a vote of six (6) ayes.

Committee Chair Troy Warner – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Vice Chair Karen L. White – <i>Aye</i>
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Committee Member Ophelia Gooden-Rodgers – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Member Sherry Bolden-Simpson – <i>Aye</i>
Citizen Member Tom Gryp – <i>Aye</i>	Citizen Member Kevin Upton – <i>Aye</i>

Bill No. 26-08 - Resolution Approving and Adopting the Downtown 2045 Plan

Tim Corcoran, Director of Planning, with offices on the fifth (5th) floor of City Hall, South Bend, IN 46601, presented the bill. He outlined the research behind it, four (4) key priorities, and several vision projects focused on jobs, placemaking, connectivity, and historic preservation. He detailed key initiatives including the tech and talent innovation district at Colfax Corner, reactivating Michigan Street as a historic retail corridor, transforming Jon Hunt Plaza into a cultural gateway, and creating a downtown town square as a central public “living room.” The plan involves reconnecting the City to the riverfront and East Bank by realigning Jefferson Boulevard, improving gateways under the tracks, and enhancing walkability, greenspace, and riverfront access. Housing expansion, mixed-income redevelopment, and projects like the Renaissance District at the Studebaker plant and the Western Avenue transformation are key parts of the plan. He stressed that these goals depend on strong partnerships, alignment with regional plans, and reinvestment in underutilized historic buildings to bring active use back to downtown.

Committee Chair Warner opened the public hearing.

Zach Klonsinski, 843 South 23rd Street, South Bend, IN 46615 spoke in favor of the bill. He expressed support for several aspects of the plan, including the expansion of multi-modal transportation downtown.

Gwen O’Brien, 739 North Frances Street, South Bend, IN 46617, spoke in favor of the bill. She shared her perspective as Director of Community Relations for the University of Notre Dame and Vice-Chair of the DTSB Board of Directors. She said her family moved to South Bend from Granger due to the “South Bend Renaissance”.

Beth Weber, 824 North Saint Peter Street, South Bend, IN 46617, spoke in favor of the bill. She said she has lived all over the world and moved to South Bend from San Diego in 2022. She said she fell in love with the City, has been involved in the resident engagement process, and believes deeply in the direction of the plan.

Committee Chair Warner closed the public hearing.

Committee Member Gooden-Rodgers moved to send Bill No. 26-08 to the Full Council with a favorable recommendation, which was seconded by Committee Member Bolden-Simpson and carried by a vote of six (6) ayes.

Committee Chair Troy Warner – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Vice Chair Karen L. White – <i>Aye</i>
Committee Member Ophelia Gooden-Rodgers – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Member Sherry Bolden-Simpson – <i>Aye</i>
Citizen Member Tom Gryp – <i>Aye</i>	Citizen Member Kevin Upton – <i>Aye</i>

With no further business, Committee Chair Warner adjourned the Community Investment Committee meeting at 6:01 P.M.



Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Troy Warner", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Troy Warner, Committee Chair