

CITY OF HASTINGS, NEBRASKA
MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2026

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a meeting of the Hastings Planning Commission was conducted at the Hastings Municipal Airport, 3300 W 12th Street, Hastings, Nebraska, January 21, 2026

Chair Rosenberg called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. in Regular Session. The following members were present: Michelle Lewis, Shawn Rossi, Craig Hubbard, Jody Stutzman, Chuck Rosenberg, Joe Kindig, and Lou Kully. Absent: Shannon Adler and Greg Sinner.

The following City Officials were present: City Administrator, Mark Funkey, City Attorney, Jesse Oswald, City Mayor, Jay Beckby, Director/City Engineer, Lee Vrooman, Director of Development Services, Kevin Kubo, Chief Building Inspector, Danny Graves, City Planner, Ember Batelaan, Community Risk Reduction Officer, Anthony Murphy, IT Director, Eric Nielsen, and Public Information Manager, Tony Herrman.

Chair Rosenberg led the Commission in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

Chair Rosenberg called for a motion to adopt the current agenda for the January 21, 2026, meeting, without item number eight. Moved by Kully, seconded by Rossi, to adopt the current agenda without item number eight. Ayes: Kindig, Stutzman, Rosenberg, Hubbard, Rossi, Lewis, and Kully. Nays: None. Motion carried: 7-0.

Citizen Communications: None

PUBLIC NOTICE - Official Notice of the Regular Meeting was published in accordance with Nebraska Revised Statute Section 84-1411. Pursuant to Nebraska Revised Statutes Section 84-1412, the public is advised that a copy of today's agenda and all reproducible written material, which will be discussed at today's meeting, is available for public review. Additionally, a current copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act is posted and accessible to the public. Neb. Rev. Stat 84-1411 (1bn).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Meeting of December 16, 2025

Chair Rosenberg called for a motion to approve the minutes of December 16, 2025. Moved by Rossi, seconded by Hubbard: Roll Call: Ayes: Stutzman, Hubbard, Lewis, Rossi, Rosenberg, Kindig and Kully. Nays: None. Motion Carried: 7-0.

Special Order of Business -None

Unfinished Business

- a. Continued Applications – None
- b. Tabled Applications- None
- c. Postponed Applications – None

Chair Rosenberg opened the Public Hearing.

Public Hearings

- a. **2025-826. Public hearing on the request of the Community Redevelopment Authority regarding Blight and Substandard Study for an area to be known as Redevelopment Area No. 19 and is generally located between East 7th Street and Union Pacific Train tracks and North 6th Avenue and North Showboat Boulevard in the City of Hastings, Adams County, Nebraska.** Kubo presented the Staff Report to consider a request of the Community Redevelopment Authority regarding Blight and Substandard Study for an area to be known as Redevelopment Area No. 19. Staff recommended that the Planning Commission recommend approval to the City Council designate the proposed Redevelopment Area No. 19 as a substandard and blighted area, based on the findings provided in the staff report.

Randy Chick, 520 W 1st St #200, Hastings, NE, on behalf of the Community Redevelopment Authority. Community Development Law allows first-class cities the ability to create redevelopment areas within the City limits, to allow the use of Tax Increment Financing. Unfortunately, they have deemed this process to blight substandard areas, and Chick explained how that carries a negative connotation. Chick explained the Community Development Law in more detail. Chick discussed how Hastings has put a dent in the city's severe housing shortage. This proposal will create another redevelopment area on the East side of town, for future residential growth. Chick introduced Keith Carl of Hanna:Keelan Associates, who was there to discuss the blight study after doing the site visit.

Keith Carl, Hanna:Keelan Associates, 3275 Holdrege St, Lincoln, NE. The staff report highlighted the company's findings regarding why the land meets their criteria. Mr. Carl discussed the key points that were in the report.

Lee Saathoff, 904 N 6th Ave, Hastings, NE. How can they deem this as blighted and substandard? He didn't understand at all.

Kara Jacobsen, 1219 N 7th Avenue, Hastings, NE. Kara is a property owner within 100 yards of this Redevelopment Area No. 19. She had serious concerns about whether the requirements met those of Nebraska Law. Especially to land that is

predominantly vacant, undeveloped, and zoned for agricultural use. Kara listed reasons she felt it wouldn't qualify, including a 1998 Supreme Court Case that ruled against the City of Hastings. Kara read the Supreme Court's findings in 1998. She wasn't opposed to continued growth for the city; however, felt the blight designation carries significant long-lasting repercussions for property owners.

Michelle Lewis asked Keith Carl to come up and discuss Ms. Jacobsen's concerns. Mr. Carl pointed out other communities that use Tax Increment Financing, which often involves examining agricultural land. If a city desires to grow in that direction, a blight designation can be given. Mr. Carl provided examples of other cities that utilized agricultural land and implemented projects to attract more tax dollars to the community. They feel Hastings is very knowledgeable regarding Tax Increment Financing. Chair Rosenberg asked Keith if this is legal under State Law. Oswald spoke up about the Hastings case, saying In 1998, the City had Blight Study Area No. 7, which was the Medical Park area. The City Council wanted to extend area No. 7 to the field to the West, and the Supreme Court said you can't take an existing area and extend it out into a cornfield and then blight it. That area would have had to have been blighted, in and of itself. They did not say that a city can't blight agricultural land. Chair Rosenberg asked if the city's legal in the State Statutes for blighting. Mr. Carl stated that Hastings did meet the criteria. Hubble brought up two center pivots that sit on these properties, and they were not mentioned. As far as structures, there are three houses in that area, ranging from \$200,000 to \$300,000. Hubbard asked about zoning in this area. Ember replied that currently, some of it is zoned Agricultural, and some of it is zoned R-1. Hubbard looked for several ways to vote for this and concluded he couldn't. Stutzman thanked Keith and Randy for their information, which was beneficial for the Commission to have their expertise, as well as thanked the people who came to speak out against it. Oswald also reiterated that it is being done all over the state, the blighting of farm ground. Rosenberg told Oswald that it seems people are worried it will affect their property taxes. Chick told them, no, the blight or substandard name does not reduce property taxes. Taxes continue to increase, no matter what the current designation. The property to the North is owned by Alan Anderson, and he would like to extend North 6th Avenue to the North and to the East, creating 20 new homes. Randy explained it in more detail.

Chair Rosenberg declared the Public Hearing closed.

Chair Rosenberg requested a motion to recommend approval of the proposed Redevelopment Area No. 19 as a substandard and blighted area, which is generally located between East 7th Street and Union Pacific Train tracks and North 6th Avenue and North Showboat Boulevard, in the City of Hastings, Adams County, Nebraska, to the City Council. Moved by Stutzman, seconded by Kindig. Ayes: Stutzman, Lewis, Rosenberg, Kindig, Kully, and Rossi. Nays: Craig Hubbard. Motion Passed: 6-1.

Chair Lewis opened the Public Hearing.

- b. 2025-827 Public hearing to consider a request for Plan Modification No. 2026-1 to Redevelopment Area No. 1 for the Middle School Redevelopment Project. The area of redevelopment is approximately 1.69 acres and is generally located northeast of the intersection of 5th Street and Hastings Avenue, in the City of Hastings, Adams County, Nebraska.** Kubo presented the Staff Report to consider the request for Plan Modification No. 2026-1 to Redevelopment Area No. 1 for the Middle School Redevelopment Project, generally located northeast of the intersection of 5th Street and Hastings Avenue, in the City of Hastings, Adams County, Nebraska. Kubo gave the staff report. Staff recommended that the Planning Commission recommend approval to the City Council for the request for a Redevelopment Plan Modification for the Middle School Redevelopment Project, generally located northeast of the intersection of North Lincoln Avenue and West 5th Street, based on the findings in the staff report and the Redevelopment Plan Modification materials.

Randy Chick, 520 W 1st St., #200, on behalf of the Community Redevelopment Authority. The CRA currently owns the building and would appreciate the commission's support. There were a few minor changes from the second time the Commission saw it before them. Previously, they were talking about an R-3 District zoning, which did not match the comp plan. The proposed zoning is C-2, which is the existing Commercial Downtown District. Funding includes Rural Workforce Housing, CRA funds, Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust, and the City received an EPA Clean-up grant. Dave Rippe, 1312 Heritage Dr, Hastings, NE. Thankful to Mark Funkey for setting up the tours. The development group he was speaking for is trying to understand the process of turning a significant city-owned liability into an asset to better serve the town. Rippe explained the level of complications it takes to convert this building into something valuable. Rippe went on to explain the apartment units, income levels, and the limited commercial space. Rippe stated it's a very complex project and is not a financially attractive project. Shannon Landauer, Chamber of Commerce and Hastings Economic Development Corp., 6011 W 13th St, Hastings, NE. She feels this is a great project and will get it back on the tax rolls before it needs to be demolished. HEDC supports this project.

Chair Rosenberg toured the building and thinks it would be a huge improvement to the city. Stutzman thanked the representatives for doing this project and Randy for putting all the time into it.

Chair Rosenberg closed the public hearing.

Chair Rosenberg asked for a motion to recommend approval for the Plan Modification #2026-1 to Redevelopment Area No. 1 for the Middle School Redevelopment Project. The

area of redevelopment is approximately 1.69 acres and is generally located Northeast of the intersection of 5th Street and Hastings Avenue in the City of Hastings, Adams County, Nebraska. Moved by Stutzman, seconded by Kully. Ayes: Stutzman, Kully, Rossi, Rosenberg, and Lewis. Nays: Hubbard. Abstain: Kindig. Motion Passed: 5-1-1.

Reports

- a. **Committee Reports:** None.
- b. **Chairman Comments:** NPZA is having a conference in Kearney, March 4-6, 2026. City will pay for that, and you can go for a day. Chuck encouraged them to go. Rosenberg presented Certificates of Appreciation and Recognition to Michelle Lewis and Jody Stutzman, whose terms with the Planning Commission end in February 2026.

- c. **Staff Reports:**

- i. Discussion of the Land Use Section of the Zoning Code Rewrite.
Ember gave a brief discussion on the zoning code rewrite for Chapter 54, to align with the Comprehensive Plan, Eliminate Spot Zoning, and Simplify Use Tables.

Chair Rosenberg asked Kubo to please fill us in on the state of the city development projects. Kubo talked about Western Reserve doing a project. Chief Ethanol is adding to its Production facilities. Kubo did a year-end report for 2025, where we added 75 million dollars in additional value to the City of Hastings through our department last year. There were 1380 permits, and we received \$495,000.00. Those numbers prove that the City of Hastings is growing. Chair Rosenberg asked Vrooman about the Southeast project. Vrooman discussed the pre-construction meeting with the State and the D Street work. Chair Rosenberg asked about progress on City Hall. Vrooman said it should be ready in April or May. Chair Rosenberg asked the Mayor about the two commissioners leaving and the vacant spot. Mayor Beckby said two applicants are coming up for appointment at the next meeting. He thanked Michelle and Jody for serving and giving their input. Mayor Beckby said Hubbard has a different point of view, and that's what it's about. Questions, answers, debates, or assumptions from other points of view are appreciated. That is the purpose of these forums: to get all the questions or assumptions answered. He gave Oswald credit for giving a rendition of what the blight study is about because you can look at it from two different perspectives. Mayor Beckby supports the Middle School and Blight Study projects. He likes the opportunity for a local developer who has been developing for several years, without any Tax Increment Financing, to be able to use this. Our city has the chance to grow towards the East and to the South. He will address the other two Planning Commission spots in February, and they will be full.

Adjourn

Chair Rosenberg called for a motion to adjourn at 5:03 p.m. Motioned by Rossi, seconded by Lewis. Roll Call: Ayes: Stutzman, Hubbard, Rossi, Kully, Kindig, Rosenberg, and Lewis. Nays: None. Motion carried: 5-0

First Chair Chuck Rosenberg