

CITY OF HASTINGS, NEBRASKA
MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMISSION
THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 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, March 17, 2026

First Chair Rosenberg called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. in Regular Session. The following members were present: Rick Schnase, Shawn Rossi, Craig Hubbard, and Chuck Rosenberg. Absent: Shannon Adler, Greg Sinner, Joe Kindig, and Lou Kully.

The following City Officials were present: City Attorney, Jesse Oswald, City Mayor, Jay Beckby, Director/City Engineer, Lee Vrooman, Director of Development Services, Kevin Kubo, Chief Building Inspector, Danny Graves, 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.

First Chair Rosenberg welcomed Rick Schnase to the Planning Commission, and Craig Hubbard, our alternate, was now a full-time Commissioner. First Chair Rosenberg told the Mayor we have one alternate vacancy. If we had people there, we could start with a quorum more easily and would appreciate that.

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).

Chair Rosenberg said we were waiting for one more Commission member before voting on the current agenda and the minutes. So moved to reports.

Reports

- a. **Committee Reports:** None.
- b. **Chairman Comments:** First Chair Rosenberg attended the NPZA conference held the first week of March, in Kearney, NE. All the planners from all over the state attended. Rosenberg said it was very informative. Kevin

Kubo and Ember Batelaan also attended. The meeting would be more of a work session, reviewing zoning code changes. First Chair Rosenberg asked Kevin to present the Zoning Codes. Jesse Oswald told them to discuss whatever doesn't need a quorum. First Chair Rosenberg told Kevin to proceed until the other Commissioner arrives, and then they would go back to the voting portions.

c. **Staff Reports:**

- i. Discuss proposed changes to zoning code.

Kubo discussed rewriting the zoning code to align with the comp plan and future land use. Kubo educated the Planning Commission on some of the changes, asking for the Commission to provide input, as their ideas and thoughts are needed. They represent the community, just as Kubo does, and their ideas are valuable. Kubo welcomed questions. This is the next step in rewriting our zoning code. Kevin discussed A-1, Agriculture District, instead of A., and the R-O Residential Estates District.

Joe Kindig arrived at 4:13 p.m.

Returned to Adopting the Current Agenda: First Chair Rosenberg called for a motion to adopt the current agenda for the March 17, 2026, meeting. Moved by Rossi, seconded by Hubbard, to adopt the current agenda. Ayes: Kindig, Schnase, Hubbard, Rosenberg, and Rossi. Nays: None. Motion carried: 5-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Meeting of January 21, 2026

First Chair Rosenberg called for a motion to approve the minutes of January 21, 2026. Moved by Hubbard, seconded by Rossi: Roll Call: Ayes: Kindig, Schnase, Hubbard, Rosenberg, and Rossi. Nays: None. Motion Carried: 5-0.

Special Order of Business

- a. **Election of Chairperson:** The First Chair, Rosenberg, asked for a nomination for Chairperson, currently held by Greg Sinner. Rossi and First Chair Rosenberg asked if Chair Greg Sinner wanted to be nominated. Melissa replied that he wished to let someone else run the meetings, but he would still like to be on the Commission in some capacity. Rossi nominated Chuck Rosenberg. Seconded by Schnase. With no other nominations, Chair Rosenberg asked them to signify by saying Aye. Nomination carried 5-0 for Chuck Rosenberg to be the Chairperson.
- b. **Election for Vice-Chairperson:** Chair Rosenberg asked for a nomination for Vice-Chairperson. Chair Rosenberg nominated Rossi for Vice-Chairperson. Seconded by Hubbard. With no other nominations, Chair Rosenberg asked

them to signify by saying Aye. Nomination carried 5-0 for Shawn Rossi to be Vice-Chairperson.

- c. **Election for Second Vice-Chairperson:** Chair Rosenberg asked for a nomination for Second Vice-Chairperson. Rossi asked who was missing, and when no one stepped forward, Melissa let them know that it was Adler and Kully who were absent. Rossi asked about this position, and Melissa told him Greg Sinner wouldn't mind being nominated as Second Vice-Chairperson. Rossi nominated Greg Sinner to be Second Vice-Chairperson. Seconded by Rosenberg. With no other nominations, Chair Rosenberg asked them to signify by saying Aye. Nomination carried 5-0 for Greg Sinner to be Second Vice-Chairperson.

Unfinished Business

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

Public Hearings: None

Subdivisions: None

Jesse Oswald interrupted and asked them to go back, as there was a quorum now. They moved back the current agenda vote.

Chair Rosenberg returned to the previous discussion on zoning changes.

Kubo started by stating the report was based on changes to state statutes intended to support “missing middle” housing and increase affordable housing options. The Planning Commission reviewed approaches used by peer communities like Kearney, Grand Island, Columbus, and Norfolk. A key principle discussed was allowing accessory dwelling units (ADUs). Kubo presented 3-D models illustrating a transition from the current R-1A District to a proposed R-O District, showing increased density to the lot size and reduced land per structure, which can improve affordability.

Rossi asked whether new housing could be built anywhere within the designated zone; Kubo confirmed it could. Rossi also inquired about proximity to existing homes, and Kubo stated a 10-foot separation requirement is proposed, though details are still being finalized.

Hubbard requested clarification on the R-O District, and Kubo explained

that it permitted a higher number of housing units per lot, which would help improve affordability. Kubo also examined the R-2 medium-density district, allowing additional structures.

Hubbard raised concerns about the 10-foot setback and potential impacts on existing neighborhoods, citing examples near 8th Street, Baltimore Street, and Elm Avenue, particularly regarding traffic safety and their proximity to schools. Kubo suggested coordination with engineers to refine clearance and setback standards.

Rossi asked how local zoning compares with other cities. Kubo stated the city is in the middle range—less dense than Grand Island but denser than Kearney. Kevin added that Kearney typically emphasizes single-family housing. Kubo noted updates to R-1 zoning could allow up to four units per lot to reflect existing neighborhood patterns and legalize current uses.

Discussion followed on the benefits and risks of increased density. Kubo emphasized affordability benefits and alignment with federal housing priorities, but noted density could be reduced. Rossi raised concerns about overdevelopment and potential impact on neighborhood character, including student housing expansions. Kubo responded that maintaining neighborhood character while allowing limited redevelopment is a priority, estimating only 0–10% of lots may redevelop over 20 years, primarily near the university.

Hubbard expressed concern about investor-driven redevelopment and corporate housing trends. Kubo acknowledged that higher-density redevelopment could occur if zoning permitted it, but stated standards could be adjusted to limit density where necessary.

Chair Rosenberg invited Murphy to comment. Murphy asked about existing non-conforming ADUs, particularly those from the NAD era. Kubo confirmed that many structures could be recognized as legal under the proposed changes.

Rossi noted concerns about converting single-family homes into multi-unit dwellings. Kubo highlighted safety issues with unpermitted conversions, and clearer standards and setbacks would encourage proper permitting and inspections. He also noted that density can be controlled through square-footage requirements or limits on lot coverage.

Kubo presented additional 3-D models showing townhouses, triplexes, and single-family homes, demonstrating how lots could be divided into four

units. Rossi expressed comfort with new multi-unit construction but remained concerned about conversions of existing homes. Kubo acknowledged these concerns while emphasizing the need to plan for long-term growth. Kubo concluded with an overview of the R-3 High Density Residential District, intended for larger apartment complexes and developments. Chair Rosenberg inquired about how many stories that would permit. Kubo said it would depend on the structure type, adding that type 5 structures would only allow four stories that are sprinklered. A Type 2B or Type 3B, or higher, if they were sprinklered and provided adequate access, could be added. The limitation depends on the structure type. Kubo discussed the complexes on West 12th Street. They are only three stories, but a good example of what we are trying to achieve for density. Kubo gave an overview of the R-4, Residential Village District, which we have not had before. We are consolidating our tiny home community, cottage court communities, and our mobile home or manufactured home communities. As of now, the manufactured homes don't have a zoning district. They are a conditional use in an industrial use district. Residential in an industrial use, so how does that work? Thus, the reason the new district was created. Rossi wondered what would happen to the existing mobile home parks. Kubo said some are bringing in the newer homes, most are platted for a sixty-foot mobile home, and now manufactured homes are eighty. That is where they are not meeting the setbacks. Redevelopment. Rossi asked if they would have to follow the new guidelines, which Kubo verified. Kubo discussed that, and that we would work with them to compromise. Kubo showed an example of a cottage court on 9th Street, giving an overview of the MU, Mixed Use District. This district was created for the colleges, Mary Lanning and Good Sam. We want them in a master plan situation to know their plans. Kubo discussed the C-1 Local Business District, explaining that the C-O District would be eliminated and merged into C-1, and provided an overview of the associated requirements. Rosenberg noted that the building heights appear reduced in many areas. Kubo explained, referencing the 3-D print, that the approach increases lot coverage rather than building vertically in order to maintain neighborhood character. He added that while commercial districts are adjacent to residential areas, the goal is to keep their character slightly different yet compatible. Kubo then moved on to the C-2 Downtown Business District, stating that most buildings are 50 Feet tall. The intent is to maintain a two-story structure in the downtown district. Kubo moved on to the C-3 District, the Commercial Corridor District. This would split the Multi-family and Commercial up to the same Maximum Height requirement of 60 feet. Kubo closed by giving an overview of the C-3 District, mixing a little residential into our C-3 District. Kubo said the new district we created is called the C-4, Highway Commercial District. This would be like Menards, Walmart, or

Home Depot.

This is for your larger structures. Kubo provided an overview of the district and presented a 3-D model comparing existing and proposed regulations, noting that the updates address structure, parking, and landscaping requirements. Kubo then reviewed the I-1 Light Industrial District, stating that the regulations were simplified. He explained that residential districts are seeing the most significant changes to allow for higher density and a wider range of housing types and asked where adjustments may be needed.

Hubbard inquired about limitations within the industrial district. Kubo responded that a minimum standard had been added. He explained that the intent is to avoid developments with full lot coverage and no parking or landscaping, using Thermo King as an example, where 100 percent coverage would result in only a building being visible. Kubo noted that typical industrial uses require space for truck movement, loading areas, employee parking, and landscaping, making full lot coverage unlikely.

Hubbard stated that some industrial properties exceed 50 percent coverage and expressed concern that the proposed standards may be too restrictive. Kubo responded that higher coverage allowances, such as 80 to 100 percent, could be considered. Hubbard questioned the need for change; ideally, they would want to maintain flexibility, to bring in more industry. Kubo said we can't design zoning codes for every scenario.

Hubbard also thought we were trying to simplify our districts. Did we add more? Kubo explained that we added the C-4 District to account for larger retail businesses, would we want Wal-Mart built at say Second and Burlington? Right now, we don't have zoning to prevent that from happening. They could tear down those buildings and put a Wal-Mart there. These regulations will help protect that. Keeping the large stores away from our Central Business District and our Commercial District. That is how we protect each type of district. For residential, we removed the R-1S and the R-1A, and added the R-O, changing the density.

Chair Rosenberg asked Kubo if we are holding community meetings. Kubo let them know two are scheduled for March 25th and March 26th. Tony Herrman has invited the community. This is everyone's code, so we want everyone's input. It needs to be a reflection of the people who live here. Rosenberg asked about the developers. Kubo said that will be the next step after the public meetings. Rosenberg feels it is important that the builders know every dimension being discussed and the costs. Kubo said Wissing builds the larger home on the larger lots, but also Reiser Corporation, at

36th and Elm, they want the higher density so they can get more for a higher return on their dollar. We are trying to find the community's happy medium. Kubo encouraged everyone to attend the 25th and 26th meetings. Ember will be there, and we are happy to tweak some of this. We can put it back in the 3-D model and show a better version. Times are changing, the costs have risen, and how do we get that little family into an affordable unit? We must sacrifice somewhere, and that's density.

Hubbard said that allowing the higher density in the residential areas won't affect Lochland or the lake communities as much. It will affect the middle-class and lower-class homeowners in town. Discussed how it may negatively impact them by decreasing the value of their property and having apartments built around them. Kubo agreed to increase the number of developers having two homes on that property. Hubbard said for someone wanting to purchase a single-family home next to it. Kubo said they may not be able to afford that single-family home, because there is only one income. If there is an Accessory Dwelling Unit attached to it, then they are helping to pay that mortgage by renting it out and can now afford to be there. We are adding more options to add density that make the public happy. Hubbard discussed how someone finding the house next door may be bought to turn it into apartments could cause issues. A lot of the newer developments have been higher-density developments. Hubbard used North Lincoln Ave. Some are apartments, but there are beautiful homes in the older neighborhoods, and he wouldn't want to see them turned into apartments. Kubo doesn't want all districts to be R-3 or R-4's, and that's why we are creating minor changes in our R-1's, allowing for ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units).

Chair Rosenberg laid out the procedure: to have some meetings, be open for feedback on the website, then come back before the Planning Commission. Kubo will bring the product back to the Commission when it's almost finished, and they will do the same, with questions and answers on why we made those decisions. More affordable housing in Hastings is the reason for these updates. What the Commission and the public want will be reflected in the zoning changes.

Rossi appreciates all the work that was put into this. Kubo said everything they do is tied to a State Statute, or an existing zoning law. The rest is up to the Commission on where to go.

Chair Rosenberg asked if this process would take six months to a year. Kubo said as long as the Commission makes it take. Kubo said by the end of the year, he hopes to have a product to bring before the City Council.

There has been a lot of thought, comparing other communities of our same size, state statutes, with zoning building laws, to accommodate everything. Wait until you see the future land use and the comp plan.

Chair Rosenberg said by making these changes, it will make the community grow, and that is what we all want to see happen and why we are on the committee.

Adjourn

Chair Rosenberg called for a motion to adjourn at 5:15 p.m. Motioned by Hubbard, seconded by Kindig. Roll Call: Ayes: Kindig, Schnase, Hubbard, Roseberg, and Rossi. Nays: None. Motion carried: 5-0.

First Chair Chuck Rosenberg