



Kankakee City Council
Economic Development Committee
Thursday, July 23, 2026, 5:30 p.m.
Council Chambers 385 E. Oak St.

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Committee ("Committee") of the Kankakee City Council ("Council"), was called to order by Chairman Mike Cobbs on July 23, 2026 at 5:33 p.m. in the Council Chambers, proper notice having been given to the public and committee members.

The following Committee members were present: Aids. Mike Cobbs (6), Dave Baron (2), Lenora Noble (7), Danita Grant Swanson(4) Absent were Carmen Lewis(5) Dale Tolly (3) Cherry Malone-Marshall (1), The following guests were present: Barbi Brewer-Watson, City Planner Elizabeth Kubal.

There were no public comments.

There was a quorum present.

4. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Cobbs informed the committee that technical issues affected the preparation of previous meeting notes. The committee acknowledged the issue and agreed to work together to ensure complete records moving forward.

5. Director's Report

The Economic Development Director reported:

- **Ten (10) new businesses** successfully completed the City's business licensing process during the past month.
- Staff continued providing technical assistance to entrepreneurs navigating licensing, permitting, and marketing needs.
- The Memorandum of Understanding with the Community Foundation is nearing completion, allowing the release of **\$15,000** in National League of Cities grant funding to support the CEO entrepreneurship program and Hispanic business outreach.

- Community partners provided updates, including continued downtown promotion efforts and receipt of a **\$170,083 Illinois Office of Tourism grant** to expand destination marketing.
- The Economic Alliance continues recruiting manufacturing, pharmaceutical, renewable energy, steel, and agricultural businesses while assisting with business retention efforts.
- Workforce discussions highlighted rising unemployment among residents ages **20-29**, with committee discussion focusing on workforce development, technology, AI, internships, and apprenticeship opportunities.

6. Partner & Project Updates

Updates included:

- Kankakee Riverfront Society continues fundraising for the historic Boathouse restoration and East Riverwalk improvements.
- QuikTrip construction is underway.
- Storage of America is awaiting a construction start date.
- Exit 312 engineering continues progressing with IDOT.
- Grocery store market study results are expected in September.
- West Riverwalk property appraisals have begun.
- Downtown redevelopment projects, including 310 South Schuyler and Riverstone Convention Center planning, continue moving forward.
- Staff continues monitoring key redevelopment sites, including the southwest corner of Fourth Street and Schuyler Avenue.

7. New Business

Indian Meadows Development Agreement

The committee reviewed a proposed development agreement for the Indian Meadows subdivision.

Key provisions included:

- Extension of the existing development agreement through **2040**.

- Application of a **90/10 tax increment split** consistent with the previous Dr. Gupta agreement.
- Initial development of **17 residential lots**, with an anticipated five-year build-out.

Following discussion, a motion was made and seconded to authorize preparation of the developer agreement and forward it to the City Council upon completion.

Roll Call Vote:

- Swanson – Aye
- Noble – Aye
- Barron – Aye
- Cobbs – Aye

Motion Passed Unanimously.

Tiny Tap Incentive Request

The committee considered a façade improvement incentive for Tiny Tap.

Staff recommended:

- A **\$5,000 incentive**, representing approximately **12.5%** of eligible Phase I project costs.
- Funding through available City economic development funds.

Following discussion, a motion was approved to forward the incentive agreement to the full City Council.

Roll Call Vote:

- Swanson – Aye
- Noble – Aye
- Barron – Aye
- Cobbs – Aye

Motion Passed Unanimously.

8. Special Meeting

The committee scheduled a **special Economic Development Committee meeting** for:

Thursday, July 30, 2026

5:30 p.m.

City Council Chambers

The meeting will focus on reviewing additional pending development agreements.

9. Additional Discussion

Staff discussed the need to establish a formal **Small Business Incentive Program** utilizing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. HUD's recent monitoring visit was positive, and staff expressed confidence that future grant opportunities will allow expansion of economic development assistance programs.

10. Adjournment

With no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Alderwoman Noble, seconded by Alderman Baron. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at approximately

6:16 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ald. Mike Cobbs

Chairman