

County Commissioners
Colm Willis, Chair
Kevin Cameron
Danielle Bethell



Chief Administrative Officer
Jan Fritz

MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WORK SESSION

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)/HOME Consolidated Plan Mid-Point Check-In Minutes

Tuesday, January 8, 2026, 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Commissioners' Boardroom
Courthouse Square, 555 Court St. NE, Suite 5231
Salem, Oregon 97301

Attendance:

Commissioner's: Kevin Cameron, Colm Willis and Danielle Bethell.

Board's Office: Gary White, Shawnnell Fuentes, Toni Whitler, Heather Inyama, and Chris Eppley.

Legal Counsel: Steve Elzinga.

Community Economic Development Department: Stephanie Jennings, Steve Dickey, Kelli Weese, Sheila Roberts, and Whitney Finnstrom.

Commissioner Kevin Cameron called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

1. Welcome & Introductions

-Commissioner Colm Willis

2. Project State Information

-Steve Dickey

- Marion County is conducting its five-year CDBG and HOME Consolidated Plan:
 - This meeting is a midpoint check-in.
- The Consolidated Plan must assess:
 - Local housing needs.
 - Community development needs.
 - Engage community input.
 - Establish priority goals.
 - Allocation strategies for federal funds over five years.
- Eligibility requirements:
 - Living outside the City of Salem.
 - At or below 80% of area median income.
- Over 10,000 low-income renters and about 11,000 low-income homeowners in the county.
- Data and needs analysis required by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):
 - Must be informed by both local consultations and quantitative assessment.
- Large proportion (54%) of the county's housing stock was built before 1980:
 - Higher maintenance needs.
 - Increased utility costs.
 - Concerns such as potential lead-based paint exposure.

3. Mid-Point Review

- Extensive stakeholder and community outreach conducted:
 - Four Zoom meetings with 22 organizations participating.
 - In-person community meetings:
 - Keizer, Silverton, Stayton, and Woodburn.
 - Online surveys done by 29 stakeholders and 39 community members.
- Key common challenges identified:
 - Rising housing costs for both renters and owners:
 - Significant cost-burden rates:
 - 29% of low-income renters.
 - 26% of owners face severe burden.
 - Mental health, substance abuse, and domestic violence are ongoing issues.
 - Transportation and child care remain major challenges:
 - Especially in smaller towns and rural areas.
- Homelessness data:
 - Estimates suggest around 2,000 people affected:
 - Half sheltered and half not.
 - Data reliability questioned:
 - Due to collection methods.
 - Inclusion of areas outside Marion County.
- A strategic plan framework established around three broad priority categories:
 - Housing for low/moderate-income persons.
 - Needs of special populations and homelessness.
 - Public facilities and infrastructure:
 - Such as metering and road improvement projects.

4. Discussion

- Goals and strategies are broad enough to accommodate county priorities annually:
 - Without requiring amendments.
- Preventive measures and "gap funding" for homelessness are priorities:
 - Continue indirectly and directly addressing homelessness and housing instability.
- Community service investments, facilities, and infrastructure for vulnerable population support.
- East Salem Service District is included as long as it is outside the city limits:
 - The area between Cordon Road and Lancaster Drive is covered.
- Review survey questions and give detailed feedback:
 - Distribute to the commissioners.
- Align proposed goals with priority community needs, including HUD compliance.

5. Next Steps

- Survey results and questions will be shared with the board prior to the next meeting.
- Legal clarification on two pending pre-applications for project funding:
 - Determinations will be sent to the board.
- Updated citizen participation plan will be brought forward:
 - Simplified amendment rules and participation procedures.
- Drafts of the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan will be given to the board:
 - Ahead of the March work session for review and feedback.
- Site project funding work session is scheduled for late January:
 - Follow-up to further refine priorities and applications before final adoption.
- Board seeking detailed information on the United Way senior housing project:

- Cost, acreage, and proposal documents.
- Discussion and coordination regarding potential CDBG funding restrictions on Housing Authority's Mill City property development.
- Final public hearing to adopt the Consolidated and Annual Action Plans is tentatively set for April:
 - Flexibility to accommodate federal timelines.
 - Deadline for submission to HUD is August 16th.

Adjourned – time: 2:12 p.m.

Minutes by: Mary Vityukova

Reviewed by: Gary L. White