

Eddie D. Melton
Mayor



Marco Molina
City Attorney

CITY OF GARY PLAN COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING

Thursday, November 20, 2025 @ 3:30 PM

Conference Room, Hudson Campbell Sports Center,
455 Massachusetts St., Gary, IN 46402

AGENDA

Roll call

ALAN HARRELL – **PRESENT**
WILLIAM ALLEN - **ABSENT**
TOM CERA – **PRESENT**
ADAM HALL – **PRESENT**
WILLIE MILLER - **PRESENT**
SHERMAN WILSON - **PRESENT**
BILL COOK – **ABSENT**
JEREMIAH KING – **PRESENT**
DARREN WASHINGTON – **PRESENT**

MEETING MINUTE APPROVAL

Motion to approve October minutes: Adam Hall

Seconded by: Darren Washington

Motion passed with a vote of 5-0

Member	T. CERA	W. ALLEN	A. HARRELL	A. HALL	W. MILLER	S. WILSON	B. COOK	J. KING	D. WASHINGTON
Vote	YES	ABSENT	YES	YES	ABSENT	YES	ABSENT	ABSENT	YES

PC 2026 CALENDAR

Motion to approve PC 2026 Calendar: Alan Harrell

Seconded by: Jeremiah King

Motion passed with a vote of 6-0

Member	T. CERA	W. ALLEN	A. HARRELL	A. HALL	W. MILLER	S. WILSON	B. COOK	J. KING	D. WASHINGTON
Vote	YES	ABSENT	YES	YES	ABSENT	YES	ABSENT	YES	YES

TIF DISTRICT RESOLUTION

Corrie Sharp explained the city of Gary is amending three existing Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district resolutions, originally created decades ago, to allow funds to be used for public safety expenses such as police and fire salaries and capital

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improvements. This change follows recent state legislation permitting such use. The process involves the redevelopment commission initiating the amendment, the plan commission affirming it, and then city council providing final approval. These amendments do not create new TIF districts or issue new bonds; they simply allocate existing funds for one-time public safety incentives. This approach is seen as an innovative way to support law enforcement and fire services without additional financial burden. Using existing TIF funds for public safety is considered a smart and innovative approach, as these funds would typically support such services indirectly. This one-time allocation demonstrates the city's commitment to law enforcement and fire staff through bonuses and incentives. While this strategy is beneficial, concerns were raised about maintaining overall tax base stability and understanding the long-term impact of multiple TIF districts. TIFs generally expire after 25 years, and the three districts in question will close in 2029, with most associated debts nearly paid off. The funds being used are surplus from completed projects, not new bonds or districts. Some TIF districts originally had bonds, while others served purely as financing mechanisms, meaning not all generate extra income. Many bonds have already been retired, freeing surplus funds for other uses. The redevelopment commission recently approved the 2026 budget, which details each TIF district's balances, debt service, expiration dates, purposes, and projected revenues, and this information will be shared for transparency. Additionally, major developments such as the convention center and casino fall within an airport TIF district managed separately, which recently extended its term with a new bond for hangar construction. This raises concerns about the long-term impact on tax increment distribution and highlights the need for careful planning to avoid placing major projects in TIF areas without fully considering future financial implications.

Motion to approve Midwest Center TIF dated Dec. 17, 2002: Darren Washington

Seconded by: Adam Hall

Motion passed to approve resolution for Midwest Center TIF with a vote of 7-0

Member	T. CERA	W. ALLEN	A. HARRELL	A. HALL	W. MILLER	S. WILSON	B. COOK	J. KING	D. WASHINGTON
Vote	YES	ABSENT	YES	YES	YES	YES	ABSENT	YES	YES

Motion to approve Lakefront TIF (Resolution 2745): Adam Hall

Seconded by: Sherman Wilson

Motion passed to approve Lakefront TIF with a vote of 7-0

Member	T. CERA	W. ALLEN	A. HARRELL	A. HALL	W. MILLER	S. WILSON	B. COOK	J. KING	D. WASHINGTON
Vote	YES	ABSENT	YES	YES	YES	YES	ABSENT	YES	YES

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Motion to approve Urban Renewal Area (Truck City) TIF dated April 5, 1977: Adam Hall
Seconded by: Darren Washington

Motion passed to approve Urban Renewal Area (Truck City) with a vote of 7-0

Member	T. CERA	W. ALLEN	A. HARRELL	A. HALL	W. MILLER	S. WILSON	B. COOK	J. KING	D. WASHINGTON
Vote	YES	ABSENT	YES	YES	YES	YES	ABSENT	YES	YES

PLANNING/ZONING DEPARTMENT

✚ PC UDO – UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

Corrie Sharp introduced the presentation that reflected the update to the zoning ordinance. Over the past month, the team has been refining the city's zoning ordinance by updating language, adding graphics, and addressing public feedback. A draft is available on the city's website for comments, and an official public hearing is scheduled for December 18 following a 10-day notice. The city is also remapping all zoning districts due to new criteria, which has revealed issues like incorrect legal descriptions and fragmented parcels that will require long-term cleanup. Adjustments to lot size requirements and setbacks are being proposed to prevent problems such as tiny lots and to support diverse housing types like duplexes and townhomes. Additionally, the permitted use table has been modernized by removing outdated uses and identifying missing ones, ensuring the ordinance aligns with current development needs.

✚ DEPARTMENT UPDATE

The city is actively seeking public feedback on the Unified Development Ordinance while updating zoning maps to align with the comprehensive plan. This process revealed significant addressing discrepancies that could impact emergency response and safety. Historically, parcel combinations and improper use of hyphens have led to confusing addresses, and some properties are incorrectly classified, affecting tax assessments. To resolve this, the city is implementing a full address management system and a GIS-based land use system that uses precise X and Y coordinates for accuracy. These tools will improve zoning, emergency services, and overall data integrity. Additionally, the city is streamlining its General Business License (GBL) process, requiring all businesses operating in Gary—including mobile vendors—to renew licenses annually in January. Efforts include notifying businesses of expired licenses and coordinating inspections with relevant departments to ensure compliance.

Adjournment