

MINUTES FOR THE
BUSINESS ADVISORY BOARD
Wednesday, February 11th, 2026

1. Roll Call

The following members of the Business Advisory Board were present:

Sheridan Mordue - Chair
Andy Robertson
Brittany Reese
Jeff Carleton
Pook Carson
Abudjaannah Soud

Isaac Atencio - Vice-Chair
Alyn Toalepai
Jocelyn Kearn
Scott Lyttle
Kandi Tessen
Mazhar Kathi

Also Present:

Peter Makowski, Department of Economic Development; Will Wright, Department of Economic Development; Ibrahim Ramazani, Department of Economic Development; Austin Kimmel, Salt Lake City Council; Liz Ward, Department of Economic Development; Lorena Rizzo Jenson, Department of Economic Development; Dan Dugan, Salt Lake City Council Member.

Absent:

Alfonso Brito

2. Approval of the minutes

- a. Review and Approval of January 14th, 2026, BAB Minutes.

Ms. Reese made a motion to approve the minutes of January 14th, 2026. Mr. Carleton seconded the motion. Upon roll call, the motion passed unanimously.

3. Briefings by the Staff

A. Report from the Director.

Peter Makowski, Deputy Director of the Business Development Division, shared updates from the Department of Economic Development, noting that the Economic Development Loan Fund (EDLF) application cycle has recently opened and will accept applications for roughly four weeks or until ten slots are filled. He highlighted ongoing process improvements to manage loan demand and mentioned that startup businesses less than three years old can apply for loans of up to \$100,000. Mr. Makowski also announced that the department is hiring a new Project Coordinator and recruiting for an Innovation/Technology Advisor, while staff are currently focused on monitoring the legislative session and supporting related policy discussions. He added that the Mayor plans to provide a future update on the upcoming city budget and briefly recognized recent business openings in the city.

4. Business Items

A. Introduction and Welcome Councilmember Dugan

Councilmember Dan Dugan introduced himself to the board and shared his priorities as the representative for District 6 on the City Council. He emphasized the importance of keeping election oversight at the local and state levels and encouraged businesses and community members to stay informed and engaged in these discussions. He also discussed ongoing concerns around immigration enforcement and its impact on residents and small businesses, noting that the City Council is working to support communities through collaboration with local organizations, businesses, and residents.

Mr. Dugan also highlighted economic development priorities, including filling vacant storefronts, supporting small businesses, and strengthening partnerships with programs like the Economic Development Loan Fund (EDLF) and the Community Reinvestment Agency (CRA). He stressed the need to focus not only on affordable housing but also on “affordable living,” which includes access to jobs, services, and mixed-use developments. Additionally, he discussed improving transportation and infrastructure such as bike and pedestrian access to make it easier for people to reach local businesses and help strengthen neighborhood economies.

B. Salt Lake City Fire Department

Battalion Chief Tony Allred gave the Board an overview of Salt Lake City Fire’s role beyond emergency response, focusing on how the department supports (and regulates) new business openings and development through fire code review, permitting, inspections, and business licensing. He explained that Salt Lake City’s infill growth creates unique challenges, especially around fire access and building design, so the department stays involved upstream during the planning and permitting process and downstream during inspections to help keep projects safe and compliant.

A major theme was improving customer experience for small businesses. Mr. Allred noted that what feels “simple” to code officials can be confusing to first-time business owners, and delays at the inspection stage can be costly when businesses are ready to open. He discussed efforts to make checklists and guidance more user-friendly, expand materials beyond English, and be more proactive with education (videos, one-pagers, newsletters). The Board raised concerns about redundant inspections and permitting for businesses that already have approved use (like assembly/event spaces), and Chief Allred acknowledged the issue and invited continued feedback and collaboration, including working with a subcommittee and exploring a new portal to help business owners navigate requirements across City departments.

C. Japantown Overview

Lynne Ward (Japanese Church of Christ) and Rolen Yoshinaga (Salt Lake Buddhist Temple) presented an overview of Salt Lake City’s historic Japantown area and the two faith communities that anchor it. They described a long-standing, close partnership between the two organizations and shared how the city, CRA, and community have been working on a “Japantown Streetscape” concept focused on improving safety, traffic calming, and pedestrian crossings, especially because members frequently cross between the two sites. They also highlighted that the area currently functions as the “back of house” for the Salt Palace, with heavy semi-truck loading activity that already creates access and safety challenges during events.

Much of the discussion centered on the impacts of the Smith Entertainment Group redevelopment and nearby large-scale construction. Ms. Ward and Mr. Yoshinaga raised concerns about demolition and

construction disruptions (dust, debris, truck traffic), long-term access to worship spaces, and whether new development will preserve Japantown's character or treat it as a service corridor. They noted a desire for solutions like an additional vehicle access point (potentially via 200 West), street-facing retail and restaurants that reflect Japanese cultural identity, and better integration of Japantown into the broader downtown destination experience. The Board expressed strong support, emphasized the need for community voices, and discussed taking the issue to a subcommittee to help coordinate next steps and advocate for mitigations, potentially including temporary accommodation options during heavy construction periods and clearer communication tools for broader public engagement.

D. Letter of Support for Harvey Milk Boulevard

The Board's Legislative Sub-Committee presented two draft versions of a letter opposing Utah House Bill 196, which would rename Harvey Milk Boulevard, and discussed using one version for a letter-to-the-editor (to meet word limits) and another for direct outreach to legislators. The Board voted to approve both versions, with flexibility for minor edits by the subcommittee, and agreed the letter would go out under Board Chair Sheridan Mordue's signature once staff provided the appropriate legislator contact list and confirmed the preferred format for sending.

E. City Council Announcements

Austin Kimmel, Public Policy Analyst for City Council, shared several City Council updates, including progress on the Grove Northwest Pipeline Building project and the Library Union agreement, which was approved and includes wage and benefit improvements for library employees without requiring a property tax increase. He also discussed the zoning map amendment at approximately 265 E 100 S, noting that the Council received significant public comment and is continuing discussions due to concerns about the potential impact of a high-rise development on a nearby cathedral and its solar panels. Additionally, the Council received a briefing on the Economic Development Loan Fund (EDLF) from the Department of Economic Development and discussed a temporary street closure planned for the 2027 Temple Square reopening, which raised concerns among council members about traffic flow, school routes, and broader transportation impacts during multiple downtown construction projects.

F. BAB Member Announcements

A. BAB members will announce new board members

The Board welcomed two new members who briefly introduced themselves. Mazhar Kathi shared his experience working with immigrant communities in Salt Lake City, helping entrepreneurs start small businesses, particularly in areas like food, crafts, and specialty products, and connecting them to local markets and business development resources as Founder of The Catalyst. Kandi Tesen introduced herself as the owner of Eats Bakery, noting that she has lived in Utah for seven years and recently expanded from a small business into a brick-and-mortar location. She expressed appreciation for programs like the Economic Development Loan Fund (EDLF), which supported her business, and shared her interest in helping connect entrepreneurs with the many resources available to small businesses in the community.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.


sheridan mordue (May 14, 2026 07:13:34 MDT)

Sheridan Mordue - Chair

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MINUTES FOR THE
BUSINESS ADVISORY BOARD
Wednesday, March 11th, 2026

1. Roll Call

The following members of the Business Advisory Board were present:

Sheridan Mordue - Chair
Andy Robertson
Brittany Reese
Jeff Carleton
Mazhar Kathi

Isaac Atencio - Vice-Chair
Abudjaannah Soud
Jocelyn Kearn
Scott Lytle
Kandi Tessen

Also Present:

Peter Makowski, Department of Economic Development; Will Wright, Department of Economic Development; Ibrahim Ramazani, Department of Economic Development; Austin Kimmel, Salt Lake City Council; Liz Ward, Department of Economic Development; Lorena Rizzo Jenson, Department of Economic Development; Katherine Matheson, Department of Economic Development; Matthew Brown, City Recorder's Office; Spencer Madanay, City Recorder's Office.

Absent:

Alfonso Brito
Pook Carson

2. Approval of the minutes

- a. Review and Approval of February 11th, 2026, BAB Minutes.

Mr. Atencio made a motion to approve the minutes of February 11th, 2026. Mr. Carleton seconded the motion. Upon roll call, the motion passed unanimously.

3. Briefings by the Staff

A. Briefing by SLCPD.

The Salt Lake City Police Department shared that it is launching a new strategic game plan and has released a short public survey to gather input on the department's future direction. The survey takes about 2 to 5 minutes to complete and is intended to collect feedback from a wide range of voices, including community members and business stakeholders. Officials emphasized that the initiative reflects leadership's commitment, especially from the Chief, to listen to both internal staff and the broader community when shaping priorities.

Board members were encouraged to complete the survey and share it widely to maximize participation, as the response window will only remain open for a few weeks. Early feedback on the survey has been

positive, and the department hopes to gather as many responses as possible before analyzing the results. There was also brief discussion about potential funding for a command center, though no specific updates were available at the time.

B. Report from the Director.

Colin Gibbs, Director of the Business Development Division, provided an overview of ongoing efforts within the Department of Economic Development, highlighting strong progress in construction mitigation outreach and business engagement. The team has been preparing for upcoming construction along the 700 North and Redwood Road corridors by coordinating with engineering, identifying impacted businesses, and conducting early outreach. Since the start of the fiscal year, the team has completed 139 site visits. Colin also introduced Luis Garcia, a new Project Coordinator, who will support business outreach and special assessment area efforts.

4. Business Items

A. NeighborWorks' Programs & Impact

Luis Pineda and Pablo Correa from NeighborWorks Salt Lake presented an overview of their organization's mission and impact, highlighting nearly five decades of work focused on strengthening communities, particularly on Salt Lake City's west side. Their work is centered around four key pillars: real estate development, community-based economic development, community building, and homeownership support. They emphasized initiatives like the First Home community land trust, which creates permanently affordable housing through shared equity, as well as a national housing investment fund that has distributed millions to support housing development and nonprofit capacity.

The organization also focuses heavily on economic mobility and community empowerment through workforce training programs, youth leadership development, and financial education. Programs include trade certifications, youth initiatives, and financial coaching with matched savings accounts to help residents build assets such as homes or small businesses. NeighborWorks also hosts large volunteer-driven community events and provides direct support like home repairs and down payment assistance. Overall, their presentation highlighted a strong track record of impact, including hundreds of homes developed, thousands served through youth programs, and ongoing efforts to expand opportunities and stability for local residents.

B. City Council Announcements

Austin Kimmel, Public Policy Analyst for the City Council, provided several updates on current and upcoming council actions. The Council approved a public benefit analysis for "The Grove," a redevelopment project at 300 East and 200 South that will preserve a historic building while creating 196 affordable housing units. They are also considering temporary street closures near the Salt Lake Temple from March to October 2027 to manage safety and large crowds during its reopening. Additionally, a proposed rezoning in Sugar House would replace a previously planned gas station with a hotel, with a public hearing scheduled to gather community input. Councilmembers are also hosting a Budget 101 workshop on April 8 to help residents better understand the city's budgeting process.

Kimmel also highlighted recent funding and policy actions. The Council approved a budget amendment that includes approximately \$1 million for a mobile command center to support police response during emergencies and large events, along with upgrades to downtown parking signage. Acting as the Community Reinvestment Agency, the Council approved \$8.1 million in housing funding to support four

projects expected to create around 600 affordable units. Lastly, the Council is reviewing updates to the recurring nuisance properties ordinance, with changes to definitions and compliance options, and is expected to act soon.

C. BAB Member Announcements and Discussion

During Business Advisory Board announcements, Will Wright encouraged all members to complete the required Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) training, with a goal of reaching 100% completion by April. Members were reminded that the training is brief and can be completed online, and that a certificate or screenshot should be submitted as proof. Staff offered to follow up individually with those who have not yet completed it to help ensure full compliance.

The Board also discussed introducing a formal code of conduct and civility pledge to guide member behavior and strengthen engagement. The goal is to create a respectful, inclusive environment where all members feel comfortable sharing perspectives while maintaining professionalism both during meetings and externally. Board members expressed support for the idea, noting it would reinforce accountability, respect, and effective collaboration. The proposal will be refined and brought back at a future meeting for potential adoption.

D. Tentative Closed Meeting

The Board entered a closed meeting session following a motion by Mr. Carleton, which was seconded by Ms. Reese. Upon a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously and the closed session began.

After discussion concluded, Chair Sheridan Mordue requested a motion to reopen the meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Kearl and seconded by Mr. Kathi. The Board voted unanimously to exit the closed session and return to the open meeting.

E. Board Action

The Board conducted a vote to recommend sending a letter to the mayor. All members voted in favor, with no objections. Following the unanimous approval, the letter was submitted to the mayor along with the Board's recommendations for her final decision.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.


sheridan mordue (May 14, 2026 07:13:34 MDT)
Sheridan Mordue - Chair

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MINUTES FOR THE
BUSINESS ADVISORY BOARD
Wednesday, April 8th, 2026

1. Roll Call

The following members of the Business Advisory Board were present:

Sheridan Mordue - Chair
Andy Robertson
Brittany Reese
Jeff Carleton
Mazhar Kathi
Pook Carson

Isaac Atencio - Vice-Chair
Abudjaannah Soud
Jocelyn Kearn
Scott Lytle
Kandi Tessen

Also Present:

Peter Makowski, Department of Economic Development; Will Wright, Department of Economic Development; Ibrahim Ramazani, Department of Economic Development; Austin Kimmel, Salt Lake City Council; Liz Ward, Department of Economic Development; Lorena Rizzo Jenson, Department of Economic Development; Katherine Matheson, Department of Economic Development; Kristen Lavelett, Downtown Alliance; Minerva Jimenez, Department of Economic Development; Luis Garcia, Department of Economic Development.

Absent:

Alfonso Brito

2. Approval of the minutes

- a. Review and Approval of March 11th, 2026, BAB Minutes.

Mr. Carleton made a motion to approve the minutes of March 11th, 2026. Mr. Kathi seconded the motion. Upon roll call, the motion passed unanimously.

3. Briefings by the Staff

A. Briefing by SLCPD.

Detective Marie Stewart provided an update on behalf of the Salt Lake City Police Department, highlighting ongoing efforts to address the growing issue of wire theft across Salt Lake City. Detective Stewart noted that theft-related losses have been increasing significantly each year, creating costly repair challenges. To combat this, the department is working with a local

company, Vertical Visions, which has developed a cost-effective locking lid solution for existing pull boxes, eliminating the need for full infrastructure replacement. This approach is expected to allow for faster and more budget-conscious implementation once funding and procurement are finalized. The discussion also highlighted that much of the stolen wire may be reused directly in other construction projects rather than sold as scrap, making enforcement more difficult. The proposed solution could be applicable to both public and private properties, and further collaboration with construction stakeholders was encouraged to explore broader prevention strategies.

B. Report from the Director.

Colin Gibbs, Director of the Business Development Division, provided updates on several ongoing initiatives, including progress within Economic Development Loan Fund (EDLF) activities and the advancement of the Sugar House special assessment area. Mr. Gibbs highlighted strong momentum in the Construction Mitigation Grant (CMG) program, noting a goal of 30 grants, with 15 applications received, 13 approved, and 9 checks already distributed, as outreach efforts continue in key construction-impacted areas. Additionally, Mr. Gibbs shared news of a major economic development project involving the new Western Governors University headquarters in downtown Salt Lake City, which will redevelop a near full city block into a mixed-use campus featuring approximately 1 million square feet of office space, housing up to 5,000 employees, along with retail, dining, and potentially a hotel, with construction expected to begin around spring 2027 and completion anticipated by 2030.

Taylee Folger, Project Coordinator with the Community Reinvestment Agency (CRA), provided an update to the Business Advisory Board on the upcoming launch of the CRA's new Commercial Development Loan Program. The program, expected to open soon, will offer loans of up to \$2 million for projects within CRA project areas, with a focus on expanding commercial corridors and supporting large-scale property improvements rather than tenant-specific upgrades. Loans will have a five-year term with interest rates starting at the Treasury yield plus 3%, with the potential to decrease to as low as 3% based on community benefits such as job creation, sustainable development, and wealth-building opportunities. The program is primarily intended as a gap financing tool, though it may also be used for primary financing, and approximately \$10 million in total funding will be available.

4. Business Items

A. 2026 Legislative Session Review

Michelle Hoon, Deputy Director of the Legislative Affairs Division, provided an overview of the 2026 Utah Legislative Session and its impact on Salt Lake City. Ms. Hoon explained that her team manages government affairs at the federal and state levels and tracked 351 bills this session, with 126 identified as high priority. While the legislature introduced a large volume of legislation, fewer bills ultimately passed, reducing implementation burdens for the City. Ms. Hoon emphasized that many proposals that could have negatively impacted the City, particularly those related to property tax limitations, service delivery constraints, and rollbacks of legal wins, did not pass, which was a major success for the City and its partners.

Ms. Hoon also highlighted key legislation that did pass, including HB236, which increases transparency around potential tax increases, HB492, which provides funding opportunities for infrastructure and housing development, and SB242, which updates transportation policy while maintaining existing bike infrastructure and requiring coordination with UDOT. Additional legislation addressed public safety, homelessness funding, mental and behavioral health services, and environmental efforts such as funding for the Great Salt Lake. She noted continued scrutiny of economic development tools and emphasized the importance of collaboration with regional partners in shaping legislative outcomes, concluding that the session was productive overall.

B. Parking 101 Presentation

Allison Dupler, Urban Services Director, provided an overview of City parking operations and the role of the Urban Services Division in Salt Lake City. Ms. Dupler explained that the division, established in 2025, brings together parking enforcement, the Clean City team, and crossing guards to improve coordination, efficiency, and responsiveness across services. Parking enforcement operates extended hours throughout the week and is responsible strictly for enforcing ordinances, while transportation handles policy and signage decisions and Planning oversees zoning requirements. She emphasized the division's collaborative approach, including cross-training staff and working with businesses and neighborhoods to address parking challenges through coordinated efforts with the Transportation Division.

Ms. Dupler also addressed community concerns related to extended parking hours, enforcement practices, and impacts on local businesses, particularly regarding short-term parking for customers and delivery drivers. She encouraged stakeholders to engage directly with the City to explore solutions and noted ongoing discussions about accommodating delivery services. Additional topics included enforcement policies such as 48-hour parking limits and ADA parking allowances, as well as tools like the MySLC app for reporting issues. She highlighted upcoming downtown parking studies and emphasized the importance of community feedback to help guide improvements and ensure parking systems better support businesses and residents.

5. City Council Announcements

Austin Kimmel, Public Policy Analyst for the City Council, provided updates on recent and upcoming Council actions in Salt Lake City. Mr. Kimmel highlighted the Council's approval of temporary street closures around Temple Square from March to October 2027 to improve pedestrian safety during the anticipated reopening. He also noted an open appointment to the Metropolitan Water District Board and shared that the Council, acting as the Community Reinvestment Agency, approved an agreement with UTA and UDOT to extend the Sugar House streetcar, with construction expected to begin soon and service anticipated in late 2027. Additionally, the Council is reviewing its process for honorary street naming following recent concerns and has approved a nuisance properties ordinance to better address repeat problem properties.

Mr. Kimmel also discussed recent land use and infrastructure decisions, including the Council's

vote against rezoning the former Sizzler site near Sugar House Park for a proposed hotel due to community concerns about precedent, traffic, and neighborhood impacts. He noted approval of funding to move forward with the Foothills Trail projects after prior delays, signaling renewed progress in that area. Looking ahead, he emphasized the start of the City's budget season, with the Mayor's proposed budget expected in early May and opportunities for public engagement, including a Budget 101 workshop, encouraging stakeholders to participate in shaping funding priorities.

6. BAB Member Announcements

Kristen Lavelett, Business Development Manager at the Downtown Alliance (DTA), provided an overview of the Downtown Alliance's work in Salt Lake City, explaining that the organization operates as a business improvement district funded through a special assessment on commercial properties within the downtown core. The Alliance focuses on supporting property owners, developers, and businesses while managing key programs such as the Downtown Ambassadors, who provide hospitality, outreach to unsheltered individuals, and light cleaning services. Ms. Lavelett noted that the organization collaborates closely with the City to extend services beyond the central district and plays a key role in maintaining and activating downtown spaces.

Ms. Lavelett also highlighted several cultural and community initiatives, including the Blocks Arts District, which promotes arts programming and placemaking, and upcoming summer events like expanded "Steppin' on Main" performances and the new Art Garden at the former Utah Theater site. Additionally, she shared updates on the long-running Downtown Farmers Market, which continues to draw strong attendance and will operate in a hybrid format this year due to construction at Pioneer Park. Overall, she emphasized the Alliance's role in enhancing downtown vibrancy through economic development, arts, and community-focused programming.

Isaac Atencio, Vice-Chair of the Business Advisory Board, provided an update on efforts to form a new citywide business coalition in Salt Lake City. Mr. Atencio explained that the group formerly known as Midtown has introduced an initial framework aimed at improving coordination and information sharing among business organizations and stakeholders across the city. An upcoming meeting will focus on forming workgroups and developing next steps, and he encouraged interested members to participate, emphasizing that the initiative is intended to be inclusive and citywide rather than tied to a specific geographic area.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.


sheridan.mordue (May 14, 2026 07:13:34 MDT)

Sheridan Mordue - Chair

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