



**VILLAGE OF BARTLETT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

MEETING AGENDA

**Meeting to be held at:
BARTLETT VILLAGE HALL
228 South Main Street, Bartlett, IL
September 8, 2025 – 1:00 PM**

PLEASE NOTE 1:00 PM STARTING TIME

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of the August 11, 2025 meeting minutes
4. Public Comment
5. TIF Database
6. New Business
7. Adjournment

Bartlett Economic Development Commission

Meeting Minutes August 11, 2025

1. Call to Order

The Bartlett Economic Development Commission meeting was called to order at 1:00 PM on the afternoon of August 11, 2025.

2. Roll Call

The following members were present: Jerry Kubaszko, Kirsten Erickson, Robert Perri, Bruce Suffern, Mary Smith (representing the Chamber of Commerce), Adam Lewensky, Robert Gorski, and Mike Densford.

Also present: Tony Fradin, Economic Development Coordinator, Scott Skrycki, Assistant Village Administrator, and Ricci Lucas, Community Engagement Coordinator. All members were accounted for, achieving a full attendance of eight out of eight.

3. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

The agenda proceeded with the approval of the minutes from the previous meeting held on July 14, 2025. Discussion arose regarding two necessary amendments to ensure accuracy. On page two, the sixth paragraph's last sentence incorrectly referred to the "beta grant program," which needed to be corrected to "BEDA."

Additionally, the adjournment time on the final page was listed as 7:40 p.m. instead of the correct 1:40 p.m. It was confirmed that these corrections would be made before posting the minutes on the village website.

A motion to approve the amended minutes was made and seconded. All members voted in favor, and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Public Comment

No public comments were made, as no individuals from the public were present to speak.

However, the commission took the opportunity to introduce Ricci Lucas, the newly appointed Community Engagement Coordinator. Her role will encompass community outreach, economic development initiatives, special events coordination, and other efforts that align closely with the commission's ongoing discussions over recent months. The commission warmly welcomed Ricci, expressing enthusiasm for her contributions to Bartlett's economic and community development goals.

5. Lake Street TIF Update

Tony Fradin provided a comprehensive update on the Lake Street Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, adopted by the village board in late fall of 2024 following an eligibility study and redevelopment plan.

The TIF has been a recurring topic at EDC meetings, focusing on mechanisms to drive redevelopment and strategic planning. The update was timely, coinciding with a recent *Daily Herald* article highlighting behind-the-scenes efforts in economic development and site preparation. The village board, staff, and EDC have been actively engaged with the TIF daily.

Tony noted the village's acquisition of a former gas station site at 555 West Lake Street approximately one month ago, which has generated significant interest, with dozens of inquiries via calls, meetings, walk-ins, and LinkedIn messages.

Most inquiries have come from gas station operators, though coffee shops and restaurants are also under consideration. The village plans to remove underground storage tanks and demolish the existing structure, with remediation costs estimated at \$260,000, which the village aims to recoup through future sales or redevelopment agreements.

The primary focus, however, was a larger, approximately 20-acre parcel, the largest development site under private ownership within the TIF, though not all acreage is developable due to potential wetlands.

The village has been pursuing this site for two months as a cornerstone for redevelopment. At a special board meeting two weeks prior, a purchase contract was presented and signed by both the village and the owners. The village is currently in the due diligence phase, involving frequent communications and environmental assessments.

On the previous Friday, environmental engineers from V3, a firm with extensive experience in the village and suburban areas, conducted soil borings on the site. Contract details, including pricing and timing, were negotiated between attorneys, with the purchase price published in the *Daily Herald*.

The site is zoned commercial, with the TIF redevelopment plan envisioning a mix of residential and commercial uses, particularly commercial along the frontage. Potential developments include townhomes, strip centers, out lots, or mixed-use projects, though a large shopping center remains a possibility.

The site's location was described as west of Tom's, southbound on North Bartlett Road at the T-intersection, with a map included in the meeting packet for reference. The property is owned by a private investor, not the Department of Transportation.

Closing on the property is anticipated within two months, pending the due diligence period.

Discussions with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) regarding an adjacent property are in early stages, and a recent bid opening addressed phase one of the Oak Avenue realignment, which could enhance the site's value.

Commissioners praised the village's proactive approach, led by Mayor Gunsteen and the board, to control development types and position the village as an initiator rather than a regulator or facilitator. The site is seen as a major gateway to the village, with hopes for a legitimate project proposal within a year.

6. Upcoming Events and Economic Development

The commission discussed upcoming events and their role in fostering economic development. Tony highlighted how events like the 4th of July, National Night Out, Oktoberfest, and Merry and Bright engage businesses through parades, booths, and promotions, driving foot traffic and sales to nearby establishments.

The Cocoa Crawl, with approximately 30 participating businesses last year, was cited as a prime example. These events require significant planning from village staff, including Scott Skrycki, Ricci Lucas, and Tony, and contribute to economic vitality.

Studies from planning and economic development journals indicate that such events can significantly boost revenues, particularly for food-related businesses, by attracting hundreds or thousands of attendees.

The village's event calendar, accessible on its website, lists numerous activities over the next two months, including movies, garage sales, pet events, food trucks, Touch-a-Truck, Bartlett Depot Museum events, Smoke and Irons, and car shows.

Commissioners were encouraged to promote these events to counter perceptions that "there's nothing to do" in Bartlett and to submit events for posting on the Discover Bartlett Facebook page.

Commissioner Suffern emphasized the value of daytime events, which boost slower periods like lunch hours for restaurants, citing Bartlett Heritage Days, where daytime activities tripled or quadrupled business volumes compared to evenings. Mary Smith from the Chamber of Commerce highlighted opportunities at Oktoberfest, with approximately 10 exhibitor spots available (four remaining), priced at \$200 for chamber members and \$300 for non-members, ideal for service or product-based businesses excluding food vendors. The commission recognized the branding and economic benefits of these events, including parking coordination that exposes attendees to local shopping centers.

7. Commercial Vacancy Update

Tony presented a commercial vacancy update, leveraging the village's subscription to a municipal analytics program, including CoStar reports, which provide data on traffic counts, spending patterns, retail analysis, and demographics.

Shared among most DuPage County villages, this program offers quarterly insights, replacing annual reports. CoStar categorizes 79 commercial buildings in Bartlett, with a current vacancy rate of 7.7%, up slightly due to a minus-2% net absorption over the past 12 months, primarily attributed to the vacant CVS on Army Trail Road and a few other vacancies.

The capitalization rate is 7.9%, implying a roughly 12.5-year return on investment for commercial properties, a figure that has been compressed in recent years. Average base rent is approximately \$19 per square foot, varying by location—lower in downtown areas (around \$15-16) and higher in DuPage County areas like Stearns and 59 or Army Trail and 59 (closer to \$30), with CAM charges (including taxes and maintenance) higher in Cook County.

Five shopping centers are fully occupied: Bartlett Commons (now filled with a new tenant), Bartlett Orchards, Galleria of Bartlett (featuring Beef Shack and Atlas Chicken), Bartlett Plaza (in front of Home Depot with Starbucks), and Bartlett Square (including Army Trail Animal Hospital and Pietanza's).

Streets of Bartlett has one remaining vacancy, the end unit formerly a medical office and Annie's hot dog spot. Higher vacancy rates persist at Devon Prospect Plaza (over 20%), Oakfield Center (about 20%), and Stearns Crossing, despite active brokerage.

Positive developments include interest from a large shopping center owner in upgrading Oakfield Center, leveraging its TIF status. Additional indicators were included in the meeting packet, with full reports available upon request. Tony expressed enthusiasm for using the program's economic impact studies for future analyses, such as projecting revenues from projects like the approved railroad apartment development and invited commissioners to request specific data.

8. New Business

The commission welcomed two new businesses to Bartlett. Mathnasium, a math tutoring center, filled the last vacancy in Bartlett Commons with a ribbon cutting the previous week. El Ancla, a seafood-focused Mexican restaurant featuring cocktails, opened a few days ago in Streets of Bartlett at the former O'Hare's location.

Commissioners praised El Ancla's menu, ambiance (featuring turquoise accents and octopus motifs), and friendly staff, describing it as potentially the best restaurant in Bartlett and a unique Michoacán-style addition. Efforts will be made to involve El Ancla in events like Restaurant Week for greater exposure.

Other forthcoming businesses include a wood-fired pizza place in Westgate Commons and a stationary store at 138 South Oak, replacing a paper goods store. Tony reflected on the vacancy rate's improvement from over 20% a decade ago to the current 7.7%, crediting strategic measures, though noting challenges with vacancies like the CVS on Army Trail Road, which involves complex leases expiring in early 2027.

A follow-up was provided on a BEDA grant for TL's signage, showcasing the impressive \$30,000 installation, which was well received by attendees.

9. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Erickson, seconded by Commissioner Densford, and unanimously approved by all commissioners. The meeting adjourned at 1:50 PM.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 3, 2025
TO: Members of the Bartlett Economic Development Commission
FROM: Tony Fradin, Economic Development Coordinator
RE: Lake St TIF Database

Background

Following the establishment of the Lake Street TIF District, village staff compiled detailed information on all properties within the district. Recognizing the need for a centralized system to manage communications with brokers, property owners, and other interested parties, a collaborative team from Administration, GIS, and Planning and Development Services was formed to develop a database.

Internal Dashboard

GIS created an internal dashboard that enables staff to log correspondence notes through a survey form. The dashboard organizes these records, offering filtering and listing options for efficient review and tracking of interactions with stakeholders.

By consolidating information in one accessible location, it provides the Planning and Development Services team with context from Economic Development activities, while giving Economic Development greater insight into planning matters. The primary users of this internal database will be the Planning and Development Services Director, the Assistant Village Administrator, the Economic Development Coordinator, and GIS staff.

Public Mapping Application

To promote transparency and support redevelopment, GIS also developed a public-facing mapping application. This tool offers property-specific details, including drone imagery and video, to help potential buyers, developers, and other parties better understand opportunities within the TIF District.

Its goal is to generate interest, attract investment, and facilitate development in the area.

Going Forward

In addition to centralizing data, the database will function as a progress tracker and marketing resource. Updates on site cleanups, demolitions, and groundbreakings will be made in real time. The public-facing application will be linked to a QR code featured in

real estate journals, broker communications, business cards, promotional materials, and other outlets.

This will allow the Economic Development team to share direct links with local and regional developers, brokers, construction groups, site selectors, financial and legal professionals specializing in land use and municipal incentives, as well as organizations such as ICSC, DCEO, and regional chambers of commerce.