

**Northwest Citizens Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC)
January 8, 2026**

Hybrid Meeting: Legends Center, 5130 Soutel Dr., 32208 and via ZOOM Webinar

Meeting Attendance

CPAC Members: CPAC Vice Chair, Vanessa Cullins Hopkins – PEABO Corp.; Sallie Barnes – Robinson’s Addition Neighborhood Association; Elaine Billups – Better Living Community Association, Inc.; Victor Coleman – Central Fairfax Community Association; Roxsan Currier – Marietta Senior Center; Constance DeV Vaughn – Woodstock Neighborhood Association; Jacqueline Harrington – Grand Park; Velma Rounsville – Timber Oaks HOA; Bettye Scott – Ribault Manor; Ginny Winters – Pickettville Civic Club; Cynthia Brown – Robinson’s Addition Neighborhood Association; Leroy Kelly – Carver International; Bertha Richardson – Better Living Community Association, Inc.

Excused: Bervinda Mincey – Moncrief Springs Neighborhood Association.; NW CPAC Chair, Rhonda Boyd – Timber Oaks HOA; NW; Pamela Strickland – Jacksonville North Trout River Manor.

Staff and Elected Officials: Paula Renfro – Duval County Public Schools; Paige DeBold – FDOT; Lieutenant Scott Holechek – JFRD; Yuri Blackburn – JPL; Commander Harry Massey – JSO Zone 5; Erin Abney – Planning Department; Helena Parola – Director Planning and Development; Brittany Norris – Mayor’s Office.

Guests: Ernest Smith; Dana Lomas; Rochelle Gross; Leo and Marilyn Brown; Jeanett Coleman; Antonia Bryant; Larry Solomon; Aldreda Deason Butlet; Marshay Wellington; Chandra Miller; Carole Gamble.

Zoom Participants: Bradley Straley; Doretha Tompkins; Dr. Brenda Boston Hudson; Kimberly Mal; Shirley Thomas; Lana Suggs Champion; Roxie McLeod; D.; Samsung; Motorola.

Meeting Summary

1. **Call Meeting to Order and Verify Quorum:** Northwest CPAC Vice Chair, Vanessa Cullins Hopkins, called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Edwina Henry verified that a quorum was present.

Pledge of Allegiance

2. **Approval of the previous Meeting Summary:** The November 13, 2025, meeting summary was approved as written with any corrections.
3. **Presentation: Helena Parola**, Director of the Planning and Development Department; Erin Abney, Chief of Current Planning and Brittany Norris, Mayor’s Office.

Ms. Parola discussed findings from a 2023 Land Development Regulations (LDR) Update on Targeting Growth and Why It Matters. (Planning Department/Office of Resilience)

Several challenges prompted this review/update:

- Increasing Flood Risks
- The Growth of Jacksonville’s population

- Housing costs are becoming more difficult

Committee Goals:

- Increase resilience to flood risks
- Increase housing opportunities
- Protect neighborhood character while accommodating growth

Balancing Risk and Growth. Rather than implementing mandates, the committee focused on creating a framework to guide development outcomes.

Incentive Based Approach:

- Encourage desired outcomes
- Provide clearer expectations for developers and neighborhoods
- Tie flexibility directly to public benefit

Identified Target Growth Area:

- Better suited to accommodate growth
- Lower flood risk and better infrastructure access
- Enables housing opportunities connected to transit
- Protects existing single-family neighborhoods

Defining Target Growth Areas:

- Outside of flood risk areas, including FEMA flood zones

Focus Area:

- Close to high-ridership JTA routes and/or the Emerald Train
- Within Urban Priority Area and Urban Area of the City's Comprehensive plan

Zoning Compatibility:

- Excludes airport accident/noise zones
- Excludes low density residential areas (single-family subdivisions)
- Excludes existing zoning overlays

Incentives which may be offered:

- Density bonuses (more units per site); height flexibility; increased lot coverage; smaller lot sizes; parking flexibility
- Incentives are only granted if a project delivers measurable public benefit

Resilient design looks like:

- More permeable surfaces to reduce runoff
- Landscaping that absorbs and manages stormwater
- Capturing the first three inches of rainfall on-site
- On-site renewable energy contributions
- Shaded parking and hardscape to reduce heat

Neighborhood Protections:

- This framework does not apply to all neighborhoods
- Does not infringe on existing single-family neighborhood character

Next Steps:

- Legislation and continued public engagement
- City Council consideration and votes

CPAC Role:

- Ask questions and provide feedback to the Planning Department
- Encourage attendance at the public hearings (will forward dates as soon as they are set).
- Please reach out to your CPAC Coordinator with any questions and she will forward them to us.

Helena Parola - HParola@coj.net

4. Elected Officials Report: None.

5. Chair's Report: tabled, due to absence of the CPAC Chair.

6. Staff Reports: (three-minute time limit)

- **JSO – Commander Harry Massey:** stated that he does not have data for District 6.

Overall Calls for Service: 9,168

Crimes Against Persons: past 30 days: 267 incidents – previous 30 days: 233

Aggravated Assaults: past 30 days: 8 incidents – previous 30 days: 57 & 26 arrests

NOTE: JSO is hiring: <https://careers-jaxsheriff.icims.com/jobs>

Commander Harry Massey JSODistrict5@Jaxsheriff.org

- **DCPS – Paula Renfro** made several announcements:
 - Kimberly Brown, Principal of Northwestern Legends Elementary School was named Principal of the Year. Within two years, Northwestern legends Elementary School went from an F Grade to a B Grade.
 - Magnet Schools of Choice applications are open through January 31, 2026.
 - Congratulations to Raines High School Vikings – Class 3A State Champions!
 - Schools of Hope, where charters can come in and co-locate in a DPCS building at no charge – twenty-five proposals from charter schools were submitted in November and 23 have since been withdrawn. The two remaining proposals are for Merrill Road Elementary and Fort Caroline Middle School. During the application process if there are “impractical reasons” why the charter school could not co-locate, DCPS will submit those reasons.
 - In the Trout River Manor Neighborhood, Ability Housing did finally purchase the Lake Forest property (12/17/2025). There is a meeting tonight (1/8/2026) to talk about plans, starting with the clean up and demolition and to start building for Ability Housing. Pamela Strickland is the NW CPAC Representative for the North Jacksonville Trout River Manor and is most likely attending that meeting.
 - Susie E. Tolbert – voted to be demolished.
 - R.V. Daniels is still on the market and the status of bids is unknown.

- Annie R. Morgan – there is a contract for purchase.
- FSCJ provides a program to assist those students interested in earning a GED.

Paula Renfro – renfrop@duvalschools.org

- **MCCD** – Chad Owens, Zone 5 Supervisor, shared the following information:
 - Zone 5 Code Officers completed over 1,000 inspections
 - MCCD has recently hired new officers and is currently realigning staff. He will bring officers to the next NW CPAC Meeting to introduce them.
 - Supervisor Owens met with the NW CPAC Blight Subcommittee earlier this afternoon and stated that he is working on a system to address the backlog of cases.
 - Supervisor Owens will be meeting next week with the Robinsons Addition Neighborhood.
 - His goals are to get cases addressed, make sure that MCCD better service and inform everyone of what they do.
 - NW CPAC Vice Chair Cullins Hopkins noted that the Blight Subcommittee Chair, Dr. Brenda Boston Hudson will give the subcommittee report later in the meeting.

Chad Owens – ChadO@coj.net

- **JPL** – Yuri Blackburn announced a new library book club and other programs:
 - Local branches can help you learn a new language, which is a free services accessed through your library (card) account.
 - The library can help you preserve photos film, cassettes, VHS tapes, etc., at the Memory Lab at the Main Public Library. Call for an appointment
 - Monday, January 19, 2026, is the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday and all JPL branches will be closed for the day.
 - AARP is offering free tax preparation assistance at selected branches. Fliers were distributed. Appointments are needed. Call (904) 701-3462 to find a location near you or <https://jaxpubliclibrary.org/blog/free-tax-preparation-available-aarp>

Yuri Blackburn – Yjewitt@coj.net

- **FDOT** – Paige DeBold stated that she is Derek Dixon’s replacement as the CPAC Representative. She commented on a question emailed by a CPAC Member and stated that FDOT is addressing the lack of height markings on overpasses.

Paige DeBold – Paige.debold@dot.state.fl.us

- **JFRD** – Lieutenant Scott Holechek stated that JFRD had a very busy fire season and it hasn’t calmed down. The Fire Marshal wants the following topics discussed at CPACs:
 - Space Heater Safety – be careful refueling space heaters and note that the CO2 emitted from them is an odorless gas and can be poisonous. Getting a CO2 detector is recommended, along with getting a fire alarm/smoke detector. Call 630-CITY to request a smoke detector and JFRD will come out and install it – free of charge.
 - The JFRD Public Education Division has materials and a public education trailer that can be requested, along with a fire engine for safety demonstrations, etc.
 - In response to a question – JEA maintains fire hydrants and JFRD tests them.

Lieutenant Scott Holechek – ScottBH@coj.net

- **Neighborhoods Department** – Edwina Henry made two announcements:
 - The Neighborhood's Department is partnering with CPAC Chairs and various COJ departments and divisions to launch a series of district-wide block parties. Each CPAC will have the opportunity to organize the neighborhood associations, the HOAs and nonprofits in your district to put on a fantastic, informational, and entertainment-filled event.

Since the Urban Core CPAC is in Planning District 1, they will be first. The District block parties will be scheduled for every other month and NW CPAC, representing district 5, will be scheduled for October 24. You are all invited to attend the First District Block Party, scheduled for Saturday, February 28 at A. Philip Randolph Heritage Park. Details to follow. The Greater Arlington/Beaches CPAC is in District 2 and their District Block Party is scheduled for April.

So, we are asking each CPAC Chair and Vice Chair to form your planning subcommittee and start thinking about what your event will look like. The Neighborhoods Department will work with other COJ departments and agencies to participate in this opportunity for community engagement and education. For example, JFRD may bring their fire safety trailer or a fire engine.

- The Mayor's African American Advisory Board is hosting a Black History Month Program at the Main Public Library, in the Hicks Auditorium. Fliers are included in your meeting packet. The Board is conducting a community poll seeking nominations for unsung heroes in the Jacksonville community. The Board will be recognizing those who participated in the making of the Jacksonville Legends Visual Art Installation that runs here at the Legends Center. If you have not viewed it, please do. It is a video project onto the Legends Center Building facing the parking lot.

Edwina Henry – EHenry@coj.net

7. Old Business: None.

8. New Business: None.

9. Subcommittee and Liaison Reports:

- **Land Use and Zoning** – Roxsan Currier, Chair: several applications were reviewed and no action was taken.
- **Taxation, Revenue & Utilization of Expenditures (T.R.U.E.) Commission** – Velma Rounsville, Representative: The Commission received a report from the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department. The department's inventory includes 400 parks and facilities; 600 athletic fields and has roughly 1500,000 participants, annually. Funding is distributed equally among all city parks. There is a concern for the impact to parks and recreation if property taxes were eliminated. It was also stated that mowing and landscaping issues were addressed and corrected. The next speaker at the TRUE Commission will be Colin Tarbert, CEO of DIA and he will speak on the Pearl Street Project.

- **Blight** – MCCD Supervisor Owens provided good feedback to the subcommittee and there were a number of issues closed. The Subcommittee is working very hard to streamline what constitutes a “blight” case that makes it onto the Blight Spreadsheet. Subcommittee Chair, Dr. Brenda Boston Hudson stated that the subcommittee met earlier this afternoon and appreciated having a one-on-one with Supervisor Owens, who has been with the subcommittee since its founding in August 2025.

The subcommittee is happy to report 10 closed cases, nine cases were removed with referrals; which leaves six open cases. We want to clean up our neighborhoods, so if there are any blight issues, don’t hesitate to reach out to the subcommittee and we will certainly assist you with your issue or complaint.

- CPAC Vice Chair Cullins Hopkins asked for a list of names to form the District Block Party Steering Committee:
 - Velma Rounsville
 - Elaine Billups
 - Constance DeVaughn
 - Rhonda Boyd
 - Dr. Brenda Boston Hudson
 - Non NW CPAC Members
 - Carol Gamble
 - Marsha ray Wellington
 - Chandra Miller
 - Larry Solomon

NW CPAC Vice Chair Cullins Hopkins thanked everyone who volunteered and stated that the expectation is that we will need you to spread the word throughout your networks, as we want this to be the biggest, best block party that the city will ever have!

10. Public Comment/Announcement (three-minute time limit)

- Larry Solomon announced that he has four pieces of his art on display in the Historical Museum in Waycross, GA, and he welcomes everyone to come check it out. He also stated that he has a property on New Kings Road that he would like to convert to a museum. The exhibit runs from January 20, 2026, through February 20, 2026. [Black Heritage Exhibit | Okefenokee Heritage Center](#)

11. Motion to Adjourn: It was properly moved and seconded, meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Next Northwest CPAC Meeting: Thursday, February 12, 2026, at 6 pm. Please note that the Blight Subcommittee meets at 3:30 pm.