News

Mansfield joins CMDA, prioritizing family housing



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The town of Mansfield is one of the newest members of the Connecticut Municipal Development Authority, according to town council meeting minutes.

CMDA is a "statewide quasi-public organization that works with towns and cities to increase housing production in neighborhoods that are mixed-use, walkable, and well-served by transit," according to its website. The organization currently works with 39 municipalities across the state.

CMDA was first introduced to the council at their Nov. 24, 2025, meeting by Executive Director David Kooris. He came to the meeting to present the organization to the council and offer an opportunity to opt in. Kooris told the council that CMDA would provide funding for potential housing development in Mansfield's eligible downtown areas, including Downtown Storrs, the Four Corners, the East Brook Mall and the area of King Hill Road and North Eagleville Road.

After approval from the Planning and Zoning Commission at a meeting in December, the town council voted to officially join CMDA at their meeting on Jan. 12.

Jennifer Kaufman, Mansfield's director of planning and development and a recent appointee to the CMDA board of directors, said that the council felt like there was no downside to opting in. CMDA's role is purely advisory. None of their recommendations are binding.

"[CMDA is] taking a look at our zoning regulations, and they're going to provide recommendations [for] if our zoning regulations are likely to increase housing in these downtown areas," Kaufman said. "It's up to the local Planning and Zoning Commission to enact those. They can take the recommendations or not."

Mansfield is already having to take another look at their zoning regulations in compliance with HB 8002, a housing bill passed by a special session last fall requiring municipalities to adopt their own housing growth plans or comply with a regional growth plan. Kaufman said that the goals of this bill and that of CMDA go hand-in-hand.

"Our planning and zipping commission felt like, well, we may as well learn from this group and figure out if it's something we should be doing," she said. "We're going to get some free technical assistance, and then if we do decide to establish a district... then we'll work with CMDA to assist us in developing the type of housing that the town wants."



Jennifer Kaufman, the director of planning and development for the town of Mansfield. The town has recently decided to join the CMDA for recommendations on zoning. PHOTO COURTESY OF JENNIFER KAUFMAN ON LINKEDIN

Kaufman said that the town is hoping to add more family housing to these downtown areas to provide more opportunities for people to "age in place in Mansfield."

"I think we have so much student housing that's approved right now," she said. "And I hear this all the time from the more long-term residents that we need housing for families and people and seniors."

Landmark Properties, the company that owns the Standard at Four Corners which opened in fall 2025, was recently approved to build another student housing complex, The Mark Mansfield. It's planned for completion in 2028.

Kaufman said that the town and CMDA are still in the process of defining the next steps. She will meet with the organization to discuss specific goals and focus areas. She said that CMDA is just one opportunity for the town to work on meeting their residents' needs.

"Mansfield is trying to just serve the needs of our residents. Ultimately, we want to make sure that things that we do align with this vision for our community..." Kaufman said. "[CMDA is] one tool in the box, but it's not the only tool. It's one of many that we're working on."

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Tuesday, February 10, 2026

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