



ORLAND CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, December 2, 2025

ALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Matt Romano at 6:00 PM.

ROLL CALL

Councilmembers Present: Councilmembers John McDermott, Terrie Barr, Vice Mayor JC Tolle and Mayor Matt Romano

Councilmembers Absent: None

Staff Present: City Manager Joe Goodman, City Attorney Scott Drexel, City Clerk Jennifer Schmitke

Arrived at 6:30 pm: Police Chief Joe Vlach, Library Director Jody Meza

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENTATION

Councilmembers congratulated the Orland High School volleyball team for their hard work and dedication, which led to their championship title.

Mayor Romano presented certificates of recognition to the Orland High School Girls' Volleyball Team in honor of their 2025 Northern Section Championship title.

CITIZENS COMMENTS ON CLOSED SESSION - None

MEETING ADJOURNED TO CLOSED SESSION AT 6:10 PM.

CLOSED SESSION ENDED AND RECONVENED TO REGULAR SESSION AT 6:31 PM.

REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION - *Mayor Romano announced that Council met with City Staff and City Attorney Scott Drexel regarding possible significant exposure to litigation, as noted on the Closed Session agenda, Mayor Romano shared that there was no reportable action.*

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Valerie Johnson, a county resident and representative of Hidden Treasures Cat Sanctuary, provided a brief clinic update, reiterated her interest in partnering with the City, and expressed her desire to meet

with the ad hoc committee regarding the voucher program. She also requested to be placed on an upcoming agenda.

Orland resident Helen Tolle announced that Epic Barbell will host a blood drive on December 16, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the gym on South Street.

Orland resident Ron Lane reported that he is collaborating with local schools to collect food donations for the local food bank.

APPOINTMENT TO FILL CITY COUNCIL VACANCY AND ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF OFFICE

City Attorney Scott Drexel provided a brief overview of the council vacancy that opened at the beginning of November and outlined the Council's decision to appoint a new councilmember rather than hold a special election. Mr. Drexel explained the next steps the Council will take in the appointment process.

The Mayor invited the three applicants who submitted applications to step forward and address the Council. Only two applicants came forward.

Orland resident Alex Enriquez spoke about his background and shared his reasons for seeking a seat on the City Council.

Orland resident Froylan Mendoza introduced himself and explained why he would like the opportunity to serve on the City Council.

Councilmembers discussed both candidates, noting that each appeared highly qualified. However, the Council ultimately agreed that Alex Enriquez should be appointed, as he was the next highest vote-getter on the most recent ballot less than a year ago.

ACTION: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Tolle, to move to appoint Alex Enriquez to fill the vacant Council seat immediately. Motion carried by a voice vote 4-0.

OATH OF AFFIRMATION OF ALLEGIANCE FOR NEW COUNCILMEMBER

City Clerk Jennifer Schmitke administered the Oath of Affirmation to the newly elected Councilmember Alex Enriquez. Councilmember Enriquez will serve a one-year term.

ELECTION OF MAYOR AND VICE MAYOR FOR 2025-2026

City Clerk Schmitke opened the floor for nominations for Mayor for the 2025-2026 term. Councilmember Barr nominated Mayor Romano, Councilmember McDermott nominated Councilmember Tolle, then Councilmember Romano nominated Councilmember Barr. With no additional nominations, the nomination period was officially closed.

ACTION: Upon roll call vote, Mayor Romano received three affirmative votes and two non-affirmative votes for Mayor. (Ayes: Councilmembers Barr, Enriquez, Romano, Nays: Councilmembers McDermott and Tolle) Motion failed due to Mayor Romano needing 4/5's to have a second term.

ACTION: Upon roll call vote, Vice Mayor Tolle received two affirmative votes

and three non-affirmative votes for Mayor. (Ayes: Councilmembers McDermott and Tolle. Nays: Councilmembers Enriquez, Romano and Mayor Barr) Motion failed 2-3.

ACTION: Upon roll call vote, Councilmember Barr received three affirmative votes and two non-affirmative votes for Mayor. (Ayes: Councilmembers Barr, Enriquez, Romano, Nays: Councilmembers McDermott and Tolle) Motion passed and Councilmember Barr was declared Mayor for 2025-2026.

City Clerk Schmitke called for nominations for Vice Mayor for the 2025-2026 term. Mayor Barr nominated Councilmember Romano, Vice Mayor Tolle nominated Councilmember Enriquez. With no additional nominations, the nomination period was closed.

ACTION: Upon roll call vote Councilmember Romano received one affirmative vote and four non-affirmative votes for Vice Mayor. (Ayes: Mayor Barr; Nays: Councilmember McDermott, Tolle, Romano and Enriquez) Motion failed 4-1.

ACTION: Upon roll call vote Councilmember Enriquez received five affirmative votes and zero non-affirmative votes for Vice Mayor. (Ayes: Mayor Barr, Councilmembers McDermott, Tolle, Romano, and Enriquez) Motion passed 5-0 and Councilmember Enriquez was declared Vice Mayor for the 2025-2026 year.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Warrant List from November 4, 2025 (Payable Obligations)
- B. Approve City Council Minutes for November 18, 2025
- C. Receive and File Arts Commission Minutes from October 15, 2025
- D. Carnegie Center Renovation Update
- E. DWR Emergency Water Project Update
- F. Council Chambers Technology Reliability Update
- G. Downtown Water Mains and Central Well Modernization Update
- H. Approve and Adopt Second Reading of Ordinance 2025-05: Title 17 Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment – Review and Recommend the addition of text to General Commercial (C-2) Section of the Orland Municipal Code (OMC) Title 17 to differentiate the difference between residential uses generally (17.40.040(D) and Dwellings located on the second floor (17.40.030(A)(7)) of commercial structures specifically.
- I. Approve and Adopt Second Reading of Ordinance 2025-06: Amending Chapter 10.32 of the Orland Municipal Code Relating to Abandoned, Wrecked, Dismantled, and Inoperative Vehicles

Councilmember McDermott asked to pull items D, E and G for further discussion.

Michelea Ponce asked to remove a statement from the prior minutes that she stated was not accurate.

Vice Mayor Enriquez abstained from voting on the consent calendar.

ACTION: Councilmember Romano moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Tolle, to approve items A, B, C, F, G, H and I. Motion carried by a voice vote 4-0-1. (Vice Mayor Enriquez abstained)

City Manager Joe Goodman explained that he added updates to the consent calendar to provide the community with more information.

Mr. Goodman provided an update on the Carnegie Center renovations, stating that he has met with the contractors and emphasized that while the City does not currently have sufficient funds, it remains committed to completing necessary renovations in a financially feasible manner. He noted that he has been working with Public Works and the City Engineer to make the current ramp ADA accessible and shared that a plan will be brought back to Council once the City Engineer completes the design.

Mayor Barr inquired about the feasibility of installing an exterior grade lift. Mr. Goodman suggested that a temporary solution could be modifying the existing exterior ramp to meet ADA requirements.

Councilmember McDermott emphasized that ADA accessibility is a significant issue and suggested that Council meetings be held in a more accessible location to ensure the disabled community is not excluded.

Councilmember Romano spoke about the community ancestors who created and built the Carnegie Center, expressed concern about building maintenance, and suggested using Measure J funds to properly address the renovations.

Mayor Barr agreed that the Carnegie Center is an important community building, concurred with Councilmember Romano regarding the need for prompt attention, and stated that she supports the temporary ADA fix. She directed staff to provide cost estimates for the Carnegie renovation project and ADA improvements.

Orland resident Earl Megginson asked if the Carnegie Foundation is still in operation and whether the building was funded locally or through the Foundation. Mr. Goodman confirmed the Foundation is still active, and Mayor Barr added that funds were raised 50/50 by the Carnegie Foundation and local contributors, including the Orland Women's Improvement Group. Mr. Megginson suggested contacting the Carnegie Foundation and local organizations for potential grant funding. Mayor Barr directed the City Manager to have staff draft a letter to the Carnegie Foundation to explore funding opportunities for the renovation.

Orland resident Erin Passero emphasized the importance of advocating for minorities and acknowledged the building's significance to the community. She suggested that Council meet at an alternate location until renovations are complete.

Shepphird Associates Architect representative William Shepphird shared that he is working closely with contractors to reduce project costs and thanked the community and Council for their patience regarding the Carnegie project.

Mr. Mendoza highlighted the importance of ADA accessibility and reiterated the potential need to hold Council meetings at an alternate location until the project is complete.

County resident Joannie Woods suggested that the Council consider the Carnegie Center as a future City Hall location.

Mr. Goodman also provided a brief review of the quarterly report from the City Engineer, noting that most projects are on track for completion by February 2026, except for the water tank, which is delayed until July 2026 due to the late arrival of an electrical component.

He gave a verbal update on issues with the central street well, explaining the need to redirect \$800,000 from the Walker Street well project due to grant restrictions. City Engineer Paul Rabo is coordinating

with the Department of Water Resources to ensure the grant can be used for upgrades to the central street well and replacement of aging water mains and valves in the downtown area. Construction drawings are being prepared, with work expected to begin in early January and conclude by March 31, 2026.

Mr. Lane asked whether roads would be impacted; Mr. Goodman clarified that the work will occur in the downtown alleys.

ACTION: Councilmember Romano moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Tolle, to approve items D, E, and G from the consent calendar. Motion carried by a voice vote 4-0-1. (Vice Mayor Enriquez abstained)

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Appointments/Reappointments to City Commissions

City Clerk Schmitke presented the following community members for confirmation by City Council:

Public Works and Safety Commission – Two (2) vacancies with new terms expiring December 31, 2027.

Applicants: Monica Rossman and David Kelly (Consider Reappointment)

Action: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Councilmember Tolle to approve reappointments of the above listed with terms expiring December 31, 2027. Upon voice vote, the motion carried 5-0.

Recreation Commission – Two (2) vacancies with new terms expiring December 31, 2027

Applicants: Jason Ovitz (Consider Reappointment) and one open seat.

Action: Councilmember Tolle moved, seconded by Councilmember McDermott to approve reappointments of the above listed with terms expiring December 31, 2027. Upon voice vote, the motion carried 5-0.

Economic Development Commission (EDC) – Two (2) vacancies with new terms expiring December 31, 2027

Applicants: Ron Lane (Consider Reappointment) and one open seat.

Action: Councilmember Tolle moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Enriquez, to approve reappointments of the above-listed with terms expiring December 31, 2027. Upon voice vote, the motion carried 5-0.

Library Commission – Two (2) vacancies with new terms expiring December 31, 2027

Applicants: Mary Viegas and Sherry Romano (Consider reappointment), and two open seats

Action: Councilmember Tolle moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Enriquez, to approve reappointments of the above-listed with terms expiring December 31, 2027. Upon voice vote, the motion carried 5-0.

City Clerk Schmitke requested the Council's direction regarding one open seat on the Planning Commission, asking if they would like staff to reach out to the past applicants or open up the seat to the public again. Council directed staff to open the seat to the public.

Action: Mayor Barr moved, seconded by Councilmember Romano to reopen the Planning Commission vacant seat. Upon voice vote, the motion carried 5-0.

City Council 2026 Appointments to Boards and Commissions

City Clerk Schmitke requested that Council members review the current appointments and submit their preferences and availability for each Board and Commission to the Mayor. This will allow City staff to prepare a draft list by December 11th, ahead of the next Council meeting scheduled for December 16th.

824 Fourth St. Building & Police Station Expansion Feasibility Study

City Manager Joe Goodman presented a request for City Council authorization to conduct a feasibility study evaluating municipal facility needs. The study will explore relocating City Hall and Council Chambers into the former Purity Foods building at 824 Fourth Street and converting the existing City Hall into a modern Police Department headquarters.

He explained that the Police Department has outgrown its current facility and lacks adequate workspace, security features, and room for future growth. City Hall and the Council Chambers also have outdated layouts, limited accessibility, and insufficient space.

The feasibility study will assess building suitability, space planning, conceptual layouts, MEP (mechanical, electrical, plumbing) systems, architectural renderings, and prepare a preliminary cost estimate. The work is expected to take 6–8 weeks.

The study cost will not exceed \$31,000 and will be funded by development impact fees. Staff will return to Council with next steps if the project is found feasible.

Ms. Johnson expressed her support for restoring City-owned buildings and ensuring they are both functional and visually appealing.

Orland resident Jan Walker voiced her support for rehabilitating the building at 824 Fourth Street, noting that the project would help revitalize the downtown area.

Councilmembers discussed the item and asked several questions regarding the feasibility study.

ACTION: Councilmember Romano moved, seconded by Councilmember Tolle, to approve the feasibility study not to exceed \$31,000 funded from development impact fees allocated for improvements to City Hall, public safety facilities, and community facilities. Motion carried by a voice vote 5-0.

Authorization to Initiate Annexation and CEQA Analysis for the West Orland Annexation Project

City Manager Joe Goodman presented a request for City Council authorization to begin CEQA review and prepare an Annexation Plan for the proposed West Orland Annexation Project. Property owners have requested annexation of approximately 37 acres west of I-5 and north of South Street. While no development is currently proposed, annexation would allow the City to apply its zoning standards, plan infrastructure, and support future highway-commercial and light industrial uses that could benefit local employment, economic activity, and traffic circulation.

The consultant will prepare the Annexation Plan, required LAFCo documentation, and CEQA analysis using streamlined CEQA Guidelines Section 15183. Work will include service plans, water supply analysis, housing need assessment, and an Environmental Checklist. The process is expected to take about 8 weeks.

The total cost is \$39,600, funded by transportation development impact fees.

Mr. Goodman recommended that the Council authorize the work, approve the consultant proposal, and direct staff to submit the annexation application to LAFCo once completed.

Orland resident Margaret Van Warmerdam expressed concerns about the City funding improvements for a County property proposed for annexation, questioning whether it could constitute a gift of public funds and potentially set a precedent for future development.

Councilmembers inquired whether other cities typically fund pre-development planning and annexation work. City Attorney Drexel stated he would need to further research the matter. Councilmembers noted that approximately 50% of the City's revenue is generated from the I-5 corridor and that the proposed annexation area could be a prime location for future businesses such as hotels and restaurants. They agreed that having the property pre-annexed would make it more attractive to prospective investors. Council also discussed potential challenges if development interest does not materialize.

Mr. Mendoza agreed with the Council's perspective, adding that freeway-adjacent development would help draw more visitors into the downtown area.

Orland resident Billy Irvin asked questions regarding traffic access and whether any private property would be acquired as part of the project.

ACTION: Councilmember Romano moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Enriquez, to: (1) direct staff to initiate the West Orland Annexation Project and complete the Annexation Plan and CEQA documentation; (2) approve the consultant proposal in the amount of \$39,600, funded by transportation development impact fees; and (3) direct staff to submit the annexation application to LAFCo upon completion of the required documents. The motion carried by voice vote, 5–0.

Establishment of the Community Enrichment Ad Hoc Committee

City Manager Joe Goodman presented a proposal to establish a Community Enrichment Ad Hoc Committee. The committee's purpose is to expand community events, activate public spaces, and enhance Orland's social and civic life.

The committee will engage diverse community voices, support downtown activation, promote public gatherings, maintain a neutral mission (not focusing on cultural or identity advocacy), and help execute Council priorities.

The fiscal impact is minimal, limited to staff time.

Mr. Goodman recommended that the Council approve the resolution establishing the committee and authorize staff to begin the member application process.

Orland resident Coreen Deleon expressed concern about a section of the policy and requested clarification on the provision stating that the committee “will not engage in cultural advocacy.” Ms. Deleon shared that her goal is to support a committee that brings the community together to celebrate and learn about all cultures. City Manager Goodman clarified that the intent of the language is to ensure the committee does not advocate for one culture or group over another, emphasizing that the committee is intended to be neutral.

Ms. Passero voiced her support for the committee and agreed that the policy language should be reviewed and improved for clarity.

Mr. Mendoza suggested that the Council finalize the policy after the committee is formed and its members can provide input.

Ms. Woods asked whether the committee’s focus would be on promoting cultural events and celebrations or serving as a broader community group for all residents.

Mr. Lane inquired whether City commissioners could participate on the committee and suggested including a representative from the Glenn County Fairgrounds.

Councilmembers agreed that the policy language needs refinement and emphasized that the current draft is intended as a starting point. They expressed enthusiasm for the committee’s formation and discussed reviewing how other communities support multicultural events. Council encouraged community members to share ideas and suggestions to help shape the committee’s work.

California Voting Rights Act (CVRA) – Consideration of Resolution of Intent to Transition from At-Large to District-Based Elections

City Attorney Scott Drexel reported on the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA) and recommended that the City Council adopt a Resolution of Intent to transition from at-large to district-based elections for City Council members.

He explained that Orland’s current at-large system is vulnerable to CVRA legal challenges, which are costly and difficult to defend. Adopting the resolution provides a 90-day safe harbor against lawsuits and reduces potential financial exposure.

Two timeline options were discussed:

- November 2026 first district election – shorter legal exposure but tight schedule for public outreach.
- November 2028 first district election – more time for outreach and planning but a two-year gap in legal protection after safe harbor expires.

Mr. Drexel recommended the Council adopt the Resolution of Intent, direct the City Clerk to publish a tentative public hearing schedule, and have staff return in January 2026 with a recommended implementation timeline.

Councilmembers discussed the district-based system and asked several questions, including what occurs if no candidate runs in a district and how a transition would work if two current councilmembers reside within the same district. City Attorney Drexel stated he would need to research these questions and return with answers.

Ms. Deleon asked whether cities of Orland's size typically transition to district-based elections. City Attorney Drexel responded that there is no population threshold and noted that many cities similar in size to Orland have adopted district-based systems.

Jake Hackett expressed his support for adopting the Resolution of Intent.

Orland resident Daniel also voiced support for district-based elections.

Mr. Megginson asked whether the City Council could state its intention to fully follow through with the transition process.

Mr. Irvin expressed concern about a comment made by the Mayor and shared frustration that certain questions regarding district-based elections were not answered.

Mr. Lane asked whether the City would have five districts and questioned what happens if no candidate runs in a particular district.

Orland resident Janet Jonte noted that district-based elections could make it less expensive for community members to run for office, encouraging broader participation. Councilmember Tolle clarified that running for Council does not require personal expense unless a candidate chooses to include a statement in the voter guide.

Mr. Irvin asked whether nomination signatures would need to come only from the candidate's district. Mr. Drexel stated he would research this question as well.

ACTION: Councilmember Romano moved, seconded by Councilmember Tolle, to adopt the Resolution declaring the City's intent to transition from at-large elections to district-based elections for City Council members pursuant to California Elections Code Section 10010(e)(3)(A); direct the City Clerk to publish a tentative schedule of required public hearings within 10 days; and direct staff to return in January 2026 with a recommended implementation timeline. Motion carried by voice vote, 5–0.

City Manager Verbal Report

City Manager Joe Goodman asked the Council whether they preferred receiving the reports as part of the consent calendar or at the end of the meeting. The Council agreed they preferred having the reports included in the consent calendar, as it allows more time for review and preparation.

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

Councilmember McDermott:

- Had no items to report.

Mayor Barr:

- Had no items to report.

Vice Mayor Enriquez:

- Requested an update on the camping ordinance, including whether any citations have been issued. Councilmember McDermott suggested meeting with Chief Vlach for additional information.
- Encouraged increased bike activity in the community and expressed interest in exploring a City ordinance addressing modified electric bike speeds.

Councilmember Romano:

- Had no items to report.

Councilmember Tolle:

- Had no items to report.

MEETING ADJOURNED 9:04 PM

Jennifer Schmitke, City Clerk

Terrie Barr, Mayor