



ORLAND CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, March 17, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Barr at 6:30 PM.

ROLL CALL

Councilmembers Present: Councilmembers John McDermott, JC Tolle, Vice Mayor Alex Enriquez and Mayor Terrie Barr

Councilmembers Absent: Councilmember Matt Romano

Staff Present: Acting City Manager Janet Wackerman, City Clerk Jennifer Schmitke, City Attorney Scott Drexel, City Engineer Paul Rabo, Library Director Jody Meza

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

County resident and Hidden Treasures President Valerie Johnson provided an update on ongoing improvements being made to the Hidden Treasures property. She also announced that the organization will host its second annual fundraising gala at Locaso Hall on May 2.

Orland resident Bonnie Morgan informed Council that the Glenn Chorale will be holding a concert on May 3 at the Orland Memorial Hall.

An employee of Orland Veterinary Clinic, Carlee, addressed Council to express concerns regarding safety related to the proposed Glenn County Mental Health facility planned for the corner of 6th and South Street, adjacent to the veterinary clinic. She noted apprehension about the potential impact of the project on staff and workplace security.

PUBLIC HEARING

Douglas Johnson of National Demographics Corporation presented via Zoom an overview of the City's transition from at-large to by-district elections, following the City Council's adoption of a Resolution of Intent on December 2, 2026. This meeting represented the second of five required public hearings.

Mr. Johnson reviewed the public hearing requirements under California Elections Code Section 10010, explaining that the purpose of the current hearing was to gather community input regarding neighborhoods and communities of interest to help guide the development of draft district maps.

Residents were encouraged to participate in the process by submitting proposed district maps through the City's online mapping tool at DrawOrland.org.

Mr. Johnson also recommended that the Council provide early direction on whether it preferred a four-district system with a citywide-elected mayor or a five-district system with a rotating mayor, noting that this guidance would help focus future public feedback and map development. He briefly reviewed the key differences and potential advantages of each option.

Mr. Johnson confirmed that additional public hearings were scheduled for April 7, April 21, and May 5, 2026, during which draft maps would be reviewed, additional public input received, and a final district map and election sequence selected. He recommended that the Council adopt a final map by the end of May to allow sufficient time for implementation by the Glenn County Registrar of Voters.

Mayor Barr opened the public hearing at 7:05 p.m.

County resident Sarah Bosley expressed concern that the City was moving too quickly through the districting process and questioned making decisions when not all Councilmembers were present. Ms. Bosley stated she intended to petition the City to slow the process and delay implementation until the next election cycle.

Orland resident Janet Jonte voiced confidence in the Mayor, Council, and staff to make the appropriate decisions regarding district elections. She acknowledged the change would be significant but emphasized the importance of moving forward and noted that district elections offer several advantages.

Orland resident Earl Megginson raised concerns about effectively communicating information to elderly residents. Council discussed the issue and directed staff to explore additional outreach options to better reach seniors and residents who may not use digital platforms.

County resident Marilyn Ponci stated she had not previously heard about the item and expressed concern that the change could be divisive. She also noted that it is already difficult for the City to recruit Council candidates and requested clarification on the reasons for transitioning to district elections. City Attorney Scott Drexel explained that the City is proceeding under the requirements and legal risks associated with the California Voting Rights Act, noting there is a high likelihood of litigation if the City does not comply. He further stated that the City had already received a threat of legal action.

Orland resident Christine Stifter shared concerns that the process appeared rushed and emphasized that districting would represent a major change for the community. She also questioned why residents living outside city limits were not included in the decision-making process and suggested reconsidering the City's sphere of influence. Mr. Drexel responded that the Council had previously discussed and selected the accelerated timeline during a prior public hearing in order to align with the upcoming election and reduce the City's exposure to costly litigation.

Orland resident Janice asked whether district boundaries would extend into the County and whether the districting process was related to Proposition 50. Mr. Drexel clarified that districting applies only within city limits and is not related to Proposition 50. Mayor Barr reiterated that the Council does not have the authority to include County areas in City elections.

Mayor Barr closed the public hearing at 7:16 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS CONTINUED:

County resident and Orland Veterinary Hospital owner Josh Brownfield, whose clinic is located on 8th Street adjacent to the proposed Glenn County wellness center, expressed concerns regarding the safety of his staff and the security of his business. Mr. Brownfield noted that veterinary clinics can be vulnerable to theft and may be specifically targeted due to the presence of controlled medications, and he shared apprehension about potential risks associated with the neighboring facility.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Warrant List (Payable Obligations)
- B. Approve City Council Minutes from March 3, 2026
- C. Approve City Council Special Minutes from March 9, 2026
- D. Receive and File Library Commission Minutes from January 12, 2026
- E. Approve and Adopt the Second Reading of Ordinance 2026-01 Amending Orland Municipal Code Sections 2.32.030 and 2.36.030 – Commission Appointment Procedures
- F. Consider Resolution 2026-05: A Resolution of the City of Orland Authorizing the Grant Application, Acceptance and Execution for the Orland Emergency Groundwater Resource Project

Vice Mayor Enriquez reviewed the minutes and requested a sentence be removed that was not related to the Lely West field naming item. The City Clerk stated she would make the corrections.

ACTION: Vice Mayor Enriquez moved, seconded by Councilmember McDermott, to approve the consent calendar with corrections. Motion carried by a voice vote 4-0.

PUBLIC HEARING CONTINUED

Mayor Barr reopened the public hearing to invite additional comments from both the community and Council, noting that the Council was interested in understanding community preferences regarding districting options.

Orland resident Jan Walker expressed support for a five-district system with a rotating mayor.

Ms. Bosley stated her preference for the four-district option.

Councilmember Tolle indicated he is leaning toward the five-district option but would support whichever option the community favors. Vice Mayor Enriquez also supported maintaining five districts, stating it would allow for greater representation within Orland. Councilmember McDermott expressed interest in gathering additional public input, suggesting a community survey, and noted he personally favors five districts but would defer to community preference.

Mayor Barr asked how the City is currently reaching residents and inquired about additional outreach methods. Mr. Drexel responded that notices have been published in the newspaper the City's social media and posted on the City's website. He also reminded Council that a draft map must be posted by May 31, and that the next public hearing is scheduled for April 7, where further input will be accepted.

Councilmember McDermott raised concerns that seniors may not be receiving information due to limited technology use and encouraged community members to assist in sharing information with neighbors. Mayor Barr emphasized the importance of maximizing outreach. Vice Mayor Enriquez suggested that if broader participation is a priority, the City could consider delaying district implementation to the following

election cycle, though Councilmembers expressed concern about potential legal risks if the process is delayed.

Ms. Bosley suggested that a Council representative attend local churches to reach seniors.

County resident Joanie Woods recommended using local news stations to increase awareness.

Chico resident Scott Howard, a former news director at Action News, offered insight into working with local media to share information about the districting process.

Orland resident Jill Elliott suggested outreach at the senior center. Mayor Barr stated she would be willing to meet with any community group to help disseminate information.

PRESENTATION: Arts Commission Presentation

Orland Arts Commission Chairperson Rae Turnbull provided the Council with an overview of the Orland Arts Commission and its role in the community. Ms. Turnbull highlighted the Commission's history, mission, and ongoing efforts to promote arts and culture in Orland.

She described the variety of special events and exhibits hosted by the Arts Commission, including art shows, live music performances, and art demonstrations, all of which are designed to engage and enrich the community. Ms. Turnbull also outlined the Commission's funding sources, noting that operations are supported through donations, sales commissions, and membership dues.

Ms. Turnbull reviewed the ordinance that established the Arts Commission and discussed the many projects completed in partnership with the City, as well as the Commission's continued collaboration with the Orland Unified School District to support arts education and student involvement.

Looking ahead, Ms. Turnbull announced that the Art gallery will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the United States' independence with a special exhibit scheduled for Friday, July 3. The event will feature 18 nationally recognized artists from across the country, showcasing artwork that reflects scenes and themes celebrating the nation's history and culture.

Councilmembers expressed their appreciation to Ms. Turnbull for her presentation and for the Arts Commission's ongoing contributions to the community.

Ms. Walker shared that Orland's strong sense of community is shaped by the people who live there and noted that the city would not be the same without the Turnbull family's longstanding involvement and support of the arts.

Orland High School art teachers Molly Wallace and Brooke Davis also spoke, sharing their positive experiences bringing students to the Arts Center, where they have had the opportunity to learn directly from Ms. Turnbull and her staff in a hands-on and inspiring environment.

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Review and Adjustment to Maintenance Assessment District (MAD) No. 2006-05 (Orland Park)

City Engineer Paul Rabo provided an overview of MAD No. 2006-05, explaining that assessments fund storm drainage, street lighting, parks, and other public improvements. Assessments had previously been reduced to zero for all parcels, but in 2022 staff recommended reinstating them due to new building permit applications.

Mr. Rabo explained that the owners of Parcels 65 and 66 requested their assessments go back to zero. Staff explained that assessments apply to all parcels within the MAD and noted that the 2025/2026 assessments had been reduced to reflect unconstructed improvements. Mr. Rabo spoke about the two lots explaining that neither benefit from the improvements.

Mr. Rabo provided Council with possible options for Council Consideration:

1. Maintain current assessments.
2. Reduce Parcels 65 and 66 to zero and adjust other parcels accordingly.
3. Remove Parcels 65 and 66 from the MAD following Municipal Code procedures.

Parcel owners Pat Laughlin (Lot 65) and Scott Howard (Lot 66) addressed the Council regarding their properties. Mr. Laughlin explained that Lot 65 is 30 acres of cow pasture and does not currently benefit from any MAD improvements. Mr. Howard expressed appreciation for the Council's consideration and shared his hopes for future use of Lot 66.

City Engineer Paul Rabo stated his support for the owners' requests and briefly explained the process for enforcing assessments. Mayor Barr inquired about amending City code to prevent similar unnecessary assessments in the future.

After discussion, Council agreed to reduce the assessments for Lots 65 and 66 back to zero and directed Mr. Rabo to assist City Hall staff in creating and submitting a letter to the County Tax Collector documenting the assessment amendments.

ACTION: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Councilmember Tolle, to reduce the assessment on both lots 65 and 66 (MAD No. 2006-05) back to zero. Motion carried by a voice vote 4-0.

Colusa Street Improvements

Mr. Rabo reported that the owner of Newville Brewing contacted the City regarding the deteriorated curb, gutter, and sidewalk on Colusa Street between 5th Street and the adjacent alley. He stated that City staff met with the owner to discuss necessary improvements and a potential cost-sharing arrangement.

Mr. Rabo noted significant cracking and settlement in the existing infrastructure. While the brewery's remodeling plans include replacing approximately 300 square feet of sidewalk for a new entrance, he presented a broader improvement option in which the City would replace the curb, gutter, additional sidewalk, and construct a new alley driveway. Mr. Rabo shared that the brewery would fund only the sidewalk improvements required for its project. Mr. Rabo also provided the Council with an engineer's estimate of total construction costs.

The Newville Brewing owner, Lisa Williams, stepped forward to express concerns regarding the condition of the sidewalk and gutter in front of her business and thanked the Council for considering her request.

Orland resident Daniel Louder asked what portion of the project the City would be financially responsible for. Mayor Barr responded that the estimated City cost would be \$59,000. Mr. Rabo noted that the estimate was based on prevailing wage rates for a contractor in the event the Public Works Department is unable to complete the work. Mr. Louder expressed support for the brewery and the importance of maintaining attractive and well-maintained infrastructure. He asked whether future maintenance or upgrades were planned for the area. Mr. Rabo responded that this location is not currently included in any scheduled improvement plans. Mr. Louder also expressed a desire to see the area repaired, with proper drainage and ADA compliance addressed, and suggested that the brewery contribute a greater share of the cost.

Ms. Williams clarified that the area in need of repair is at the main entrance and expressed concern about the difficulty of installing an ADA-compliant ramp under current conditions.

Vice Mayor Enriquez inquired about infrastructure improvements in the area and discussed the owner's timeline for opening.

Councilmember Tolle stated that the project was a "no-brainer" and raised concerns about potential liability related to the sidewalk condition.

Councilmember McDermott suggested the use of gas tax funds. Ms. Wackerman noted that gas tax monies typically fund street-related projects and indicated that the curb portion could be eligible.

Mayor Barr asked about the use of Measure J funds and suggested installing underground infrastructure in preparation for future downtown lighting improvements.

ACTION: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Enriquez, to authorize the Acting City Manager to execute an agreement with Newville Brewing. The motion also directed staff to initiate improvements to the curb, gutter, and sidewalk along Colusa Street in front of Newville Brewing, with costs to be shared between the City and Newville Brewing and funded through Measure J and gas tax revenues. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote, 4–0.

CPA Service Agreement Amendment and Budget Discussion

Acting City Manager Janet Wackerman reported that RGS Consultants is requesting an additional \$65,500 to assist with current and upcoming budgets, the year-end audit, staff training, and ongoing financial support through June 2026.

Ms. Wackerman further reported that the City Council approved an agreement with RGS Consultants in December 2024 for financial advising services. She noted that RGS does not provide CPA services. Ms. Wackerman added that three amendments have been made due to additional work, including financial software implementation, bank reconciliations, budget support, Appropriations Limit calculations, and financial review.

An Orland resident came forward to share concerns that RGS is not a CPA firm and is both preparing financial statements and conducting audits. Ms. Wackerman clarified that the City uses an independent outside auditor, RT Dennis, which is separate from RGS.

Councilmember Tolle asked questions regarding staff training and whether Regional Government Services (RGS) is the appropriate agency moving forward. Ms. Wackerman stated that the Council would need to wait until the City Manager returns from leave to address questions related to training.

Councilmember Tolle also discussed the need for in-house CPA expertise. Ms. Wackerman explained that Tyler is an effective software system and noted that staff are still transitioning from an older system to the newer platform. She compared the transition to moving from a Model T to a Prius and stated that a learning curve is expected during this process.

Councilmember McDermott expressed concern that the Council should do whatever it can to support staff, given current staffing limitations.

Mayor Barr raised concerns about unreconciled City accounts and expressed frustration that the Council has not received the final or current budget.

Ms. Bosley expressed concern that RGS is being paid at a level comparable to the City Manager while performing duties that should fall under that role and questioned the adequacy of Tyler's training. Ms. Wackerman responded that Tyler has provided substantial training, but RGS is assisting with day-to-day operations training also.

Mayor Barr expressed concerns regarding staff training and referenced Mr. Goodman's efforts to hire an individual with bookkeeping experience. She noted that no current City staff have a financial background and asked what next steps should be taken to continue the search for a Finance Director.

Ms. Wackerman clarified that, under the municipal code, the City Manager holds the title of Finance Director, and that Mr. Goodman previously served in that capacity. Mayor Barr expressed concern that the current City Manager's background is in engineering rather than finance. Mayor Barr requested that a discussion regarding the position be placed on a future agenda, and the City Attorney indicated that a reorganization item could potentially be added.

The consensus of the Council was to authorize the Acting City Manager to approve an amendment to the agreement with RGS Consultants in an amount not to exceed \$65,500.

City Manager Verbal Report

The Acting City Manager provided a brief update on the Westside annexation at the request of Mayor Barr. Ms. Wackerman reported that she reviewed the City Manager's emails and located a message from early February from the consultant who completed the Westside annexation report. Based on that correspondence, she indicated that the City will need to take prompt action and expedite the process by holding public hearings, beginning with a special Planning Commission meeting on April 9, followed by a City Council meeting on April 21, before the matter is submitted to LAFCo.

City Council Communications and Reports

Councilmember McDermott:

- Requested that a future agenda item include contingency plans for Ms. Wackerman's departure, including discussion of potentially bringing Pete Carr out of retirement as an interim replacement.

- Asked about Councilmember Romano's absence, noting that several individuals observed him packing up his residence. He requested that Mr. Drexel contact Councilmember Romano to confirm whether he intends to return.

Vice Mayor Enriquez:

- Attended the February Planning Commission meeting.
- Requested a continuation of the closed session item from the March 3 City Council meeting.

Mayor Barr:

- Expressed concerns regarding unreconciled records under previous City Managers and stated she does not want a repeat of past issues.

Councilmember Tolle:

- Attended an Orland Police Department demonstration of its use-of-force simulator.
- Attended the Orland VIPs ceremony.
- Attended the Westside Ambulance Board meeting, noting he was the only representative from Orland. He expressed interest in having more local professionals participate, such as John McDermott and Chief Justin Chaney, and noted the next meeting will be held in approximately six weeks.

MEETING ADJOURNED 9:37 PM

Jennifer Schmitke, City Clerk

Terrie Barr, Mayor