



CITY OF ORLAND STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: February 17, 2026

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council

FROM: Joe Goodman, City Manager

SUBJECT: **Commission Appointment Procedures and Proposed Standardized Process** (Discussion / Action)

Background

The City Council requested additional information regarding the procedures for appointment to City commissions. Questions have arisen regarding consistency in the process and communication with applicants.

The City of Orland currently has six commissions established by ordinance:

- Planning Commission (OMC 2.32)
- Library Commission (OMC 2.24)
- Arts Commission (OMC 2.18)
- Economic Development Commission (OMC 2.20)
- Public Works & Safety Commission (OMC 2.36)
- Parks & Recreation Commission (OMC 2.28)

While each commission has appointment language in the Municipal Code, the procedures vary slightly, and the City has historically followed an informal internal process for managing vacancies and reappointments. Additionally, the City often receives a limited number of applications for commission seats, and there have been past concerns regarding communication with applicants.

This report outlines (1) the existing ordinance requirements and (2) a proposed standardized appointment process to improve clarity, transparency, and communication.

Existing Ordinance Requirements

Appointment Authority

With the exception of procedural differences for interviews, all commissions are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council.

Interview Requirements by Commission

- **Planning Commission (OMC 2.32.030)**
Applicants shall be interviewed by a panel consisting of the City Manager, Community Development Director or designee, City Engineer, and a member of the City Council. The panel

makes a recommendation to the Mayor and Council. (Note: OMC 2.32.030 currently references “community services director,” a position the City no longer has. An ordinance amendment is recommended to update this reference.)

- **Public Works & Safety Commission (OMC 2.36.030)**
Applicants shall be interviewed by a panel consisting of two City Council members and the Commission Chair, who make a recommendation to the Mayor and Council. (Note: Staff recommends removing this mandatory interview panel requirement from OMC 2.36.030 by ordinance, allowing the standardized process to govern.)
- **All Other Commissions (Library, Arts, EDC, Parks & Recreation)**
Appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by Council. No specific interview panel is required in the Municipal Code.

Residency Requirements

- All six commissions require a majority of members to reside within City limits, with remaining members residing within the 95963 zip code area.
- EDC requires reasonable attempts to include at least one Chamber representative and one member of the local financial community.

Current (Unofficial) Administrative Process

Historically, staff has followed this general annual timeline:

Mid-September

- Review terms expiring December 31
- Send “Term Expiring” letters to incumbents
- Include application form

Early October

- Publish legal notice of vacancies
- Set application deadline (typically last business day of October)

Application Review & Interviews

- If multiple applicants, schedule interviews
- If 1–3 applicants, forward to Commission Chair or Council
- If insufficient applicants, extend deadline
- Interviews conducted at publicly noticed meetings

Council Appointment

- Appointments agendaized for Council action
- Effective January 1

Post-Appointment

- Send formal letters
- Ensure required FPPC filings
- Process exit filings for outgoing members

When mid-term resignations occur, Council receives recommendations by commission chairpersons, or interviews are completed before council appoints a replacement to complete the term.

While this framework has generally worked, it is not formally adopted policy.

Identified Issues

1. **Communication with applicants**
Applicants are not individually notified of publicly noticed meetings.
 2. **Limited volunteer pool**
The City often receives few applications, requiring extended recruitment periods.
 3. **Process variations between commissions**
Differences in interview requirements can create confusion when not clearly documented.
 4. **Lack of a formally adopted policy**
The process exists administratively but is not officially codified in a standardized Council policy. Staff recommends adoption by resolution rather than codification in the Municipal Code, as this is an administrative process best governed by Council policy.
-

Proposed Standardized Appointment Process

To improve transparency, fairness, and communication, staff recommends adoption of the following standardized process:

1. Annual Recruitment Timeline (Standing Schedule)

- **September 15** – Review expiring terms
- **October 1** – Publish legal notice and post vacancies on website and social media
- **October 31** – Standard application deadline (unless extended)
- **November** – Conduct required interviews
- **First Council Meeting in December** – Council appointment
- **January 1** – Terms begin

Mid-term vacancies would follow a similar 30–45 day recruitment window unless urgency requires expedited appointment.

2. Standard Communication Protocol

Upon adoption, staff will continue to do the following:

- Send confirmation when an application is received
- Notify public when application period is extended
- Notify applicants when interviews are scheduled
- Send formal notification to applicants not selected
- Send appointment letters to selected applicants

This ensures all applicants receive closure and clear communication.

3. Interview Procedures

- The Planning Commission interview panel (OMC 2.32.030) will continue to follow code requirements, with the updated position title. If adopted, the ordinance amending OMC 2.36.030 would remove the mandatory PW & Safety interview panel, allowing the standardized process to apply.
- Commissions without mandated panels may:
 - Be interviewed by the Mayor and one Councilmember, or

- Be considered directly by Council with chairperson recommendation if applicant volume is limited.

All interviews will be conducted at publicly noticed meetings to maintain transparency.

4. Recruitment Enhancements

To address limited volunteer participation, staff recommends:

- Posting vacancies prominently on the City website homepage
 - Posting vacancies in the local newspaper
 - Utilizing social media
 - Direct outreach to local service clubs and business organizations
 - Maintaining an “Interested in Serving?” interest list year-round
-

5. Documentation and Tracking

- Maintain a centralized Commission Roster & Term Tracking document
 - Publish commission vacancies and term expiration dates online
 - Create a simple flowchart of the appointment process for internal use
-

Policy Consideration

Staff recommends the Council formally adopt this standardized process by resolution. The resolution should include directory language clarifying that the policy serves as an administrative guideline and does not create any enforceable right or entitlement for applicants or members of the public. This ensures long-term consistency regardless of staff changes while preserving Council’s flexibility.

In addition to adopting the standardized process by resolution, staff recommends two Municipal Code amendments: (1) amend OMC 2.32.030 to replace “community services director” with “community development director or designee” to reflect the current City organizational structure; and (2) amend OMC 2.36.030 to remove the mandatory interview panel requirement for the Public Works & Safety Commission. Draft ordinances are presented for Council direction.

Attachment: Resolution 2025-XX - A Resolution Of The City Council Of The City Of Orland Adopting A Standardized Commission Appointment Process

Fiscal Impact

Minimal. Staff time for enhanced communication and recruitment efforts.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the City Council take the following actions:

1. Adopt the attached Resolution establishing a Standardized Commission Appointment Process as an administrative policy of the City, with directory language ensuring the policy does not create enforceable rights for applicants.

2. Direct staff to prepare an ordinance amending OMC 2.32.030 to replace “community services director” with “community development director or designee” and bring the ordinance back for introduction at a future meeting.

3. Direct staff to prepare an ordinance amending OMC 2.36.030 to remove the mandatory interview panel requirement for the Public Works & Safety Commission and bring the ordinance back for introduction at a future meeting.