



ORLAND CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

ALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Matt Romano at 6:01 PM.

ROLL CALL

Councilmembers Present: Councilmembers Brandon Smith, 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, City Planner Lisa Lozier and City Engineer Paul Rabo

CITIZENS COMMENTS ON CLOSED SESSION - None

MEETING ADJOURNED TO CLOSED SESSION AT 6:02 PM.

CLOSED SESSION ENDED AND RECONVENED TO REGULAR SESSION AT 6:34 PM.

REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION - *Mayor Romano announced that Council met with City Staff and City Attorneys Scott Drexel and Greg Einhorn in Closed Session to conference with labor negotiators, and real property negotiators, 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:

Orland resident Brett Reed spoke on behalf of his mother, who lives on Road M ½, and expressed concerns about the recent reconstruction project on that road.

County resident Jody Samons raised concerns about water leaking from a manhole on South Street, stating it is interfering with her irrigation. She reminded the Council that 3CORE previously conducted a study along the I-5 corridor, offered to share the findings, and encouraged the City to review that information before commissioning a new I-5 study.

Orland resident Tommy Haas shared that he is affiliated with Grace Church and is actively seeking a building to renovate for their congregation. He noted efforts to contact the owner of the Grange building on SR 32.

Orland resident Yvonna Bennett spoke regarding a public records request she submitted to several local agencies.

County resident Joannie Woods announced that the Hometown Harvest Festival will be held on October 18th from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. She also shared that Orland native Matt Whittaker has a film set to be released.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Warrant List (Payable Obligations)
- B. Approve City Council Minutes from September 2, 2025
- C. Receive and File Library Commission Minutes from July 14th, 2025
- D. Receive and File Arts Commission Minutes from July 16th, 2025
- E. Receive and File Economic Development Commission Minutes from August 12, 2025

F. Approve Library Projects

G. Award a contract for professional services for construction support for the Walker Street Well Project

Councilmember Smith requested to pull Item G for further discussion and clarification, specifically asking whether the contract would return to Council for final approval.

City Engineer Paul Rabo explained that a new contract with GEI is necessary due to a change in project location.

Councilmember Barr inquired about the funding source. Mr. Rabo confirmed that the project would still be funded by the Department of Water Resources (DWR), but through the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) funding program.

ACTION: Councilmember Barr moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Tolle, to approve the consent calendar as presented. Motion carried by a voice vote 5-0.

PUBLIC HEARING

A. General Plan Amendment GPA#2025-01: Review General Plan Amendment (GPA#2025-01) for adoption and incorporation of the updated Glenn County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan 2025 into the Safety Element of the City of Orland General Plan by reference.

City Planner Lisa Lozier presented a staff report regarding a proposed amendment to the Glenn County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP).

Ms. Lozier explained the financial advantages to the City of updating the plan, particularly in meeting California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) requirements. She noted that Glenn County—and possibly the City of Willows—had already approved their respective amendments. She also stated that the update would include an addendum to the City’s adopted General Plan Safety Element.

Ms. Lozier reported that the Planning Commission had unanimously recommended forwarding the amended MJHMP to the City Council for consideration and adoption at its August 21, 2025 meeting.

During the Council discussion, Councilor Barr inquired about the frequency of plan updates. Ms. Lozier noted that the last update occurred in 2021.

Mayor Romano opened the public hearing at 6:58 p.m.

Orland resident Ron Lane spoke in support of the plan update, sharing his experience volunteering at the food pantry during the last update and emphasizing the importance of the plan in supporting the community.

County resident Kristy Howard asked whether a copy of the plan would be available at City Hall. Ms. Lozier responded that the City could print and provide copies to the public as needed.

Councilmember McDermott expressed concern that the threat posed by Arundo (invasive vegetation) in Stony Creek was not addressed in the plan. He also noted that the closure of Glenn Medical was not mentioned and felt it should be considered in future updates.

Councilmember Barr emphasized the importance of being proactive to ensure the City remains in compliance with State regulations. Mayor Romano noted that this topic could be brought forward as a future agenda item.

Mayor Romano closed the public hearing at 7:04 p.m.

ACTION: Councilmember Smith moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Tolle, to Adopt General Plan Amendment 2025-01, hereby amending the City of Orland General Plan Safety Element to include the Glenn County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan 2025 update and find that General Plan Amendment (GPA 2025-01) is exempt from environmental review as required by CEQA by the “General Rule” Section 15061(b) (3) that is applied to proposals, which will have no potential adverse impact on the environment. Motion carried by a voice vote 5-0.

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Police and Fire Chief Employment Agreements

City Manager Joe Goodman presented proposed amendments to the Police and Fire Chiefs' employment agreements to the Council. Mr. Goodman reminded Council that the original agreements were set to expire on June 30, 2025. To avoid a lapse in coverage, the Council approved a 90-day extension of both contracts at the June 17th meeting. Mr. Goodman shared the following proposed amendments to the agreements:

1. Extend the term of each agreement to June 30, 2026.
2. Provide a 2% salary increase effective July 1, 2025, with a salary review in January 2026. This review would compare actual General Fund revenue received from July 1 through December 31, 2025, with projections for the same period, and use that data to evaluate compensation.
3. Confirm the existing practice of aligning benefits with those provided to the City's safety employees (Police), where applicable.

Councilmember McDermott thanked both Chiefs for working with the City Council on their agreements and stated that the agreements will be brought back for discussion in early 2026.

ACTION: Vice Mayor Tolle moved, seconded by Councilmember McDermott, to approve Second Amendment to the Employment Agreement (Chief of Police) between the City of Orland and Joseph Vlach. Motion carried by a voice vote 5-0.

ACTION: Councilmember Barr moved, seconded by Councilmember McDermott, to approve Second Amendment to the Employment Agreement (Fire Chief) between the City of Orland and Justin Chaney. Motion carried by a voice vote 5-0.

Modification to Orland Police Officers Memorandum of Understanding

Mr. Goodman presented proposed modifications to the Orland Police Officers Memorandum of Understanding, noting that the recently negotiated agreement includes a retiree medical trust. The proposed modification addresses a technical IRS requirement and does not alter the substance of the retiree medical trust provision.

ACTION: Councilmember Smith moved, seconded by Councilmember McDermott, to approve the proposed modification to the Orland Police Officers Association Memorandum of Understanding and authorize Mayor, Vice Mayor and City Attorney to sign. Motion carried by a voice vote, 5-0.

DWR Emergency Water Project Update

City Engineer Paul Rabo presented to the Council an update on the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) project, which aims to provide safe and reliable drinking water for residents both within and outside city limits. Mr. Rabo summarized the project's progress and funding allocations for each phase.

Mr. Rabo reported that Phase 1 is approximately 70% complete, Phase 2A is 80% complete, while Phase 2B is complete. The City has secured the necessary permits from the United States Bureau of Reclamation to install water mains across irrigation canals on federal lands, as required by federal regulations. Phase 2C Unit 1 is complete. Units 2 through 6 of Phase 2C have been advertised, and bids were opened September 12 with a possible award date of September 16th by Council. Phase 3A is fully complete. Phase 3B, although previously advertised and bid, has been removed from the current funding scope and reassigned to a different funding source. Phase 4 is currently under construction. Mr. Rabo also presented a Project Budget Overview. The project has been awarded a total of \$16.7 million, allocated as follows:

- \$1.25M: Administration, permits, and CEQA documentation.
- \$2.25M: Design.
- \$13.2M: Construction, with costs broken down by phase:
 - Phase 1: \$1.4M (water services and main extensions).
 - Phase 2A: \$5.35M (water mains, services, fire hydrants).
 - Phase 2B: \$2.0M (water mains, services, fire hydrants).
 - Phase 2C: \$0.8M (connecting meters to houses).
 - Phase 3A: \$0.35M (well construction).
 - Phase 3B: REMOVED (well equipping and site improvements).
 - Phase 4: \$3.30M (storage tank, booster pumps).

Council discussed concerns regarding portions of the project that may not be completed by the State's final deadline and inquired about the remaining costs the City may be responsible for once the project concludes.

Ms. Samons, runs temporary drought relief program, shared that the State has set a firm "drop-dead date" of February for project completion and noted that the State has been very generous throughout the process. She recommended that the City explore SAFER Grant opportunities to cover any remaining costs not reimbursed by the State.

County resident Valerie Johnson shared that she plans to trap the cats living in the old Bucke's building and relocate them to a safer location.

City Council discussion and possible action to award multiple construction contracts for the City of Orland Emergency Groundwater Resource Project – Phase 2C Units 2 through 6

Mr. Rabo briefly reviewed each unit sizes for the project and summarized the bids received for Phase 2, Units 2 through 6. He spoke about the two recommended contractors—Bear Mountain and R & R Horn—and explained that the units will be completed concurrently, using multiple crews from both contractors. He noted that the contract completion times range from 22 to 55 days, depending on unit size.

Ms. Samons shared that the relief program has served 250 families during the current drought relief effort and is still providing water deliveries to 25 homes. She expressed hope that all remaining homes can be connected by December, as program funding is coming to an end.

Councilmember Barr expressed concern about the City's ability to service the new water connections if the storage tank is not completed on time. Mr. Rabo assured the Council that the City's water system can support the additional demand until the project is finished. Councilmember Barr also asked whether City Hall is prepared to implement billing for the new connections. Mr. Rabo confirmed that as homes are connected, they are being added to the billing system.

Councilmember McDermott asked if the City could prioritize connecting the 25 residents still receiving water deliveries. Mr. Rabo stated that he would look into expediting their connections.

The City Attorney requested that the item be brought back once the lowest responsible bidder has been identified and recommended scheduling a special meeting as soon as possible. Council directed staff to set a new meeting with the agenda item.

Undeveloped City Property 517 Walker Street

Mr. Goodman briefly provided background on the City-owned property at 517 Walker Street and opened a discussion on potential future uses for the vacant lot.

Councilmembers discussed various ideas regarding potential uses for the location. Some felt it would be suitable for additional downtown parking, while others suggested it could serve as a park or a site for downtown restrooms to better support local businesses. Additionally, several councilmembers noted that the City-owned lot at the corner of 6th Street and Colusa Street could be a good location for additional parking and potential electric vehicle charging stations.

Orland resident Ron Lane shared that he has heard from people that a park at the 517 Walker Street location would be a great idea. He stated that he would like to see a visitor center or Chamber of Commerce with a possible small park.

Orland resident Jan Walker emphasized the importance of first impressions when entering a town. She also expressed disappointment that electric charging stations will no longer be located at this site.

Mr. Reed shared that he liked the idea of a park with benches and trees but questioned whether the location is ideal due to the traffic on Walker Street.

County resident Joannie Woods stated that 517 Walker Street is a welcoming property for the City. She raised concerns about the downtown public restrooms, noting that the only facilities in Library Park need updating. Ms. Woods also suggested the Council consider parking permits for downtown, as some business owners and residents park in front of businesses all day.

Councilmember Tolle expressed interest in hearing input from downtown businesses and community members regarding the property.

Mayor Romano noted that, given the number of ongoing downtown projects, he would like to hire a single architect to oversee the downtown aesthetic. Once chosen, the architect would gather public input to develop a consistent vision and plan for downtown projects. Councilmember Barr reminded the Council that a consultant had previously been hired for 6th Street and asked about the status of that project. Mayor Romano indicated that due to staffing changes, he was unsure if any progress had been made.

Council discussed the matter and directed staff to develop an RFP to obtain a comprehensive review of 517 Walker Street, including input from business owners and community members with the possibility of the same firm working on other downtown projects.

Discussion to Rename Road M ½

Mr. Goodman provided a brief update on the Road M ½ project. He explained that when the road was annexed into the City, its County designation was removed, and no new street name was proposed—so the road remained “M ½” without the County reference. Mr. Goodman noted that the City Council requested the name be reconsidered to better reflect the identity of the neighborhood. He also presented the City of Orland Addressing Guidelines and explained that any proposed name change would be reviewed by both the Planning Department and the Planning Commission.

Councilmember Smith stated that while he likes the current name, he is open to keeping it or changing it if necessary. He acknowledged that a name change could be inconvenient for residents who would need to update their mailing addresses.

Orland resident Della Reed, who lives on M ½, expressed her preference to keep the current name, noting its uniqueness.

Orland resident Jose Andrade also shared that changing the address would be a hassle. He expressed concerns about the current project on M ½, noting the lack of curb, gutter, and speed control, and that his property has trees in front. Mr. Andrade stated it would be nice to have improvements in front of his home and asked if the City would consider installing speed bumps once the project is complete.

Mr. Reed also voiced his support for keeping the name, saying that “Road M ½” is unique to Orland and part of its heritage.

In contrast, Orland resident Ron Lane expressed support for changing the name and offered alternative suggestions.

Councilmember McDermott said he appreciates Mr. Lane’s research but does not support a name change. Councilmember Barr also thanked Road M ½ residents for attending and sharing their input, and stated that she is against changing the name.

Mayor Romano raised concerns about the City’s addressing standards and how they reflect on the City’s future. He noted that by keeping the name, the City could be setting a precedent moving forward.

No direction was given regarding a name change.

City Manager Verbal Report

City Manager Joe Goodman briefed the Council on projects around town, highlighting the following updates:

- Will Shepphird is currently preparing budgetary estimates for the Carnegie Building project. Mr. Goodman expects to present those figures to the Council at the next meeting.
- The City is still waiting on updated financial data from HdL. Mr. Goodman noted that after reviewing reports from HdL’s website, the second-quarter numbers appear to be down. Overall revenue has decreased, and the average sales figures for the top 25 and top 100 sales tax-generating companies are also lower.
- Discussions are ongoing with RGS regarding the FY 2025–26 preliminary budget. RGS has committed to finalizing the budget for presentation at the October 7th Council meeting.
- City staff is working on drafting an onsite parking ordinance.
- The City Planner identified an existing ordinance, created in 2012, related to food trucks and mobile vendors.
- Goodman is preparing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Objective Design Standards.
- An RFP for the fire station roof project is expected to be released this week.

- Goodman is also working on an RFP for the design and renovation of the Purity Building, along with plans for the current City Hall expansion.
- Mr. Goodman provided an update on Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).
- He also shared that he has met with Kamesh from GHD to begin discussions on updating the City's Circulation Plan.

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

COUNCILMEMBER UPDATES

Councilmember Smith:

- Thanked Chief Vlach for the increased police presence in the community.
- Attended the Library Commission meeting.
- Participated in the Chamber of Commerce meeting.
- Announced a cornhole tournament will be held during the Harvest Festival on October 18th.
- Attended the Orland High School *Battle of the Axe* football game.
- Attended the Greg Martinez Memorial Car Show.

Councilmember McDermott:

- Noted he was unable to attend the Greg Martinez Car Show and EDC meeting due to work commitments.
- Requested Mr. Goodman look into the *Fast Charge California Project*, which expires on October 29th and could provide funding for electric vehicle charging stations.

Councilmember Barr:

- Thanked the City Engineer for his hard work on the DWR project.
- Shared positive community feedback regarding the City's new leadership.
- Expressed appreciation for City staff and their continued dedication.
- Reported that the safety sign on 6th Street had been knocked down; Vice Mayor Tolle confirmed it has since been repaired.
- Spoke about electric vehicle charging stations, noting they can be a potential revenue source. She requested City staff explore the possibility of the City installing its own charging stations.

Vice Mayor Tolle:

- Attended the *Laws & Paws* Festival.
- Will be attending the upcoming RTC meeting.
- Noted he will be absent from the first City Council meeting in November.

Mayor Romano:

- Attended the LAFCo meeting.
- Participated in the GSRMA Board meeting.

MEETING ADJOURNED 8:35 PM

Jennifer Schmitke, City Clerk

Mathew Romano, Mayor