

CITY OF OREM
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
56 North State Street Orem, Utah
September 23, 2025

3:00 P.M. WORK SESSION - CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM

CONDUCTING	Mayor David Young
ELECTED OFFICIALS	David Young, Chris Killpack, David Spencer, Jeff Lambson, Jenn Gale, LaNae Millett, and Tom Macdonald
APPOINTED STAFF	Brenn Bybee, City Manager; Ryan Clark, Assistant City Manager; Keri Rugg, Deputy City Manager; Steve Earl, City Attorney; Chris Tschirki, Public Works Director; Brandon Nelson, Finance Director; Marc Sanderson, Fire Chief; BJ Robinson, Police Chief; Bryce Merrill, Library and Recreation Director; Gary McGinn, Community Development Director; Peter Wolfley, Communications Manager, PIO; Teresa McKitrick, City Recorder

NOTE: The referenced report and presentation documents for each discussion may be viewed at orem.gov/meetings under “City Council Presentations”

Library and Police Remodel Tour

The City Council and City staff took a tour of the Police department remodel and library remodel that were currently under construction.

Sports Tourism / Ironman Bid Presentation *Presenter: Bryce Merrill, Library and Recreation Director*

Mr. Merrill presented a possible plan to capitalize on sports and events tourism, driven by the success of facilities like Lakeside Park, which sees an annual visitor count of 765,000, with 65,000 coming from over 50 miles away—double the number from three years ago. This tourism base, which includes major soccer and softball tournaments, has quintupled park rental revenue from \$50,000 to approximately \$400,000 in three years, funding essential park maintenance across the city. The central focus is the city's consideration of a bid, in partnership with Explore Utah Valley, to co-host an Iron Man 70.3 (Half Iron Man) event in May 2027, with an initial three-year contract proposed.

The event, a 1.2-mile swim, 56-mile bike, and 13.1-mile run, is projected to draw 3,000 competitors and generate 10,000 hotel nights across Utah County, promising an estimated \$11 million economic impact from high-spending, typically affluent, out-of-town participants. Logistically, the course is designed to connect Utah Lake (for the swim start at Provo's State

Park) to the canyon, routing the bike portion over Geneva Road, under State Street, up 2000 North, and utilizing a half-road closure in the canyon to showcase scenic beauty. The finish line for the run is strategically planned for the festival street in the "Heart of Orem," aiming to secure maximum prestige for the city.

However, the event presents significant hurdles, specifically an expected six-figure commitment in cash and in-kind services from the city's Police and Public Works teams, creating a massive public safety and traffic burden—especially the bike portion, which would heavily impact major corridors for a maximum of five and a half hours on a Saturday morning. Despite the high costs and logistical risk, city officials view the Iron Man as a crucial political and economic tool to secure future funding. By demonstrating collaboration, the city aims to leverage the relationship with the Tourism Tax Advisory Board and the county to secure transient room tax dollars for significant future projects, like the Mount Timpanogos entryway and the Heart of Orem development, positioning the city as a premier destination in the Intermountain West, particularly following the departure of the event from St. George.

Engineering Projects Update Presentation *Presenter: Taggart Bowen, City Engineer and Ryan Clark, Assistant City Manager*

Mr. Bowen detailed the essential function of preemptively aligning all underground utility work—including water, sewer, storm, and gas—with the city's \$2 to \$3 million annual road improvement budget and its five-year planning cycle to avoid cutting into new pavement. This was successfully demonstrated by the timely completion of a water line trench patch on 950 North before the school year started. A major multi-year achievement was the MAG-funded roundabout at 1200 North and 400 East, a complex project that involved purchasing property from a church and UVU, burying power lines, and requiring meticulous internal project management—which saved the city over \$200,000 in consultant fees. Engineers even worked with UTA to widen corners and adjust medians to ensure the passage of articulated "accordion" buses. In park infrastructure, the wastewater reuse project was completed after years of planning, allowing parks like Lakeside Sports Park to be irrigated with effluent water. Following a destructive 50- or 100-year storm, the city is installing deep sumps (20-foot deep, interconnected injection points with gravel and fabric) in flood-prone zones like the Cherapple neighborhood to safely inject stormwater into the ground.

Mr. Clark provided updates on major facilities and parks, showcasing significant capital investment: 1) Northridge Park saw substantial improvements, including the addition of four new pickleball courts alongside a renovated tennis court, new lighting, and ADA-compliant access. Future phases across the city include new lighting for the Windsor Park ball fields and a new sports court storage/restroom building. 2) The 10 Million Gallon Water Tank is structurally complete, with its exterior uniquely designed to resemble a piece of fruit and its surrounding area featuring new play structures and landscaping. The final corner will be completed alongside the new pump station/well house project, which has been delayed due to procurement issues and is now set to begin in December. 3) The grounds for the new City Hall/Freedom Plaza are

advancing rapidly toward a critical deadline of November 18th for the planting of the Freedom Tree, which will anchor the large plaza area featuring seating and a pergola. 4) The Fire Training Facility, a future revenue-generating asset, is nearing completion, with the burn buildings finished, though the classroom building is slowed by the concurrent Geneva Road storm drain line construction running through the site. 5) Finally, the Police Building (formerly Public Safety) is receiving significant, in-house upgrades by the facilities team, including a new roof, two new boilers, and a new chiller, alongside plans to update the exterior signage to "Police" as part of a comprehensive effort to eliminate water leaks and ensure the building's longevity.

501(c)(4) Update Presentation *Presenter: Steve Earl, City Attorney*

Mr. Earl presented follow-up research on how other states regulate 501(c)(4) non-profit organizations regarding the disclosure of their donors, often referred to as "dark money" groups. He confirmed that a number of states do require 501(c)(4)s to disclose donors under certain circumstances. These regulations typically do not target the 501(c)(4) status directly but are broadly enacted campaign finance laws that require any entity making specific types of political contributions to disclose donors, thus catching 501(c)(4)s within their scope.

Mr. Earl identified at least seven states—including New York, New Jersey, Georgia, and Massachusetts—that have faced litigation challenging these laws. These state laws generally share a common theme: disclosure is triggered if an entity, including a 501(c)(4), spends a certain dollar threshold (e.g., \$3,000 to \$15,000) on "electioneering" communications (like billboards or mailers advocating for a candidate or ballot issue) that target the general public within a specific time window of an election (often 60 to 90 days). Donor disclosure is then required for contributions that meet their own threshold, which can range from as low as \$250 to as high as \$10,000. A common exception is if a donor specifically designates their contribution not for political use, in which case the money is typically kept in a segregated account and the donor is not disclosed.

Mr. Earl also noted that litigation challenging these laws on First Amendment grounds has yielded mixed results, with courts upholding the disclosure laws in four cases while finding them unconstitutional in two others. Crucially, a recent ruling in the 10th Circuit (which includes Utah) upheld a New Mexico disclosure law as constitutional, providing helpful legal precedent, though this is not "ironclad." Mr. Earl suggested that the proper remedy for non-compliance with the IRS is the revocation of the organization's tax-exempt status. He concluded by advising the council that if they wish to pursue donor disclosure, it is best handled at the state level, as this is the nationwide standard, carries more weight, and the state is in a better position to handle the frequent legal challenges these laws attract.

Mayor Young agreed that the state level is the best place for overall control of 501(c)(4) regulations but expressed concern that state action could take years. He noted that the issue is causing significant public confusion (citing a local newspaper article that sensationalized "dark money" without evidence). As a temporary, easily implemented "stop gap," he proposed adding a simple check-box to candidate campaign disclosure forms asking if the candidate has received

contributions or benefits from a 501(c)(4), or if they don't know. The goal was informational and transparency-focused, allowing candidates to acknowledge if they received this "help." He argued that while a 501(c)(4) cannot contribute directly, they can use independent expenditures to influence a campaign. He also challenged Council Member Lambson's assertion that a local 501(c)(4) had done nothing illegal, citing an example of a "Meet the Candidates" event that was allegedly tacked onto a food drive, suggesting it was an in-kind campaign event benefitting only certain candidates.

Mr. Earl clarified that 501(c)(4)s are legally prohibited from making direct campaign contributions to a candidate; they can only make independent expenditures, which by definition cannot be coordinated with the candidate. He acknowledged that requiring a candidate to disclose if they benefited from such expenditures would be ambiguous and impose an "additional burden," as the candidate may not even know who is running billboards or radio ads on their behalf. He reiterated his suggestion that the issue is best handled by the state due to legal complexity and enforcement capability.

Councilmember Millett advocated for an ordinance to increase transparency, stating the debate is about the "desire to establish more transparency," not conspiracy theories, especially since the city has a "brand new 501(c)(4)" involved in local politics. She argued that 501(c)(4)s are nationally associated with the term "dark money" because their donors are not disclosed, and they are often used for negative campaigning. Ms. Millett supported the Mayor's check-box idea as a potential solution, but stated she would prefer more detail, potentially including a disclosure requirement for donations over \$250 (citing the New Mexico case). She cited a past election with Mayor Brunst, where large, indirect contributions from the National Association of Realtors were disclosed, which made a difference to voters, demonstrating the importance of transparency. She later confirmed that a motion could not be formally made in the work session but asked to place the item on the next City Council agenda for an official vote.

Councilmember Lambson was against the proposal, arguing that the local 501(c)(4) ("Stronger Together Community") had done "nothing illegal, nothing wrong," and was organized only to support local schools and community groups, claiming their donations are fully disclosed. He specifically stated he spoke with the group and they affirmed they "never contributed to political campaigns or candidates in Orem." Mr. Lambson viewed the council discussion as using "political influence to chase conspiracy theories" and wasting significant city staff time and resources on an organization that has caused no proven issues. He supported Mr. Earl's guidance to let the state deal with the matter.

Councilmember Gale opposed the immediate adoption of the check-box proposal, stating that while the discussion on transparency is important, she believes the council is using its influence to "go after an organization" and is not a "great use of taxpayer" resources. She pointed out that 501(c)(4)s cannot give money directly to candidates, further questioning the value of the check-box. She also stressed that the ongoing discussion was making the meeting run late and advocated for pushing the matter to a later date.

Councilmember Killpack echoed the sentiment that the council was wasting significant "city resource time" on an entity that has not had any issues, characterizing the debate as driven by "suspicions of dark money." He pushed back against Ms. Millett's use of the "dark money" definition in a local context.

Councilmember Macdonald primarily responded to other speakers, clarifying that candidates already list where contributions are coming from and noting the ambiguity of requiring a candidate to acknowledge help they may not know about. He supported the idea that the city was wasting time on a non-issue.

Council members Spencer supported the Mayor's simple check-box proposal as an easy way to add transparency without major legislative hassle, with Mr. Spencer stated there was "no harm, no foul" in adopting the simple solution immediately.

The discussion concluded without a formal motion, as motions are not appropriate in a work session. Councilmember Millett noted the vote was likely four to three against immediately pursuing the transparency measure (with Lambson, Gale, Macdonald, and Killpack against). Ms. Millett proposed making a motion at the next formal meeting to place the item on the agenda, an action that was met with pushback over the use of staff time.

CITY COUNCIL / STAFF REPORTS (BOARDS & COMMISSIONS, NEW BUSINESS, ETC.)

AGENDA REVIEW & PREVIEW OF UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS

6:00 P.M. REGULAR SESSION - COUNCIL CHAMBERS

CONDUCTING

Mayor David A. Young

ELECTED OFFICIALS

David Young, Chris Killpack, David Spencer, Jeff Lambson, Jenn Gale, LaNae Millett, and Tom Macdonald

APPOINTED STAFF

Brenn Bybee, City Manager; Ryan Clark, Assistant City Manager; Keri Rugg, Deputy City Manager; Steve Earl, City Attorney; Chris Tschirki, Public Works Director; Brandon Nelson, Finance Director; Marc Sanderson, Fire Chief; BJ Robinson, Police Chief; Bryce Merrill, Library and Recreation Director; Gary McGinn, Community Development Director; Peter Wolfley, Communications Manager, PIO; Teresa McKitrick, City Recorder

CALL TO ORDER

INVOCATION / INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHT – Spencer Woolley

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / FLAG CEREMONY – Raelynn Woolley

MAYOR'S REPORT/ ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL

Mayor's Message / Moment of Silence *Presenter: David Young, Mayor*

Mayor Young addressed the City Council and community following the tragic murder of Charlie Kirk, sharing his personal reflections and calling for a moment of silence. He revealed that the weeks following the event were deeply challenging for the City and its leadership, which organized a candlelight vigil for approximately 3,000 attendees within seven hours of the attack. He described the vigil as one of the saddest experiences of his life, witnessing the grief on the faces of the crowd. He also noted that the event prompted a rare show of unity, leading all 22 Utah County mayors to issue a joint statement to the media.

Mayor Young's main statement focused on honoring the legacy of Charlie Kirk, who he acknowledged was a man defined by his belief in freedom of speech, dialogue, and persuasion over violence. He emphasized that Mr. Kirk, founder of Turning Point USA, was primarily a husband and father who dedicated his life to engaging young people on the principles of freedom and responsibility. He stressed that Mr. Kirk was courageous not because he avoided conflict, but because he was willing to stand before audiences that often disagreed with him, trusting that "truth presented clearly and courageously would always speak louder than intimidation."

Mayor Young characterized the murder as more than an attack on one man; it was an attack on the fundamental American freedoms to speak, assemble, and disagree peacefully without fear. He described the days following the attack as a sleepless, urgent effort by law enforcement, valley mayors, and federal officials to pursue justice for the community. Mayor Young asserted that Orem, known as "Family City, USA," and typically associated with parades and festivals, was shaken to its core because the violence felt so out of place. He concluded by urging residents to honor Mr. Kirk's legacy by modeling the values he lived by: teaching children that disagreement is an opportunity to learn, that persuasion is stronger than intimidation, and that respect is stronger than contempt. He finished his remarks with a blessing for the family and the city before asking for a moment of silence.

Constitution Remarks Presentation *Presenter: Bill Johnson, Post 72 Quartermaster*

Retired United States Army Sergeant Johnson, with 34 years of service, spoke about the enduring significance of the oath taken by military personnel and its wider relevance to civic duty. Sergeant Johnson, a prior service member, explained that while military members take either a commissioned officer oath or an enlisted oath, the enlisted oath is a lifelong commitment, not just for a temporary term of service.

He recited the Oath of Enlistment in full, which binds the service member to: 1) Support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. 2) Bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution. 3) Obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over them, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Sergeant Johnson emphasized that any oath, whether taken by a soldier, a law enforcement officer, or a civilian in a position of responsibility, should be understood as a permanent commitment to support and do what is right for the community and its people. He concluded by highlighting his continued service as part of the American Legion Post 72, where he volunteers to support disabled veterans, often partnering with Lowe's to perform necessary aid work.

Constitution Month Awards Presentation *Presenter: Pete Wolfley, Communications Manager*

Mr. Wolfley addressed the Mayor and Council to report on the city's third annual Constitution Month Art Contest celebration held during September. The contest is a key component of Orem's efforts to celebrate the Constitution.

He first recognized the Hunsaker family (Nathan, Hannah, Walter, and Abigail) as winners. Their collective artwork was specifically celebrated for illustrating the First Amendment right to Freedom of Religion, which Mr. Wolfley noted as particularly meaningful since such artistic expression is restricted in some countries. The children were presented with a certificate, with their cash prize to be mailed later.

The final winner, Shauna Stowers, who was invited to speak about her winning piece. Ms. Stowers explained that her artwork was titled "A Patriot's Homecoming." She was inspired by the recent, scary moments when one of her daughters was at UVU and another was on lockdown, which reminded her that despite fear, the community is "in the hands of a God who loves all of us." Her piece depicted people from various walks of life and "different experiences on Earth" who "gave their life for a country and a cause that was greater than themselves." She expressed her profound love for both God and the country, and her belief that "we're gonna be okay."

Legislative Report *Presenter: Lisa Shepherd, Utah State Representative and David Shallenberger, Utah State Representative*

Utah State Representatives Shallenberger and Shepherd, both freshmen representing districts that uniquely span both Orem and Provo, delivered a joint update following their fast-paced, 45-day legislative session where approximately 800 bills were voted upon.

Representative Shallenberger emphasized the high volume of work, with the House voting on nearly 800 bills. A notable early success was passing legislation designed to streamline 911 emergency dispatch services in Provo, enhancing efficiency and improving cooperation with emergency resources statewide. Moving forward, Rep. Shallenberger is concentrating on large-scale issues crucial to the region: he is working with the Mountainland Association of Governments (MAG) and UDOT on transportation planning and is deeply involved in water resource issues, collaborating with the Central Utah Water Conservation District regarding the Great Salt Lake and the Colorado River. Furthermore, he is partnering with Senator Stratton to adjust a sweeping wildlife management bill to ensure Orem residents can continue to use the foothill areas for recreation (hiking and biking) while maintaining the areas' integrity as

necessary winter havens for wildlife. Finally, he highlighted the escalating threat of cybersecurity, noting the state's network endures approximately 1.5 billion penetration attempts every day.

Representative Shepherd, whose district covers southwest Orem and part of Utah Lake, detailed her legislative work serving on the Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, Government Operations, and Revenue and Taxation committees. She successfully passed a bill focused on transparency in elections, requiring candidates to file a conflict of interest statement simultaneously with their official filing, rather than after being elected. She identified two other bills as the most significant passed during the session: a bill providing essential protections and treatment for firefighters dealing with job-related cancer, and a strong anti-drug measure that imposes prison time for possession of a significant amount of fentanyl, reflecting her commitment to the safety of Orem and Provo. She also mentioned her current focus on the Organized Crime Committee due to concerning activity observed even within Utah County. Both legislators concluded by underscoring that their work is guided by the principle of "Vox Populi" (The People's Voice) and pledged to remain accessible to the City Council and residents regarding any local and statewide concerns.

Library Advisory Commission *Presenter: Bryce Merrill, Library and Recreation Director and Katrina Britner, Library Advisory Commission Chair*

Mr. Merrill began by thanking the entire Library Advisory Commission for guiding major decisions throughout a "busy and awesome" year. A significant focus for the commission has been increasing the collection development budget and boosting investment in digital library resources to maximize the impact of tax dollars.

Ms. Brittner, speaking for the commission, gave a special shout-out to the dedicated library staff, crediting them with keeping the library fully functional and innovative. She highlighted the sheer volume and variety of programming offered in just one week, including: 1) Children's programs (Puppets, Story Time, Toddler Tales, Bouncing Babies, and Cuentos). 2) Educational and cultural events (clinics on costumes and cosplay, lessons on radon risks and home safety, a LEGO Lab, and the Common Threads art show). 3) Entertainment (screenings of Superman II and Conversation, and a comedy show).

Ms. Brittner quoted scholars, calling the Orem Public Library the "heart and soul of the community" and celebrating its success in building community, noting that patron numbers and activities are soaring.

Mayor Young provided context, explaining that the library's current success is a dramatic turnaround. He recalled that just two and a half years prior, the library was struggling, facing negative press, and lagging behind the rest of the city workforce in an employee engagement survey. To address this, the City moved Mr. Merrill to revitalize the library.

Mr. Merrill responded to the challenge by researching "best practices" at other successful libraries nationwide and implementing innovative ideas. The Mayor praised Mr. Merrill and his

team for this "phenomenal job," stating the library is now a "happening place" and on track to become "one of the best, most exciting libraries in the state."

Council members Millett and Killpack echoed the praise. Ms. Millett thanked Mr. Merrill for his "thinking outside the box" and successfully aligning the library's growth with the city's "Family City, USA" motto. Mr. Killpack applauded the synergy, innovation, and extra effort from the staff that has allowed the Orem library to exceed all expectations and set records.

Top Work Places Presentation *Presenter: Amy Peterson, HR Manager and Jennica Jones, Strategy and Innovations Manager*

Ms. Peterson reported on the city's outstanding results from a recent anonymous employee survey conducted by the workforce research firm Energage. This survey, which measured workplace culture and engagement, led to the city's recognition as one of Utah's Top Workplaces, ranking 49th in the Large Employers category. Notably, Orem is the only city to receive recognition in this category, an award based entirely on employee feedback and only given to organizations whose scores surpass national benchmarks.

Key highlights demonstrating the strength of Orem's organizational culture and employee experience include: 1) Recommendation: 81% of employees highly recommend working at the City of Orem. 2) Professional Growth: The city ranked in the top 2% nationally for employees seeing professional growth and opportunities, a result attributed to Orem's investment in training, education, and encouraging certifications through the hybrid step program. 3) Management: Orem is in the top 1% for having caring and supportive managers. 4) Innovation: The city is in the top 14% for innovation and supporting new ideas. 5) Meaningful Work: 86% of employees feel their work is meaningful. 6) Culture Descriptors: When asked for three words to describe the culture, the top answers were friendly, fun, and positive.

Ms. Peterson thanked the Mayor and Council for their support and investment in professional growth, affirming that the city is proud of the recognition but will continue working to improve the employee experience.

New Youth Council Introductions and Swearing In *Presenter: Jennica Jones, Strategy and Innovations Manager and Sydney Bailey, Events Coordinator*

Ms. Jones and Ms. Bailey presented the current Orem Youth Council members to the Mayor and City Council. The Youth council has over 20 members this year, all of whom are Orem residents demonstrating a strong commitment to serve the community, eagerness to learn about city government operations, and a desire to build friendships across different schools.

Ms. Bailey reported that the Youth Council held its first meeting earlier this month to brainstorm their mission statement, which will center on leadership, community, and service. The council is set to be very active throughout the year, with plans to: volunteer at various city events, attend the Local Officials Day at the State Capitol, and lead several service projects in the community.

Mr. Jones also expressed gratitude for the support and service of Council Members Gale and Lambson, who work directly with the Youth Council. The presentation concluded with an official swearing-in ceremony conducted by the City Recorder, Ms. McKittrick.

PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Opened at 7:08 PM

Michael Lee addressed the council with two main concerns, both centered on physical elements in his neighborhood, Sunset Heights. First, regarding the recently completed Heritage Park, he expressed general excitement over the adjusted height, which achieved necessary drainage while managing neighborhood objections, but asked that the city follow through on plans to cover the visible "lots and lots of rocks" with grass or other play surfaces to match the original renderings. His second, and more significant, concern involved the poor conduct and disruptive installation practices of Lumen's subcontractors who are laying fiber. He detailed a distressing lack of communication. Furthermore, he opposed the company's intent to dig multiple holes around the roots of his 30-year-old tree. Mr. Lee argued that the city, as the administrator of the easement, has the right to deny access to companies that are not essential.

In response to Michael Lee's concerns regarding the Lumen company installing fiber and potentially damaging private property, Mayor Young asked for clarification on the city's authority over the public utility easement.

Mr. Bybee explained that the Lumen company, as the successor to CenturyLink, possesses a pre-existing, historic right to use the easement. This right stems from a telecommunications agreement initially established in either 1935 or 1938. Because Lumen acquired this pre-existing right, the City cannot simply deny them access. However, the city does retain the authority to manage the process and enforce construction standards: The city can hold Lumen accountable to all existing guardrails and regulations for construction and the public can contact the city's engineering division directly for assistance in enforcing these standards. Mr. Bybee noted that the council would only have the authority to decide on granting access if a "future brand new private utility provider" attempted to enter and use the easement for the first time. For Lumen/CenturyLink, however, that right is already established.

Jonathan Wagstaff expressed deep concern that Orem and UVU have become negatively associated with tragedy on the national stage, arguing that this lingering stigma could lead to a significant 10% decrease in property values and reduced tax revenue, citing a 2015 economic study. Mr. Wagstaff proposed a strategy to convert the stigma into distinction by rebranding Orem as the "center of dialog and discourse." His plan involves two main thrusts: establishing the Orem Award for Dialog and creating a public holiday called Dialog Day. Mr. Wagstaff urged the Mayor and City Council to form a committee to enact these initiatives.

Tyler Haroldson, a Vineyard resident, addressed the council to express urgent concerns about the safety of 400 South, a street partially controlled by Vineyard and partially by Orem, which he asserts is dangerous. He highlighted two severe incidents on the road during October,

where a sixth-grader named Ryder was struck in 2022, sustaining a skull fracture, and a 17-year-old named Sienna was fatally struck while running in 2023. Given the road's proximity to a park and an elementary school and recorded issues with excessive speeding, his primary request is to make the street safer. His preferred solution is to consolidate control of the entire street under one city to streamline decision-making, and he urges the council to implement quick, inexpensive traffic calming measures.

Heather Frey, an Orem resident, began by sincerely thanking the Orem staff and leadership for quickly organizing the candlelight vigil to honor and mourn Charlie Kirk. She then introduced a proposal to name the large clock outside City Hall. Ms. Frey is asking the City Council and Mayor to name the clock "Charlie." She noted that Charlie Kirk's life began in 1993 and tragically ended in Orem on September 10th. She suggested that the city's newest timekeeper would be a fitting and powerful representation of life moving forward and a lasting way for Orem to commemorate Charlie Kirk.

Evan Thacker first expressed gratitude to Mayor Young and Ms. Frey for their comments regarding Charlie Kirk. He then raised two main points concerning Orem City. His primary concern was the display of political campaign signs on canal fences after the Canal Company specifically requested their removal. He noted that signs for candidates Young, Millett, Spencer, and Mulestein remained, worrying that this disregard for a reasonable request might reflect a general disrespectful governing strategy. Conversely, he praised candidates McCandless, Mecham, Mortimer, and Moulton for the conspicuous absence of their signs, viewing this as a signal of respect and regard that he hopes will define Orem's leadership. Second, Mr. Thacker offered his thanks for the City Council's recent positive action in making information about the city's successful grant-getting efforts public on the transparency portal, acknowledging the work of the grant writer and Councilors Millett and Spencer for listening to his feedback. He suggested that the council could further enhance transparency by adding details about the specific purposes and projects for which the multi-million dollar grant money has been or will be used.

Mayor Young and Councilwoman Millett responded to Evan Thacker's concern about political signs remaining on Orem's canal fences, offering clarification and context to the situation. Mayor Young stated that for the 35 years he has lived in Orem, political signs have always been on the canals without controversy until this year. He explained that the recent issue arose because one specific Canal Company asked for signs to be removed after being "harassed" with repeated phone calls from certain people/campaigns. The Mayor clarified that there are multiple canal companies, and the other companies are "just fine with the signs." He asserted that the candidates were not disrespecting or disregarding rules, but were following the specific instructions of each separate canal company. Councilwoman Millett echoed this, adding that four years ago she personally received permission from a water master, who said they only cared that the gates weren't blocked. She confirmed that signs have been on the canals in past elections and noted a sign for candidate Doyle Mortimer is currently on a canal. Ms. Millett specifically stated that the one water master who requested removal did so because she was harassed by supporters of a certain candidate who "don't like the other candidates," characterizing the situation as "dirty

politics." Both leaders confirmed that the signs were removed from the canals where the specific complaint was made.

Closed at 7:34 PM

SCHEDULED ITEMS

PUBLIC HEARING - ORDINANCE - Request to Amend the Text of Article 22-21 Special Exceptions for Multi-Family Dwellings *Presenter: Jared Hall, Planning Manager*

Mr. Hall, joined by applicant Mr. Zumbrena, proposed text amendment to Orem City Code Article 22-21, which governs special exceptions for placing multifamily dwellings in single-family residential zones (R-6, R-6.5, R-7.5). The current, narrowly written article aims to allow multifamily development on vacant lots that are surrounded by existing multifamily properties. The applicant's property is just over one acre near the intersection of 975 North and 100 West. The key proposed amendments by Mr. Zumbrena include: 1) Lot Size Expansion: The required eligible lot size would expand from a maximum of 20,000 square feet to a maximum of 48,000 square feet (to accommodate lots like his, which is over one acre). 2) Block Eligibility Criteria: The standard for eligibility, which currently requires all other lots in the surrounding block (defined by public streets) to be multifamily, would be loosened. The proposal would require at least 75% of the properties to be multifamily. For blocks larger than 10 acres (like the applicant's), the 75% rule would apply to a contiguous area of at least 300 feet drawn around the lot. 4) Density Formula: A new density formula is proposed for lots greater than 20,000 square feet, allowing one unit for every 2,950 square feet (approximately 14.75 units per acre), and an additional 5% density bonus for superior construction/energy-efficient materials. 5) Architectural Standards: The list of approved building materials would be expanded to include wood and fiber cement board.

Mr. Hall noted that this amendment, if passed, would apply citywide to any parcel that meets the expanded eligibility standards, not just the applicant's property. Council members noted the current law is rarely used, though Councilwoman Millett cited two previous uses in 2000 and 2008. The Planning Commission reviewed the proposal during a public hearing but ultimately recommended denial of the text amendment.

Mr. Zumbrena, the applicant, spoke in support of the proposed text amendment, framing it within the historical context of Orem's desire for growth and addressing the current housing affordability crisis. He cited the city's naming after Walter C. Orem in a failed bid for a railroad stop and Orem's successful bid to host the University Mall after Provo rejected it, arguing the city was historically growth-minded, a mentality he feels has now shifted to the "extreme other side." He highlighted that the affordability crisis is severe, noting a 480% increase in owner-surrendered pets in Utah due to high housing costs and rents. His motivation is to add quality, affordable multi-unit housing (townhomes). He noted that Orem has not approved a new

multi-unit project in five years, though Mayor Young countered that hundreds of previously approved units have been built.

Regarding his specific property, Mr. Zumbrena explained that while it's zoned R-6 (single-family), its rectangular dimensions (335 ft x 150 ft) are not functional for desirable single-family homes, and building high-value single-family homes next to an older fourplex is not marketable. He proposes the 16-unit townhome project as a transitional property between the existing fourplexes and the single-family homes. He plans to market the units for sale, initially using lease-to-own options.

The City Council had a discussion where they addressed their concerns. These concerns included the impact of the amendment on the City as a whole. Mr. Zumbrena stated that based on departmental maps, the amendment would realistically only affect "maybe six properties" citywide. Councilmember Millett expressed concern that if the amendment passes, the specific 16-unit project would be reviewed by the Board of Adjustments and the Planning Commission, and would not return to the City Council for final approval, thus limiting the opportunity for resident feedback. Council members asked why he wouldn't develop the five single-family homes allowable under current R-6 zoning. Mr. Zumbrena claimed it "just doesn't blend in," but Councilman Spencer and Councilman Macdonald expressed concern that moving from five homes to 16 multi-unit townhomes on an R-6 lot compromised neighborhood integrity and consistency. Following this discussion, Mayor Young opened the floor to the general public for comment.

Public Hearing Open 8:07 PM

Dick Allen, a resident living directly east of the proposed project, voiced a concern about traffic congestion in the area between Main Street and 185 West, from 8th North to 12th North. He reported that recent surveys conducted by a friend documented 230 vehicles parked on the street and 276 vehicles in parking lots on one night, stating that streets like 1st West and 185 West are already severely congested and difficult to drive through due to vehicles parked on both sides. Mr. Allen's primary worry is that adding Mr. Zumbrena's planned 16-unit complex, even if the 56 resident cars are parked inside, will introduce additional visitor parking on the already crowded streets, increasing the risk of accidents and danger, especially to the children who will likely live in the family-oriented townhomes and walk to the nearby school. While acknowledging that a nice-looking complex would improve the area's appearance, he urged the city to address the congestion regardless of the project's approval by restricting parking to one side of 100 West and 185 West.

Steve White urged the council to reject the proposed zoning adjustment, framing it as "spot zoning" that benefits a single landowner and sets a dangerous precedent, rather than a technical adjustment. He argued that the proposal, which more than doubles the maximum lot size for exceptions from 20,000 to 48,000 square feet without any city-wide justification or study, constitutes favoritism and not genuine planning. Mr. White warned that packing 16 units onto one lot would negatively impact the community by adding cars to already clogged streets,

straining schools and utilities, and eroding the city's unique neighborhood character defined by open spaces and tree-lined yards, not "boxy townhomes." Finally, he accused the council of disrespecting residents who have repeatedly spoken out against higher density, demanding they stop overriding the community's voice for developer profit and instead address density transparently through a city-wide, resident-driven plan, urging them to protect the neighborhoods where families live.

Rick Jeske, who has lived near the site since 1991, supported the concern about increased parking and density by sharing the history of the nearby Blackhawk subdivision, which was originally intended for 5.6 units but was approved for six units after neighborhood agreement, ultimately creating a nice development. However, Mr. Jeske noted that even with only six units, there is already an issue with cars parking on 930 North and 100 West at night, a problem compounded by the overflow parking from other townhomes further south, forcing traffic on 100 West to function like a "one-lane bridge." He emphasized that the primary concern is the overnight parking spillover onto the road, and while he might support a smaller project of five or six units with internal parking to prevent street overflow, he urged the council not to approve the proposed change because it could unknowingly affect other properties city-wide without the benefit of neighborhood input or meetings.

Crystal Muhlestein echoed the traffic and parking concerns previously raised, confirming that driving on the street near the proposed project is essentially like navigating a "one lane road" due to congestion. Her primary objection, however, centered on zoning practices, stating that it is inappropriate to change the definition of a zone simply to accommodate a specific project. Ms. Muhlestein argued that approving such an action sets a very bad precedent for the city's future, warning that it could "open a can of worms" that would be impossible to close, and she urged the council not to approve the proposed zone change.

Tammy Moore stated her opposition to the proposed code change. Her primary concerns center on traffic impact and the long-term character of the community. Ms. Moore pointed out that 800 North is a major traffic corridor to the rapidly growing areas, noting that she and her husband already try to avoid it, and she fears the code change will exacerbate congestion there. Additionally, while acknowledging the need for apartments, she believes the city is tipping the balance too far between owner-occupied homes and rentals, which threatens Orem's reputation as a "family place" and erodes the "good quality of life." She concluded by urging the council to be good stewards and protect the existing neighborhood character.

Stephan Zambrennon, whose father is the project's applicant, spoke not just on behalf of the project but as a lifelong resident who is currently priced out of the city, living in Springville despite working in the area. He highlighted the difficulty and frustration of growing up in Orem but being unable to afford to raise his own family there, linking this issue to the broader anger and frustration seen among younger generations who cannot achieve basic stability or "a slice of life." Mr. Zambrennon argued that the city must be forward-thinking and create housing opportunities for future generations, lest Orem's families be forced to move to more distant, affordable cities like Eagle Mountain or Ogden. He asserted that denying such projects

contributes to local issues like school closures due to declining enrollment (citing Windsor being "on the chopping block"). Finally, he addressed the claims of widespread impact, noting that under the current law, "not a single property in the city of Orem" would qualify for the type of amendment being discussed, minimizing the concern that the change would affect a wide range of properties.

Public Hearing Closed 8:24 PM

The City Council gave final thoughts on the project. Councilmember Lambson acknowledged the importance of apartments but stated his opposition to the proposal. He emphasized that the neighborhood needs stability, which he feels comes from single-family homes. He also expressed concern about the unforeseen, city-wide consequences that approving the code change would cause.

Councilmember Spencer also opposed the change, stating his belief that the city must maintain the integrity of its neighborhoods. He argued that the property is zoned R-6 and should remain R-6, believing the applicant could still develop "really nice homes" under the existing R-6 zoning, which should allow for six new homes.

Councilmember Gale expressed being "really conflicted" because she agreed with the applicant's representative on the need for places and opportunities for younger families to build equity. However, she recognized the legitimate concerns of the neighbors regarding existing traffic patterns. While optimistic that a future proposal might make more sense for both the neighborhood and housing affordability, she concluded, "I just don't think we're quite there yet."

Councilmember Millett confirmed the severity of the local traffic, calling 100 West a "one lane road." Her primary focus is on promoting owner-occupied housing opportunities to help young people build equity and personal wealth, stating that if the city only builds rentals, it won't solve the underlying problems of affordability. She expressed deep discomfort with changing an ordinance for a specific project (spot zoning) and the fact that the code change would remove the residents' right to formally comment on future projects developed under the new ordinance, which she considers a violation of their property rights. She prioritized the creation of R-6, owner-occupied homes.

Mayor Young provided a "big picture" perspective, arguing that because the city is 95% built out and already one of the densest in the state, leaders must decide what they want the city to look like. He stated that approving more density in the name of affordability is a "road to nowhere" that only makes streets more crowded—citing the street in question as a "virtual one lane Street." The Mayor believes increased density does not lead to more affordability and stressed that the current level of 42% rentals may already be too high. He concluded that the clear message from residents is that the city has "enough traffic, enough density," and the solution is not any more density.

Mr. Spencer moved to deny the request to amend the text of article 22-21 Special Exceptions for multi-family dwellings. **Seconded by** Mr. Macdonald. Those voting no: David Young, LaNae

Millett, David Spencer, Tom Macdonald, Jeff Lambson, Chris Killpack and Jenn Gale. The motion **didn't pass**.

CITY MANAGER INFORMATION ITEMS

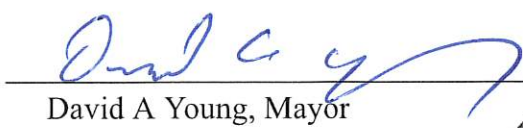
Mr. Bybee provided a quick update, first noting that the latest Citizen Budget is available in hard copy and online. He offered a report on the recent Taste of Orem event, which the city envisioned as a chance for the community to gather, find strength, and support local businesses. Mr. Bybee confirmed the event was a success, with ticket sales exceeding all expectations and resulting in rave reviews from participating businesses and residents, despite some vendors running out of food. Mr. Bybee concluded that the event was fiscally successful, but more importantly, it was wonderful to see so many happy faces proving that Orem is "Family City, USA" and demonstrating unity, peace, and community strength.

ADJOURN TO A CLOSED SESSION IN THE SUMMIT CONFERENCE ROOM

Ms. Millett moved to adjourn to the Summit conference room to discuss pending or reasonably imminent litigation; the character or professional competence of an individual; or the purchase or lease of real property, **seconded** by Mr. Killpack. Those voting yes: David Young, LaNae Millett, David Spencer, Tom Macdonald, Jeff Lambson, Chris Killpack and Jenn Gale. The motion **passed**.

(These minutes were created with the help of AI)

PASSED and APPROVED on this 18th day of November 2025.


David A Young, Mayor

ATTEST:


Teresa McKittrick, City Recorder



COUNCIL MEMBER

Mayor David A. Young

AYE NAY ABSTAIN ABSENT

☒ ☐ ☐ ☐

Chris Killpack	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
David Spencer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jeff Lambson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jenn Gale	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LaNae Millett	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tom Macdonald	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

