

CITY OF OREM  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
56 North State Street Orem, Utah  
December 9, 2025

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

CONDUCTING ELECTED OFFICIALS	Mayor David Young David Young, David Spencer, Jeff Lambson, Chris Killpack, and LaNae Millett (ZOOM Tom Macdonald and Jenn Gale)
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; Derek Spencer, Fire Division 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](http://orem.gov/meetings) under “City Council Presentations”**

**FrontRunner 2x Project Presentation** *Presenter: Taggart Bowen, City Engineer; Braden Anderson, UDOT, John Buttenonb, HDR and Janelle Robertson, UTA*

Representatives from UTA, UDOT, and HDR presented the FrontRunner 2X Project to the City Council, outlining a major infrastructure initiative designed to double the frequency of the current commuter rail service. To address peak-hour crowding that often exceeds 90% capacity, the project aims to move from 30-minute to 15-minute intervals during peak times and from hourly to 30-minute intervals during off-peak hours. This transition requires significant infrastructure upgrades, as the current 83-mile corridor is largely single-tracked. The 2X project will increase double-tracking to approximately 50% of the total system, though the segment in Utah County will become nearly 100% double-tracked. The total estimated cost for the project is approximately \$3 billion, funded through a combination of state contributions and a federal Core Capacity grant.

In the Orem and Vineyard area, the project involves a 1.7-mile segment that requires complex track realignment to navigate the Geneva Road Bridge. Because the bridge was originally designed to accommodate five tracks, UTA plans to shift both its tracks and the existing Union Pacific lines to the east. While this shift minimizes large-scale land grabs, it will

necessitate "sliver" property acquisitions of roughly 8 to 10 feet from seven residential backyards north of 800 South. The Orem Station will also see minor modifications to its parking lot layout to accommodate straightened tracks. Regarding community concerns about noise, the presenters noted that the project will utilize "springwell frogs" and ballast mats to mitigate vibration and sound, rather than installing traditional sound walls.

During the discussion, council members inquired about the possibility of high-speed "bullet" trains or express services. Ms. Robertson from UTA explained that their market analysis shows FrontRunner functions more as a regional rail with high ridership at almost every station, making express service difficult without "quadruple tracking," for which the state does not currently have the necessary land or funding. The project is currently in the final design and train procurement phase, with construction slated to begin in 2027 and the expanded service expected to launch by 2030.

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**Center Street Widening Project Presentation** *Presenter: Taggart Bowen, City Engineer*

Mr. Bowen presented a proposal to the City Council regarding the Center Street Widening Project, which aims to alleviate a major traffic bottleneck between Geneva Road and 1330 West. The project will expand the current roadway from three lanes (which currently tapers down to two lanes at the railroad tracks) to a consistent five-lane configuration. This stretch of Center Street serves as a critical regional connector between I-15 and the City of Vineyard, handling between 25,000 and 30,000 vehicles daily. Although the project was initially conceived in 2010, it was placed on hold in 2015 under the assumption that the railroad crossing might be abandoned; however, Union Pacific has since confirmed the tracks remain active for local business use, necessitating a full modernization of the crossing and gates.

The financial framework for the project involves a partnership between the City of Orem, the Mountainland Association of Governments (MAG), and the Utah Legislature. The Council is currently considering a resolution for an interlocal agreement with Utah County to secure \$11 million in funding (available in 2028) and an additional \$1.7 million (available in January 2026). Orem is responsible for a 6.77% local match of these funds. Additionally, the city received a \$1 million grant from the state legislature specifically designated for the required railroad crossing upgrades.

In addition to the lane expansion, the current design phase is evaluating the inclusion of sidewalks on both sides of the street to improve active transportation. Engineers are working to balance these improvements with the potential right-of-way impacts on local businesses, particularly on the north side of Center Street. The project is currently in the design coordination phase, with the funding resolution included as a consent item for the Council's approval.

**Station Area Plan Presentation** *Presenter: Gary McGinn, Community Development Director and Jared Hall, Planning Manager*

Mr. McGinn and Mr. Hall presented the completed Station Area Plan for the Orem FrontRunner station, which has already received endorsement from the Mountainland

Association of Governments (MAG). This comprehensive plan is centered on six guiding principles: focusing growth within a "mixed-use village," providing diverse housing options, enhancing transportation choices, connecting the community to nature via trail systems, creating gathering spaces, and supporting long-term economic impacts. The vision for this area is an urban neighborhood that serves as a "launch pad" for UVU students and commuters. Importantly, the council emphasized that this plan does not immediately trigger rezoning or commit the city to specific projects; rather, it establishes a strategic priority to concentrate high-density and student housing at the transit hub. This approach is designed to protect the integrity of Orem's established single-family neighborhoods by providing better-designed, legitimate housing alternatives for students closer to campus.

While the FrontRunner station is slated for growth, the city is pursuing a different strategy for three UVx stations located along University Parkway: Lakeview (400 West), Main Street, and University Place. Under Utah state law, municipalities may pass a Resolution of Impracticability if they determine that additional station area planning is unfeasible or detrimental due to existing land-use patterns. The administration argued that these stations are located in the heart of Orem's "economic engine"—a corridor that generates the critical sales tax revenue used to fund essential services like police, fire, and parks. Because these areas are already 90% developed with established commercial interests, such as the University Place mall and various auto dealerships, the council argued that redeveloping these sites into high-density housing would result in a net fiscal loss for the city.

The City Council's discussion highlighted a "common sense" approach to urban maturity, noting that Orem is in a different lifecycle stage than cities like Lehi or American Fork, which have vacant land surrounding their transit stations. Council members pointed out that the University Parkway corridor already contains a surprising amount of high-density housing, with approximately 2,500 beds located within a half-mile of the Lakeview station alone. The city maintains that it has already achieved the state's goals for transit-oriented development through decades of prior investment and redevelopment agencies (RDAs). By formalizing these resolutions of impracticability, the city intends to signal to state legislators and MAG that Orem will prioritize its established commercial tax base over the state's one-size-fits-all housing mandates, ensuring that the "backbone" of the city's stability remains intact while directing new growth only to the most appropriate transit hubs.

**Wildland Urban Interface Code Presentation** *Presenter: Derek Spencer, Fire Division Chief and Aaron McKnight, Assistant City Attorney*

Mr. McKnight presented a proposal to adopt the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code, a building code mandated by the Utah State Legislature through House Bill 48. This legislation was passed in response to devastating wildfires in California, such as the Eaton and Palisades fires, with the goal of preventing similar structural losses in Utah. The code specifically requires that any new construction located near wildlands utilize flame-resistant materials for exteriors,

including specialized roofing and siding, to create a more resilient perimeter against encroaching fires.

In Orem, the impact of this code is geographically limited but strategically significant. City building officials and state authorities utilized risk-assessment data to produce a map identifying a "hatched area" primarily in the northeastern quadrant near the mouth of the canyon. While this zone currently contains very few residential homes—consisting mostly of water infrastructure, Timpanogos Park, and a small number of existing properties—the designation is a prerequisite for financial protection. Adopting the code ensures that the City of Orem remains eligible for state funding to cover the exorbitant costs of wildfire suppression, particularly aerial support, should a fire occur in or near the city limits.

During the discussion, council members clarified that this is a building code requirement rather than a zoning change; it does not alter land use but simply adds a layer of safety specifications for new structures. Fire officials noted that this mandate integrates into the city's existing annual fire mitigation cycle, which includes foothill maintenance, specialized equipment procurement, and training. Although there is ongoing talk at the state legislature regarding potential repeals or modifications to HB 48 in the upcoming session, the council viewed the current adoption as a necessary "housekeeping" item to maintain the city's eligibility for emergency state aid.

**General Plan Update Water and Preservation Elements Presentation** *Presenter: Gary McGinn, Community Development Director and Reed Price, Public Works Assistant Director*

Mr. McGinn and Mr. Price presented findings based on research conducted in response to Council concerns that converting traditional grass park strips to xeriscaping might increase groundwater contamination. To address this, the city consulted with agronomy experts from BYU and senior water engineers from Hansen, Allen & Luce. The expert consensus indicated that the risk of chemicals migrating into deep aquifers is extremely low, provided they are stored and applied according to manufacturer instructions. Interestingly, the research suggested that landscaping changes do not necessarily increase the total chemical risk; rather, they facilitate a "chemical exchange." While a xeriscaped area may require more herbicides to control weeds, it eliminates the demand for the pesticides and fertilizers required to maintain healthy turf. Consequently, the transition to water-wise landscaping is seen as a shift in chemical type rather than an increase in environmental hazard.

A significant portion of the discussion focused on the "human element" of chemical application, specifically the tendency for residents to over-apply fertilizers and herbicides. The primary threat to local water bodies, such as Utah Lake, is not necessarily soil infiltration but stormwater runoff. When chemicals are spread onto non-porous surfaces like sidewalks, driveways, and gutters, they are washed into the storm drain system during rain events or irrigation. Mr. McGinn highlighted that excess nitrogen and phosphorus from fertilizers reaching Utah Lake are major contributors to ecological issues. The council emphasized that simply

sweeping excess fertilizer off the pavement and back onto the lawn is a critical, low-cost mitigation strategy that prevents these chemicals from entering the water cycle as pollutants.

To formalize these safety measures, the City added Policy 5.1 to the General Plan, which mandates the promotion of responsible use of herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers. Because a total ban on these substances is impractical, the City will pivot toward a robust public education campaign. This strategy includes updating the Drinking Water Source Protection Plan (slated for 2026 for city wells) and maintaining the annual Water Quality Report on the city's homepage. Furthermore, the City plans to utilize social media, educational videos, and booths at community events like Oremfest to teach residents about "manufacturer compliance"—applying the right amount of chemical at the right time and in the right weather conditions. Councilwoman Millett concluded by noting the ever-changing nature of scientific knowledge, using the shifting dietary reputation of eggs and avocados as a primary example. She notes that while these foods were once discouraged, they are now celebrated as essential proteins and healthy fats. This evolution leads her to argue for a philosophy of "intellectual humility" and awareness; she suggests that while we should follow current scientific guidance, we must also remain responsible and cautious in our habits. Ultimately, Ms. Millett emphasizes that because science is a continuous process of discovery, what is considered a fact today could easily be revised or proven wrong in another decade.

**Mayor Item** *Presenter: David Young, Mayor*

Mayor Young reopened a previous discussion regarding transparency in local elections, specifically focusing on the influence of "dark money." Recalling a prior debate where the council struggled to reach a consensus, the Mayor reported that subsequent conversations with other council members—including those represented by Tom (who was not present)—resulted in an agreement to move forward with a new transparency measure. The proposal involves adding specific checkboxes to official city election forms, allowing candidates to self-identify whether they are accepting funds from organizations that do not disclose their donors.

Councilwoman Millett spoke in support of the initiative, noting that "dark money" typically refers to funds routed through complex organizations that obscure the original source of the contribution. She referenced a previous presentation by Mr. Earl, which highlighted that such funding is used across the political spectrum and that many states are beginning to implement similar disclosure requirements. The Council clarified that while the city cannot currently ban these contributions, the "Orem solution" is to provide a platform for candidates to go on the record regarding the nature of their financial support.

The Mayor emphasized that the burden of due diligence would fall on the candidates to examine their donation streams for "layered" organizations or anonymous groups versus contributions from "real people." By checking a box indicating they are not accepting such funds, or identifying that they are, candidates provide voters with more context regarding who is potentially influencing their campaign. The Council reached a general consensus that this proactive identification is a critical step in maintaining election integrity, and the measure will be integrated into the city's election filing process.

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

Councilwoman Millett provided an update on several key city commissions, highlighting the Utah Lake Authority's efforts to rehabilitate the lake's ecosystem and public perception. She noted that the authority is actively working to correct misconceptions about the lake's water quality while managing the invasive carp population, which contributes to algal blooms by stirring up lakebed sediment. Innovative solutions are being utilized, including specialized "carp boats" developed at BYU and public "carp hunts" involving bow hunting. These efforts are part of a broader restoration plan that includes native replanting and the development of new trail systems to enhance the lake's beauty and recreational utility.

In addition to environmental efforts, Ms. Millett discussed the progress of the America 250 Commission and the Neighborhood Commission. The America 250 group is coordinating with state initiatives to celebrate the nation's upcoming 250th anniversary, with plans for a citywide "Neighborhood Potluck" in July 2026. Meanwhile, the Neighborhood Commission has been revamped over the last two years to serve as a more effective liaison between residents and the City Council, ensuring that local feedback directly informs city leadership.

Finally, the Arts Commission update focused on Orem's unique approach of supporting existing local arts organizations rather than producing art internally. The commission is currently exploring new public art installations, including street and sidewalk art for events like Oremfest and Rock Fest. A major future focus for the commission will be the "HeArt of Orem Downtown" project, for which they are currently seeking new members with specific expertise in outdoor sculpture and large-scale art to help guide the aesthetic development of the city's central district.

#### AGENDA REVIEW & PREVIEW OF UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS

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

##### CONDUCTING

Mayor David A. Young

##### ELECTED OFFICIALS

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

##### 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 McKittrick, City Recorder

## CALL TO ORDER

**INVOCATION / INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHT** – Jack Rhodes

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / FLAG CEREMONY** – Kelly Kirkpatrick

## MAYOR'S REPORT/ ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL

### **Orem High School Football State Champs** *Presenter: Pete Wolfley, Communications Manager, PIO*

In a celebratory segment of the meeting, Mr. Wolfley and Mr. Hixson introduced members of the Orem High School Tigers to recognize their victory in the 5A State Football Championship. Mr. Hixson, who serves as both an Orem Police Department employee and the Tigers' offensive coordinator, shared insights into the team's transformative journey. He noted that while the roster was filled with "parade players" and immense individual talent, the team initially struggled to find a cohesive identity. However, they successfully "came together at the right time," ultimately dominating the playoffs by outscoring their opponents 155 to 43 across four games.

Beyond the scoreboard, Mr. Hixson emphasized the profound personal growth the athletes experienced throughout the season. The team faced significant adversity, including personal tragedies where players lost loved ones mid-season. Mr. Hixson praised the young men for "binding together as brothers" to support those in pain, highlighting that the season was a masterclass in building character and overcoming hardship. He concluded by stating that the team proved unified effort will always beat raw talent alone, expressing deep pride in representing the Orem community. Mayor Young, recalling his own state championship experience from decades prior, offered his congratulations and affirmed the lifelong impact of such an achievement.

### **Strategy and Innovations Presentation** *Presenter: Keri Rugg, Deputy City Manager*

In a comprehensive report to the City Council, Keri Rugg and Orem's Strategy and Innovation Team detailed the success of the city's centralized grant-tracking initiative, which was established following a 2022 efficiency study. Since the team's inception, Orem has applied for 78 grants totaling over \$46.1 million. Of those, 47 grants have been awarded, securing \$26.1 million in non-taxpayer funding for the city, with an additional \$5.8 million currently pending as of early 2026. Mayor David Young emphasized that this aggressive pursuit of grants has been a primary factor in the city's ability to maintain services and infrastructure without raising taxes, effectively shifting the financial burden away from local residents.

The team highlighted several high-impact projects across various city departments that have already seen tangible results. The Orem Public Library secured LSTA grants for adaptive computer stations for differently abled residents and Hillcrest book lockers to expand remote

access, while the Arts Council used state funding for community workshops and concerts. Public safety also saw significant enhancements, with a Department of Justice grant funding a specialized mental health unit at the police department. On the recreation front, federal and state grants enabled improvements at Windsor, Northridge, and Mount Timpanogos parks, including a mountain biking trail expansion and a new sports court at Windsor Park funded by the Utah Jazz.

Looking toward the future, the city is managing roughly \$5.8 million in pending awards, which target ongoing infrastructure and sustainability goals. Key future-facing projects include the installation of solar panels on the new City Hall, the addition of high-speed EV chargers, and a massive \$10 million water reuse facility designed to remove phosphorus from the reclamation system to protect Utah Lake. The Strategy and Innovation Team—led by Jenica Jones, Heather Cox, Whitney Kingsolver, and Ben Maxfield—was praised for transforming the city's fiscal approach into a "centralized engine" of stewardship that ensures Orem remains a leader in innovation and efficiency.

**Cultural Arts Advisory Commission** *Presenter: Pete Wolfley, Communications Manager, PIO and Lia Collings, Cultural Arts Advisory Commission Chair*

In an update on the Orem Arts Council, Mr. Wolfley and Chair Collins detailed how the city fosters its local creative economy. The Council clarified that its primary role is not to create art directly, but to promote and advocate for the hundreds of talented artists and groups already thriving in Orem. A central part of this mission involves acting as dedicated liaisons for CARE Tax recipients, such as the Haitian community of Utah and local choral groups, ensuring they have the social media presence and advertising resources necessary to reach the public.

The Council's annual calendar is anchored by several signature events that celebrate local and international talent. They curate the popular Summer Concert Series held at the Orem Farmers Market, prioritizing local performers to reflect the city's unique identity. In a major partnership with the World Folk Fest, the Council recently hosted groups from Mexico and Slovenia for free performances at Library Hall. Additionally, the inaugural Taste of Orem at City Center Park blended culinary arts with live music, providing a vital advertising platform for local restaurants, many of which sold out of their featured "mini-entrées" due to high attendance.

Looking toward the future, the Arts Council is deeply involved in long-term planning for the "Heart of Orem" project, specifically the development of a dedicated Arts District. This includes providing input on integrating public art and outdoor sculptures into the city's central hub. One of the most anticipated upcoming events is the Music Stroll at Nielsen's Grove Park planned for May 2026. This event will invite residents to wander through the historic gardens while listening to CARE-funded musical groups, highlighting what the Council calls one of the city's "hidden jewels."

**2025 Gold Star Family Memorial Fundraising Report** *Presenter: Pete Wolfley, Communications Manager, PIO*

In a comprehensive update for the 2025 Gold Star Family Memorial fundraising campaign, Mr. Wolfley reported that the project is now entering its third year of development with significant physical and financial milestones achieved. As of early 2026, the city has successfully raised a total of \$94,000, with the foundation and structural footings already installed at Freedom Plaza, located between the new City Hall and the Orem Public Library. The campaign is currently in a "final stretch" with a remaining fundraising goal of approximately \$150,000 to \$200,000 to reach the total project cost of roughly \$300,000. The city aims to complete fundraising and dedicate the monument by Spring 2026.

The monument itself is a two-sided black granite tribute following a national design by Medal of Honor recipient Woody Williams, but it features four unique panels on the reverse side specifically customized to represent Orem's identity and values. The Homeland panel features a rendering of Mount Timpanogos, while the Family panel depicts a local Orem orchard to honor the city's heritage. The Patriot panel utilizes the standard national silhouette of a saluting service member, and the Sacrifice panel is deeply personal to the community, featuring a photo from the funeral of Major Brent Taylor, showing his wife Jennie Taylor's hand resting on his casket. Each of these panels is accompanied by a descriptive bevel that explains the symbolism and local history for visitors.

Fundraising efforts throughout 2025 were diverse and community-driven, ranging from "Spirit Nights" at twelve local restaurants to unique initiatives like unlimited snow cone sales at city pools and a charity wreath auction at Library Hall. Notably, city employees demonstrated immense support by personally donating nearly \$30,000 during the annual employee giving campaign in September. To close the final funding gap, Mayor Young and Councilwoman Ms. Millett issued a challenge to the city's 3,000 businesses, suggesting that if each contributed just \$100, the project would be fully funded. The Mayor pledged a personal donation of \$10,000 to inspire the community. He reminded residents that contributions made through the Orem Community Foundation before the end of the year are tax-deductible.

**Farewell to Mayor and City Council Presentation** *Presenter: Pete Wolfley, Communications Manager, PIO*

Mr. Wolfley presented a formal farewell tribute to the outgoing City Council members, marking the completion of a prolific four-year term. The presentation centered on a commemorative film that documented the administration's major milestones and featured personal messages of gratitude from across the municipal organization. Department heads each thanked the council for providing the resources and leadership necessary to complete legacy projects, including the construction of the new City Hall, the development of Hillcrest Park, and the successful launch of the "Heart of Orem" downtown master plan.

The executive staff specifically praised the council for their instrumental role in fiscal stewardship and master planning, noting that their support of impact fee studies, rate adjustments, and grant-tracking initiatives has placed the city in a "phenomenal spot" for the future. City Manager Bybee emphasized that the images and videos of these accomplishments

serve as a motivational record for the staff, framing the council's departure not as an end, but as a new beginning for a community that has been significantly strengthened under their watch. Mayor Young closed the session by commending the executive staff for their dedication in executing the council's vision, affirming that the city's current stability and core values are a direct result of their collaborative work over the last four years.

## PERSONAL APPEARANCES

### Opened at 6:39 PM

Tony Kretschmer, a resident of Orem for over 30 years, addressed the City Council to express his gratitude for their leadership in facilitating the split from the Alpine School District. Reflecting on a 20-month journey that began with Orem's "Prop 2," Mr. Kretschmer argued that the restructuring was a necessary correction to decades of outside control, noting that previously, a board dominated by members living outside Orem held the power to close local schools. He emphasized that the transition to a new four-city school district—which he suggested naming "Timpanogos"—has effectively doubled Orem's local representation, shifting the city from having only two representatives to four or five board members who live in or serve the immediate area. Mr. Kretschmer concluded by praising the Council for prioritizing local governance and securing a more manageable district structure that serves 4 cities rather than the previous 14, ensuring Orem residents finally have a dominant voice in the fate of their local schools.

Mike Christensen provided a lighthearted and humorous farewell to the departing City Council members during his first visit to the newly completed City Hall. He expressed his appreciation for the outgoing members, including Dave Spencer, Tom Macdonald, and "Magic" Mayor David Young, noting that the new municipal building stands as a lasting testament to their collective efforts despite the bittersweet reality that some departing members would not have long to use it. Mr. Christensen praised the success of recent community events like the expanded city Christmas program. He concluded by offering his support to the incoming administration and wishing the entire council a safe and happy holiday season as they transition into their next chapters.

Greg Carlisle offered a heartfelt tribute to the departing council members, specifically praising Mayor Young and Councilmember Spencer for their visible leadership and commitment to the community. Reflecting on his long history with various administrations, Mr. Carlisle designated Mayor Young as the "best mayor ever" and highlighted the essential support of the members' wives in fostering the city's recent cultural growth. Looking toward the future, Mr. Carlisle urged the newly elected council to move past the political divisiveness surrounding the Alpine School District split, arguing that while the council showed vital foresight in initiating the transition to a more manageable four-city district, the focus must now shift back to core municipal duties. He concluded by calling on the council to prioritize public safety, crime

reduction, and the management of high-density development and traffic, ensuring that the city's governance remains focused on the practical needs of its residents.

Karen Adamson, a frequent observer of city proceedings, thanked the departing council members for the significant personal sacrifices required by their service. Addressing Mayor Young and Councilmember Spencer directly, she praised their integrity and their proactive efforts to protect vulnerable members of the community. Ms. Adamson specifically highlighted their commitment to transparency, noting that their habit of providing clear, well-informed explanations for their votes allowed citizens to understand both the logic behind their decisions and their personal character. She concluded by expressing hope that future council members would follow their example of professionalism and dedication to the public.

Carol Walker concluded the public comments by echoing the previous sentiments of gratitude toward the departing members. She acknowledged that while city service can often be a source of frustration, she appreciated the profound dedication and "labor of love" the council provided for Orem. Ms. Walker specifically highlighted the city's holiday celebrations, noting that the beautiful light displays and the "phenomenal" drone presentation were significant community highlights that made Orem a better place to live.

Ken Millett praised the character and visionary leadership of Mayor Young and Councilmember Spencer as they finished their terms. Mr. Millett credited Mayor Young with transforming city operations by challenging department heads to reach new heights, resulting in significantly higher employee engagement and satisfaction. He specifically pointed to the completion of the new City Hall as a landmark achievement of the administration, noting that it was delivered without incurring new debt or raising taxes. Regarding Councilman Spencer, Mr. Millett highlighted his reputation as a "boots-on-the-ground" leader who attended nearly every city event and personally resolved specific issues for residents who contacted him directly. Mr. Millett concluded by stating that Orem is a better place due to their service and expressed his personal gratitude for their friendship and dedication.

David Busath thanked the City Council for their "backbone" in addressing the impact of UVU's expanding student population on Orem's housing inventory. He specifically credited the administration with making significant strides to protect family housing and preserve the city's "Family City USA" identity. Mr. Busath also expressed personal gratitude to Councilmembers Spencer and Millett for their support in neighborhood organizational efforts, noting that his experience serving in the local neighborhood program has been a "wonderful experience" and a "great blessing" for him and his wife.

Karen Turner delivered a comprehensive tribute to the legacy of Mayor David Young and Councilmember David Spencer, asserting that Orem stands "stronger, safer, and more united" due to their leadership. She detailed a vast array of accomplishments from Mayor Young's term. Ms. Turner highlighted major fiscal and infrastructure victories. She also praised his policy achievements. Concluding with a challenge to the incoming administration, Ms. Turner urged the new council to maintain this standard of fiscal responsibility and requested that all members prioritize consistent attendance at city meetings.

Lisa Wilkey, a resident and mother to a family of first responders, expressed her deep appreciation for the transformative support Mayor Young and Councilmember Spencer provided to the Orem Fire Department. She credited Mayor Young's leadership with revitalizing the department's culture. Ms. Wilkey also lauded Councilmember Spencer for his genuine care for the families of those who serve. She concluded by challenging the incoming administration to remain personally involved and invested in the well-being of public safety teams, emphasizing that the city's continued safety depends on leaders who relentlessly support those on the front lines.

Miriam Murphy offered a deeply emotional tribute to Mayor Young and Councilmember Spencer for their unwavering support of law enforcement. Ms. Murphy emphasized that Mayor Young stands out as the most attentive leader her family has ever encountered. She applauded the Mayor's commitment to listening and acting on officer concerns. Ms. Murphy specifically thanked the council for supporting current police leadership and concluded by stating that Mayor Young is the "best mayor" Orem has ever had, leaving behind a safer and more united city for the "heart and soul" of the community: its first responders.

Heather Fry used Theodore Roosevelt's "Man in the Arena" speech to honor the departing council members for their resilience in the face of public criticism. She specifically thanked Mayor Young and Councilmembers Spencer and Macdonald for the personal tolls they and their families have endured during their terms. Ms. Fry also used her time to renew a specific public request: naming the city clock "Charlie" in honor of conservative activist Charlie Kirk, who was assassinated during a speaking event at Utah Valley University on September 10, 2025. Ms. Fry expressed frustration that the initiative lacked unanimous support from the full council and implored the leaders to set aside political divisiveness to recognize Kirk's sacrifice.

Cathy Young read a letter addressed to Mayor Young. In the letter, Ms. Minster drew a parallel between the ethical integrity she witnessed during her 37-year career at a local dental practice and the leadership she has observed in the city government. Ms. Minster praised Mayor Young as the finest leader she has seen in her 53 years in Orem. She expresses profound gratitude for his service, contrasting his principled tenure against past instances of unethical governance and defending his character against his detractors.

Cathy Young titled her address "Service Over Politics." Ms. Young offered a reflection on her husband, Dave Young's tenure as Mayor, she emphasized his lifelong commitment to faith and quiet service. She highlighted the significant progress made over the past four years. Ms. Young expressed gratitude to the thousands of residents and city employees who supported their vision of transparent, responsive government. She noted that while the recent election was narrowly decided, it proved the community is more engaged than ever. She framed his legacy not through political conflict, but as a period of transformative growth rooted in the belief that one should "fight darkness with light," calling for future unity and healing within the city.

**Closed at 7:19 PM**

## CONSENT ITEMS

### Meeting Minutes Approval for November 18, 2025

#### Mayor Pro Tem Appointment

#### Transportation Advisory Commission Appointment - Carol Walker

#### CARE Advisory Commission Reappointment - Mary Schumacher

#### Recreation Advisory Commission Appointment - Jill Bowler

#### RESOLUTION - Approving and Authorizing the Mayor to Execute an Interlocal Agreement with Utah County for Funding of Improvements on Center Street Between I-15 and Geneva Road

#### RESOLUTION - Adopting a Wildland Urban Interface Area Map

#### ORDINANCE - Building Code Update (adding 2006 Wildland Interface Code)

#### RESOLUTION - Adopting the Orem FrontRunner Station Area Plan

#### RESOLUTION - Finding conditions of impracticability for a Lakeview Station Area Plan

#### RESOLUTION - Finding conditions of impracticability for a Main Street Station Area Plan

#### RESOLUTION - Finding conditions of impracticability for a University Place Station Area Plan

#### ORDINANCE - Amending Section 2-7-6 of the Orem City Code to add new subsection (T) pertaining to exceptions to bidding requirements

**Mr. Spencer moved** to approve the consent items. **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**.

## SCHEDULED ITEMS

### RESOLUTION - FY 2025 Independent Financial Audit Presenter: Brandon C. Nelson CPA, Finance Director and Jon Haderlie, Partner with Larson & Company, PC

Finance Director Nelson and Mr. Haderlie of the CPA firm Larson & Company presented Orem's fiscal year 2025 independent audit, which concluded with a "clean" unmodified opinion. Mr. Nelson began by highlighting several key financial narratives, noting that the General Fund ended the year with a positive fund balance due to increased sales taxes, ambulance revenues, and road funds. He specifically addressed the Capital Projects Fund, explaining that its negative balance was a healthy reflection of spending down saved reserves to complete the new City Hall without incurring new debt. Utility funds also showed strength, with the Water Fund seeing a massive jump to \$11.7 million primarily due to a \$7 million county grant. Mr. Nelson emphasized that sales tax remains Orem's primary revenue source, and while it saw a "COVID anomaly" jump in 2021-2022, it has recently flattened, requiring careful future monitoring.

Mr. Haderlie confirmed that the city's financial statements "present fairly in all material respects" and praised Orem's fiscal management, citing it as a state-wide example for its ability to pay cash for major infrastructure. While the audit was largely positive, Mr. Haderlie identified three minor compliance findings. First, the Facilities Maintenance Fund carries a deficit that the city is currently working to eradicate through budgeted transfers. Second, a minor reporting error on a Deposit and Investment report was identified and immediately corrected. Finally, the General Fund balance exceeded the state-mandated 35% cap (sitting at 40%), though Haderlie noted this is a "good problem to have" as it represents robust rainy-day savings. He explained that specific risks—such as management override of controls and revenue recognition—were thoroughly tested with no findings of misappropriation or fraud. The City Council subsequently passed a resolution to formally accept the 2025 independent audit.

**Mr. Spencer moved** to approve, by resolution, the completed independent audit performed by Larson & Company, PC. **Seconded** by Mr. Killpack. Those voting yes: David Young, LaNae Millett, David Spencer, Tom Macdonald, Jeff Lambson, Chris Kilpack and Jenn Gale. The motion **passed**.

**PUBLIC HEARING - ORDINANCE - Rezone for 1750 South Geneva Road from OS-5 to C2** *Presenter: Jared Hall, Planning Manager*

Mr. Hall presented a zone map amendment for the 4.43-acre "Johnson Farms" property located at 1738 South Geneva Road. The request seeks to rezone the parcel from OS5 low-density residential to C2 commercial. The necessity for this change stems from upcoming UDOT infrastructure projects, specifically the Lakeview Parkway, which will effectively turn the property into an isolated triangular "island." Because UDOT has restricted access from the new high-volume corridors, the site will be forced to utilize Geneva Road for its primary entry and exit. City staff and the Planning Commission, which recommended approval 5-0, noted that the property's unique geography and isolation from other residential developments make it unsuitable for traditional single-family homes or agriculture, leaving commercial "flex" space as the most viable use.

The developer's concept for the site involves a "flex retail" center designed with a historic farm aesthetic, featuring several buildings totaling over 130 parking spaces. Mr. Washburn, the applicant, explained that these spaces are intended for "destination retail" and small service-based businesses, such as beauty salons or professional offices, rather than high-traffic impulse stops like gas stations. During the discussion, Mayor Young and Councilwoman Millett emphasized the need for a formal development agreement to lock in these specific uses, as the C2 zone is broad and could otherwise allow for less desirable automotive businesses. Mr. Washburn expressed a willingness to prohibit car lots and repair shops to maintain compatibility with the nearby temple and residential neighbors, though he noted that requiring a formal agreement would necessitate a return to the Planning Commission and cause a slight delay in the project's timeline.

### **Public Hearing Open 8:12 PM**

David Busath questioned the physical orientation and accessibility of the project in relation to the new road infrastructure. Specifically, he sought clarification on the setbacks (or "offsets") between the triangular property and the planned bypass roads, expressed confusion regarding the lack of access from those new corridors, and asked whether the buildings would face Geneva Road or the new parkway. Finally, the resident inquired if the development was strategically positioned to serve the high volume of traffic traveling to the LDS temple located just two blocks to the north.

### **Public Hearing Closed 8:15 PM**

Mr. Washburn provided specific details regarding the site's layout and accessibility. He explains that the development will feature at least two, and possibly three, access points located at the north and south ends of the triangular parcel, primarily off Geneva Road. Because the adjacent UDOT roadways to the south and west are limited-access, the project is designed with a 25-foot landscape setback along those borders. Mr. Washburn clarifies that the backs of the buildings will face these new busy corridors; however, they will be designed to be aesthetically attractive despite having no rear entrances. To maximize visibility for passing motorists on the parkway, the developer plans to include a silo in the corner of the lot to serve as the project's primary signage, maintaining the "farm" aesthetic while identifying the businesses within the development.

The Council focused on the necessity of a development agreement to refine the broad permissions of the C2 zoning. Council Member David Spencer clarified that while the Planning Commission's official vote was a simple recommendation for approval, they had internally signaled a desire for such an agreement to ensure the project remains consistent with the "flex retail" concept. Mayor David Young and Council Member LaNae Millett agreed that an agreement is essential to protect the surrounding agricultural and residential neighbors, providing "peace of mind" by legally locking in the promised design and prohibiting incompatible commercial uses.

Mr. Washburn expressed his willingness to enter into the agreement but voiced concerns over potential timeline delays, noting the project had already been in process for four months. Despite these concerns, Councilmember Macdonald and others suggested the process would move quickly and would not result in the significant delays the developer feared. The discussion concluded with general consensus that the commercial rezoning was appropriate for the isolated "island" parcel, provided the specific project details—such as the farm-themed architecture and restricted uses—were formalized, leading the Council to call for a motion to approve.

**Mr. Spencer moved** to refer this back to the Planning Commission for a development agreement. **Seconded by** Ms. Millett. Those voting yes: David Young, LaNae Millett, David Spencer, Tom Macdonald, Jeff Lambson, Chris Killpack and Jenn Gale. The motion **passed**.

**PUBLIC HEARING - ORDINANCE - Text Amendment for PD-36** *Presenter: Jared Hall, Planning Manager*

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Mr. Hall explained a straightforward text amendment request for the PD-36 zone, a planned development zone located between 1600 North and 1200 North along Geneva Road. The zone is primarily designated as a technology park with specific permitted uses, and the applicants are requesting to add Land Use Code 7425 (Gymnasiums and Athletic Clubs) to that list.

The primary purpose of this amendment is to facilitate the opening of a Padel gym. Mr. Hall described Padel as an internationally popular sport that shares similarities with pickleball and racquetball. He noted that the PD-36 zone is more restrictive than standard commercial zones, requiring specific additions like this one to allow for recreational uses. He drew a comparison to a previous amendment that allowed for go-kart tracks in the same area, suggesting that an athletic club aligns with the recent shift toward regional commercial and recreational services. The Planning Commission reviewed the request on November 5 and voted unanimously to recommend approval to the City Council.

**Public Hearing Open 8:20 PM**

Parker Quinlan, a co-applicant for the project, clarified that the Padel facility will occupy a smaller corner building within the PD-36 tech park and provided a detailed overview of the sport. Describing Padel as a fast-growing international hybrid of tennis and racquetball, he explained that it is played on a court roughly one-third the size of a tennis court and utilizes glass walls as part of the field of play. As a former UVU student, Parker emphasized that his goal is to bring this unique recreational experience—currently only available at one other location in North Salt Lake—to Orem's students, young professionals, and families, presenting it as a more engaging alternative to pickleball.

**Public Hearing Closed 8:22 PM**

During the final discussion, Councilmember Millett jokingly referred to the claim that Padel is "more fun than pickleball" as "blasphemy," given the region's strong pickleball culture, but expressed genuine excitement about learning more about the sport. Mayor Young praised the applicants' strategy, noting that Orem—frequently ranked as a top city for pickleball—is the ideal location to launch a new racket sport like Padel. With no public opposition and enthusiastic support from the Council, the public hearing was closed, and a motion to approve the text amendment for the PD-36 zone passed unanimously, officially allowing gymnasiums and athletic clubs as a permitted use in the technology park.

**Ms. Millett moved** to approve by ordinance the text amendment for PD-36. **Seconded by** Mr. Macdonald. Those voting yes: David Young, LaNae Millett, David Spencer, Tom Macdonald, Jeff Lambson, Chris Killpack and Jenn Gale. The motion **passed**.

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#### **PUBLIC HEARING - ORDINANCE - Rezone for 575 E 1000 South from R8 to PD-34**

**(Home Depot)** *Presenter: Jared Hall, Planning Manager*

Mr. Hall and representatives from Home Depot and University Place Mall presented a rezoning request for a 0.31-acre parcel at 575 East 1000 South to transition the property from Residential Agricultural (RA) to Planned Development 34 (PD-34). This specific lot contains a single-family home that the Home Depot intends to incorporate into its larger development footprint to allow for more streamlined property lines and efficient site design. Because the property directly borders a residential neighborhood to the west, the proposal includes significant buffering measures required by the PD-34 zone, such as a 20-foot setback, an 8-foot landscape buffer, and an 8-foot masonry wall. To further address concerns regarding the proximity of the store's loading dock to nearby homes, the developer proposed an enhanced 12-foot masonry wall in critical areas to mitigate noise from delivery trucks.

The Council's discussion centered heavily on the acoustic impact of the loading dock, specifically the disruptive "beeping" of trucks backing up and the sound of air brakes. Representatives for Home Depot noted that while most unloading occurs inside the building, the outdoor maneuvering of trucks would be shielded by the proposed 12-foot wall, which is expected to reduce noise levels by approximately 5 decibels. In response to questions about operational hours, the developer stated that most deliveries are scheduled shortly before or after store hours (roughly 6:00 AM to 10:00 PM), though they admitted that trucks may occasionally arrive during off-hours. Neighboring residents, including one whose bedroom window would be a mere 10 feet from the new wall, expressed that these protections are vital for maintaining their quality of life. Despite a previous 3-2 vote at the Planning Commission that resulted in no formal recommendation, the Council moved toward considering a development agreement to finalize these noise mitigations and ensure the commercial expansion remains compatible with the adjacent neighborhood.

During the City Council meeting, longtime residents Ralph and Annette Olsen expressed concern over the Home Depot rezoning, highlighting that their property is uniquely vulnerable

due to its lack of a traditional backyard. While other neighbors have substantial buffers and backyards between their homes and the commercial zone, the Olsen residence sits a mere 10 feet from the property line, placing their bedroom window within roughly 15 feet of the proposed heavy truck route and loading dock. Mr. Olsen strongly advocated for an enhanced 12-foot masonry wall over the standard 8-foot requirement, noting that anything shorter would fail to adequately block the sights and sounds of massive delivery vehicles operating nearly at their doorstep. Ms. Olsen echoed these concerns, emphasizing that their home faces the full intensity of the loading dock activity, unlike other neighbors who are separated by green space and larger setbacks.

Beyond the physical proximity of moving vehicles, the couple raised the issue of environmental and noise pollution from idling engines. Drawing from their experience living near the existing Costco, Mr. Olsen described how refrigerated trucks often park near residential windows and run their engines for hours while waiting to be unloaded—a practice that would be extremely disruptive if repeated at the new Home Depot site. In response to these concerns, City Attorney Earl clarified that Orem's "disturbing the peace" ordinance, which runs from 10:30 PM to 7:00 AM, does cover stationary machinery and idling refrigeration units, even if it does not explicitly ban the movement of delivery trucks. Councilmember Millett underscored the importance of the 12-foot wall, noting it provides a significant 5-decibel reduction in noise, leading the Council to consider a development agreement to formally codify these sound mitigations and truck parking restrictions.

### **Public Hearing Open 8:48 PM**

An unidentified resident challenged the necessity of the proposed parking layout, suggesting that the developer should remove a dozen parking spots to allow the 12-foot sound wall to run in a straight line. The resident argued that since the rezone already enables disruptive truck traffic by demolishing an existing home, the developer should concede that parking space to create a wider, more respectful buffer for the remaining neighbors. Councilmember Spencer called the proposal an "amazing, wonderful gesture," as the current plan would place a massive wall just 10 feet from a resident's home.

An unidentified resident questioned the fundamental need for a new Home Depot, arguing that the area is already sufficiently served by existing hardware stores. They voiced a passionate plea to stop the "bleeding" of their community, lamenting that commercial expansion is systematically replacing "fabulous" families and longtime friends with commercial property. The resident emphasized that no wall, regardless of height, could compensate for the loss of neighborhood character and the displacement of families from the homes they grew up in.

In response to Mayor Young's inquiry about shifting the building further east, developer Mr. Woodbury explained that the current site plan is the result of two years of coordination with Home Depot. He cited significant underground infrastructure constraints that would make relocating the building or loading dock cost-prohibitive. Mr. Woodbury defended the project by noting that they avoided building taller structures—which are permitted in the zone—to prevent

further nuisance to neighbors. He emphasized that the majority of the building sits more than 70 feet from the property line and argued that the 12-foot wall was determined by experts to be a more effective noise mitigation strategy than an enclosed loading dock.

An unidentified resident raised specific environmental and health concerns regarding the Home Depot delivery operations, focusing on truck idling and air quality. She noted that Orem's consistent "canyon breeze" would likely funnel diesel exhaust fumes and noise directly into the adjacent neighborhood, creating a persistent nuisance for local families. The resident directly challenged the Home Depot representatives to disclose their internal corporate policies regarding driver behavior, specifically asking if there are enforceable rules to prevent trucks from idling during the entire loading and unloading process. This line of questioning underscored the community's fear that while a wall might mitigate some sound, it would do little to protect residents from the airborne pollutants and persistent engine noise associated with a high-volume commercial loading dock.

Mr. Zolack, representing Home Depot, addressed the residents' concerns by clarifying the store's operational policies and the added benefits of the proposed wall. He noted that the 12-foot masonry wall would not only mitigate noise from Home Depot but would also provide a much-needed sound buffer from the existing Costco operations next door. Regarding the "idling" issue, Mr. Zolack explained that Home Depot does not utilize refrigerated trucks, which are typically the main source of persistent engine noise. He explicitly stated that Home Depot has strict operational restrictions in place requiring drivers to shut off their engines during the delivery process and follow a designated route. These policies are intended to eliminate idling and reduce the impact of noise and exhaust on the neighboring families.

An unidentified resident requested greater transparency from Home Depot regarding the site's design, asking for a formal opportunity for neighbors to review the various configurations that were considered for the loading dock. While the resident clarified they were not opposed to the Home Depot itself, they argued that the community is "owed some due diligence" to understand why the loading dock cannot be placed in a less disruptive location. The resident expressed skepticism that underground utilities are the only obstacle and requested a sit-down meeting with the developer to explore options that might be more respectful to the neighborhood than the current proposal and its 12-foot wall.

Mr. Zolack responded to requests for a layout change by explaining that the store follows a rigid prototype design. In this model, the loading dock is always positioned next to the garden center to align with internal logistics, as lumber and deliveries are handled on the same side of the building. Because this configuration is a corporate standard, the company focused its "due diligence" on mitigation rather than relocation. Mr. Zolack noted that they conducted a professional sound study which took into account the high ambient noise already present from the neighboring Costco; based on those findings, they determined that the 12-foot masonry wall was the most effective way to address the neighborhood's concerns while maintaining their operational requirements.

In response to Councilmember Spencer's inquiry about flipping the building to move deliveries to the south, developer Mr. Woodbury explained that such a change would interfere with other commercial considerations and the broader flow of the site. He noted that while the property appears to have plenty of room, various constraints—including customer traffic patterns, front door placement, and operational efficiency—dictated the current layout. Artie emphasized that the plan already goes "above and beyond" zoning requirements by including the wider landscape buffer and the 12-foot wall to minimize residential impact.

An unidentified resident challenged the logic of the project on two fronts: market saturation and infrastructure. They argued that Orem is already well-served by a nearby Home Depot, Lowe's, and several Ace Hardware stores, questioning why the city needs another large-scale retailer. More critically, the resident pointed out that the existing internal roads within the Woodbury development are too narrow to accommodate 18-wheelers, predicting that these large delivery trucks will inevitably "run over other cars" or require expensive, disruptive road reconstruction later. They urged the City Council to push back on Woodbury and demand a smaller-scale retail tenant that fits the current infrastructure rather than forcing a heavy-industrial use like Home Depot into a space not designed for it.

The technical discussion regarding the site's configuration focused on whether the developer was meeting the strict requirements of the PD-34 zone while balancing the topographical challenges of the land. Mr. Woodbury explained that the "jogged" property lines and the need for a retaining wall are due to significant elevation changes on the site, which also necessitate a fenced perimeter to prevent Home Depot traffic from bleeding into future development areas known as Block F. Councilmember Millett and Mr. Hall dissected the specific setbacks, revealing that while the code only mandates an 8-foot landscape buffer, the developer is offering a more generous 10 to 24-foot buffer. Furthermore, although the legal building setback is only 20 feet, the store is positioned 43 feet from the property line at its closest point (near the Olson home) and 77 feet away in other areas.

City Attorney Earl confirmed that the building's proposed height of 24 feet is well under the 35-foot maximum allowed, and since the PD-34 zone does not require a "one-to-one" height-to-distance ratio, the project actually provides more breathing room than required. Despite these technical compliances, the Mayor and Council pushed for clarity on why the building couldn't be shifted even further east; the developers maintained that the current placement is the most efficient use of the site that still allows for future commercial expansion.

An unidentified resident raised specific logistical and timing questions regarding the site plan's southwest corner. She pointed out a potential conflict between the designated lumber pad and the path of semi-truck deliveries, asking how 18-wheelers could navigate the drive aisle and turn north if that space was occupied by staged materials. Additionally, she requested a clear project timeline, specifically asking for the expected dates for groundbreaking and the duration of construction from start to completion.

Mr. Zolack clarified that the southwest lumber pad operates differently than the main loading dock to minimize neighborhood disruption. Unlike the northern dock, which requires

semi-trucks to reverse and engage loud backup beepers and air brakes, the lumber area is designed for flatbed trucks that pull up parallel to a wide double door, unload via forklift, and then drive forward to exit without backing up. Regarding the timeline, the development team anticipates a 12 to 15-month construction window, beginning as soon as weather permits in April. The first three to four months will focus exclusively on the complex task of relocating numerous underground utilities, with the goal of a grand opening in late 2027.

An unidentified resident critiqued the project's transparency, accusing the developer of working in "isolation" for two years and ignoring neighborhood input regarding alternative loading dock locations. The resident dismissed the developer's focus on "efficiency," arguing that this serves only the mall's secretive future expansion plans rather than the privacy and health of local families. Furthermore, the speaker challenged Home Depot's claim that their layout is unchangeable, urging the company to invest in creative engineering to move disruptive operations away from property lines even if it incurs higher costs. Finally, the resident reminded the Council that a PD-34 rezone grants broad development rights that could persist even if Home Depot does not move in, pointedly asking the officials whether their primary loyalty lies with the citizens of Orem or the corporate interests of the mall.

An unidentified resident expressed concern over the potential destruction of a residential home, questioning whether the city would resort to eminent domain to clear the land for the project. The speaker shared their personal discomfort with the idea of homes being demolished for commercial expansion. He questioned the necessity of the home's removal.

### **Public Hearing Closed 9:26 PM**

After closing the public hearing, the discussion centered on a potential compromise regarding the layout of the 12-foot sound wall and the impact on the immediate neighbors.

The Mayor steered the conversation toward a specific solution for the residents living closest to the site. He noted that the nearest home (the Olsons) sits only 10 feet away from the proposed wall, while the Home Depot building is set back 43 feet. He expressed a desire to "infringe on the neighborhood as little as possible" and asked the developer if the wall could be shifted to provide the neighbors more "breathing room," even if it meant the mall giving up some land.

The Olsons expressed that living 10 feet from a 12-foot wall felt "boxed in." They advocated specifically for their neighbors, the Millers, whose bedroom window would also be directly adjacent to the wall. They suggested that instead of the wall "jogging" toward their property to follow the boundary line, the developer should straighten the line. They noted that even a few extra feet of space would be a "generous gesture" to make the situation more positive and less claustrophobic.

Mr. Woodbury proposed a significant compromise: moving the wall 7.3 feet further east (away from the homes). He suggested that Woodbury could legally deed that extra 7.3-foot strip of land to the neighbors for free. He explained that Woodbury couldn't simply let neighbors use

the land while retaining ownership due to insurance and maintenance liabilities. He proposed a "right of first refusal" or a \$10 buy-back option for the mall, ensuring that the land remains as landscaping and cannot be developed into something else by the residents in the future.

Mr. Zolack confirmed that shifting the wall 7.3 feet would have no negative operational impact on Home Depot. He verified that the drive aisles would still be wide enough for fire trucks and delivery vehicles, as they would simply be moving the landscape buffer from the "store side" of the wall to the "neighborhood side" of the wall.

Mr. Clark supported the idea of a landscape easement or conveyance, noting that the city has used similar "friendly agreements" on other properties to allow neighbors to enjoy and maintain buffer zones. Councilmember Spencer clarified that the conveyance should be free to the neighbors and applauded the move as a way to "make everybody happy. Councilmember Millett recalled a conversation with Mr. Woodbury from years prior about respecting neighborhood boundaries. She urged Woodbury to commit to ending "active solicitation" of home sales in the residential area to preserve the remaining neighborhood. Mr. Earl clarified the legal procedure, noting that the current vote was only for the rezone of the specific parcel. The detailed "wall-shift" agreement and land conveyance would likely be codified later in the Amended Participation Agreement.

The Olsens expressed gratitude for the compromise, calling the 7.3-foot shift a "fine gesture" and "very generous." The council members generally agreed that the compromise successfully balanced the city's desire for tax revenue with their duty to protect the residential character of the neighborhood.

Despite the offered compromises, an unidentified resident remained critical of the process, arguing that the developer had worked in "isolation" for two years without meaningful dialogue with the community. The speaker insisted that more "creative" solutions for reconfiguring the loading dock should have been explored through neighbor-to-neighbor discussion. Beyond the noise concerns, the resident warned of significant traffic displacement. He urged the Council to delay the vote to allow for formal meetings between Woodbury, Home Depot, and the neighborhood to address traffic mitigation and dock relocation.

An unidentified resident shared that living against a different commercial wall, noting that while neighbors were given the option to take down their fences and use a five-foot buffer strip, the associated liabilities—such as responsibility for electrical lines and general maintenance—led them to keep their fence up instead. Finally, the speaker raised a critical question about noise recourse, asking the Council if the neighborhood has any legal standing or formal process to file complaints if the truck traffic and loading dock noise prove to be excessive once the store is operational.

Following the public hearing and the negotiation of a neighbor-friendly compromise, the Council moved to a formal vote. The discussion by the individual speakers focused on the procedural path forward and the final stance of each representative. The Mayor steered the Council back to the specific decision at hand: the rezoning of a single residential property (575 East 1000 South) to PD-34. He emphasized that tonight was not the end of the conversation

regarding traffic and neighborhood impacts, and that future communication would be necessary. He initially expressed concern over how the newly negotiated compromises—such as the 7.3-foot wall shift and land conveyance—would be legally guaranteed if they were only voting on a simple rezone.

Mr. Earl provided the legal roadmap for the Council, clarifying that the vote on the rezone should remain separate from the specific layout details. He explained that the city's "security" lies in the RDA (Redevelopment Agency) Participation Agreement (Item 15.1 on the agenda). Because the developer is "highly motivated" to receive tax increments, the city can include the wall height, land conveyance, and setbacks as mandatory milestones in that agreement. If the developer fails to follow through on the compromises, they would forfeit their financial incentives.

Councilmembers expressed a unified appreciation for the "push and back-and-forth" that occurred during the meeting. Ms. Gale and Mr. Lambson noted that while the issue was tricky, the compromises made it a "great discussion" that balanced the city's economic needs with neighbor protections. Mr. Macdonald formally moved to approve the ordinance, and Mr. Killpack seconded the motion.

Councilmember Millett provided the lone dissenting voice. While she explicitly stated her support for the concessions made by Woodbury and Home Depot, she cast a "Nay" vote on principle. She explained her discomfort with the precedent of "gobbling up" residential R8 zoning for commercial expansion and expressed her hope that this would be the final time such a rezone is requested for this specific neighborhood. Councilmember Spencer cast the final vote in favor, reiterating that the arrangement was a "good compromise" and expressing confidence in the project's success.

**Mr. Macdonald moved** to accept by ordinance the rezone for 575 E 1000 South from R8 to PD-34. **Seconded** by Mr. Lambson. Those voting yes: David Young, David Spencer, Tom Macdonald, Jeff Lambson, Chris Killpack and Jenn Gale. Those voting no: LaNae Millett. The motion **passed**.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING - ORDINANCE - General Plan Update Water and Preservation Elements** *Presenter: Jared Hall, Planning Manager*

Mayor Young transitioned to a new public hearing regarding an ordinance for a General Plan update, expressing optimism that the item would proceed much more quickly than the previous debate. Mr. Hall presented the amendment, which adds Chapter 9, the Water Conservation Element, to Orem's General Plan in order to comply with the year-end deadline mandated by Senate Bill 110. Mr. Hall noted that while this is a formal legislative requirement, the ordinance largely codifies water conservation strategies that are already active components of the city's existing water plans, effectively integrating those established practices into the city's primary planning document.

Public Hearing Open 10:08 PM

No Public Comment

Public Hearing Closed 10:08 PM

**Ms. Millett moved** to approve by ordinance the general plan update for water and preservation elements. **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**.

## **CITY MANAGER INFORMATION ITEMS**

City Manager Bybee concluded with a public expression of gratitude toward the Mayor and City Council, particularly acknowledging outgoing council members Spencer and Macdonald. Mr. Bybee emphasized the weight of the responsibility entrusted to him, stating that he never takes for granted the "risk" the elected body and the public take by placing their faith in city staff. He expressed humble appreciation for the Council's belief in the staff's ability to execute their vision and direction, reinforcing the collaborative relationship between the city's administration and its leadership.

## **ADJOURN TO A MEETING OF THE OREM REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (RDA)**

**Mr. Killpack moved** to adjourn to a meeting of the Orem Redevelopment Agency (RDA), **seconded** by Ms. Gale. Those voting yes: David Young, LaNae Millett, David Spencer, Tom Macdonald, Jeff Lambson, Chris Killpack and Jenn Gale. The motion **passed**.

## **RDA CONSENT ITEMS**

### **Approval of RDA Meeting Minutes for June 10, 2025**

**Mr. Macdonald moved** to approve the RDA minutes for June 1, 2025, **seconded** by Ms. Gale. Those voting yes: David Young, LaNae Millett, David Spencer, Tom Macdonald, Jeff Lambson, Chris Killpack and Jenn Gale. The motion **passed**.

## **RDA SCHEDULED ITEMS**

### **RESOLUTION - Approving a Third Amendment to the Participation Agreement with University Shopping Center, L.C. Presenter: Ryan Clark, Assistant City Manager**

Mr. Clark presented the Third Amendment to the RDA Participation Agreement, framing it as the binding legal mechanism to "memorialize" the neighborhood protections negotiated earlier in the evening. He explained that while the 2024 version of the agreement envisioned a different building orientation, this update officially codifies the new Home Depot layout and

replaces the previous site exhibits. City Attorney Earl clarified that this contract provides the city's ultimate leverage; the 12-foot wall height, specific building setbacks, and the land conveyance are now mandatory milestones the developer must meet to qualify for tax increment financing. In a final refinement of the land transfer, Mr. Woodbury agreed to drop the "right of first refusal" buy-back option to avoid legal complications for the homeowners. Instead, the land will be conveyed to the neighbors with a simple deed restriction ensuring it remains permanent green space. The Council concluded by authorizing the Mayor to sign the finalized agreement once the legal language is updated to reflect these specific concessions.

**Mr. Killpack moved** that the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Orem authorizes and approves the Third Amendment to the participation agreement and authorizes the chair of the governing board of the Redevelopment agency of the City of Orem to execute the third amendment to the participation agreement on behalf of the agency subject to that third amendment and the exhibit being modified to reflect that there will be a 12 foot wall constructed by university mall and approximately 7 feet of the existing landscaping being conveyed to the two adjoining neighbors, **seconded** by Ms. Millett. Those voting yes: David Young, LaNae Millett, David Spencer, Tom Macdonald, Jeff Lambson, Chris Killpack and Jenn Gale. The motion **passed**.

## ADJOURN

**Ms. Millett moved** to adjourn, **seconded** by Mr. Lambson. 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 27th day of January 2026.



Karen McCandless  
Karen McCandless, Mayor

ATTEST:



Teresa McKittrick  
Teresa McKittrick, City Recorder



**COUNCIL MEMBER**

Mayor Karen McCandless  
Chris Killpack  
Crystal Muhlestein  
Jeff Lambson  
Jenn Gale  
LaNae Millett  
Quinn Mecham

**AYE    NAY    ABSTAIN    ABSENT**

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