

CITY OF OREM
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
56 North State Street Orem, Utah
April 28, 2026

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

CONDUCTING	Mayor Karen McCandless
ELECTED OFFICIALS	Karen McCandless, Crystal Muhlestein, Jeff Lambson, Jenn Gale, LaNae Millett, Chris Killpack ZOOM Quinn Mecham
APPOINTED STAFF	Brenn Bybee, City Manager; Ryan Clark, Assistant City Manager; Steve Earl, City Attorney; Chris Tschirki, Public Works Director; Bryce Merrell, Library and Recreation Director; Brandon Nelson, Finance Director; Marc Sanderson, Fire Chief; BJ Robinson, Police Chief; 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”

WORK SESSION ITEMS

Plant Freedom Tree Ceremony

Mayor McCandless welcomed the City Council, staff and guests. Current City Council members and past City Council members joined together to plant the new Freedom Tree in the Orem City Freedom Plaza. Next month there will be a ribbon cutting for the Freedom Plaza including the Gold Star Monument.

Budget Presentation for IT and General Operations *Presenter Brandon C. Nelson, CPA, Finance Director; Carlo Okolowitz, IT Director; Stephen Cannon, Information Security Officer; McKay Barton, Software Development Project Manager; Sara Peal, Software Development Project Manager*

Mr. Okolowitz provided an overview of the City of Orem’s IT ecosystem, clarifying the distinct roles within his department. While he oversees operations, his colleagues Mr. Barton and Ms. Peel handle software development, and Mr. Cannon manages product policy and compliance. Mr. Okolowitz described the past year as a period of "letting the dust settle" following the completion of the new city center, with a primary focus on optimizing

cybersecurity tools and infrastructure. Notably, the city utilized state-allocated federal grants to implement Sentinel One for endpoint management and Action 1 for patch management. These transitions allowed the city to retire previous paid services like Sophos and Avanti, resulting in direct cost savings.

The department also executed significant infrastructure upgrades to bolster disaster recovery and data redundancy. The city replaced aging backup hardware and software with modern systems, extending these upgrades to the St. George data center. This involved installing larger server racks and repurposing firewalls to ensure that city data remains redundant and recoverable in the event of a localized catastrophe. Mr. Okolowitz highlighted the scale of modern digital threats by noting that their managed detection system, AdLumen, processed nearly 1.5 billion events over the past year. While the system automates much of the "busy work," city staff still had to manually intervene in over 300 high-priority security alerts.

Addressing future challenges, Mr. Okolowitz noted that while software vulnerabilities are trending downward, the city still manages over 5,000 unique software installations and thousands of pending patches. For the upcoming budget year, he requested funding to maintain the new building's specialized cooling (CRAC) and power (UPS) units, renew the IBM Power Series lease for core databases, and cover increased costs for Google Workspace licensing. A portion of the budget is also earmarked for transitioning to government-tier licensing to ensure UCJIS compliance for criminal justice agencies. Looking ahead, the department aims to expand Help Desk hours to better support 24/7 emergency services and increase overall organizational resilience against the inevitability of cyberattacks.

Mr. Cannon presented the city's IT strategy through the lens of a "social immune system," shifting the focus from internal technical operations to the risks posed by external relationships. He emphasized that the primary focus of the past year was evaluating the city's third-party software and service providers. Much like contact tracing during a pandemic, Mr. Cannon's team is now scrutinizing the data privacy, cybersecurity, and data retention practices of outside vendors. This process ensures that when a city department (such as Parks or Fire) wants to onboard a new service, the IT department provides full disclosure regarding potential risks, allowing the city to either formally accept or reject those risks rather than operating with "blind spots."

In addition to vendor assessments, the department formalized several critical governance structures. They established a Policy Exception Path, which allows for necessary deviations from standard rules while requiring annual audits to ensure those exceptions remain valid or are closed. Furthermore, the city adopted a comprehensive Cybersecurity Incident Response Plan, transitioning from the previous year's goal of building a security framework to establishing a formal protocol for responding to active threats.

Looking toward the coming year, Mr. Cannon outlined several compliance-heavy initiatives, many of which are state-mandated. Key projects include: 1) Single User Sign-On: A backend overhaul to support the "My Orem" initiative, allowing citizens to access all city services through one centralized portal rather than managing multiple accounts. 2) Account Life

Cycle Automation: Implementing a system to prevent "backpacking," where long-term employees accumulate excessive digital privileges as they move between departments. The goal is to tailor access rights strictly to an employee's current role. 3) Encrypted Communication: Enhancing secure communications to meet the requirements of criminal justice agencies. 4) Program Maturity: Continually refining the city's privacy and cybersecurity programs to ensure a high standard of digital hygiene across all municipal operations.

When questioned by Mr. Nelson regarding the necessity of these changes, Mr. Cannon noted that roughly half of these initiatives are driven by state mandates.

Mr. Barton detailed the work of the software development team, which functions as the third pillar of Orem's IT department. Their primary mission is building and maintaining the infrastructure that enables city employees to perform their duties while providing streamlined digital interfaces for citizens. The landmark achievement of the past year was the official launch of "My Orem," a centralized portal that went live just one day prior to the presentation. This initiative fulfills the goal of unifying user accounts, allowing residents to access multiple city services without the friction of managing separate credentials for every department.

The first major integration within the "My Orem" portal is a redesigned utility billing website, which has been upgraded to enhance security and user clarity. Mr. Barton also highlighted a significant focus on federal accessibility compliance. The team is currently updating software to meet ADA Title II regulations; although the implementation deadline was recently extended, the department is proactively ensuring that all digital services are legally compliant and accessible to all citizens.

Finally, Mr. Barton addressed the structural and strategic improvements within his division: 1) Software Architecture: The team is refining how software is built to ensure "smooth transitions" during lifecycle updates. This architectural focus allows developers to pivot quickly when the city's needs evolve or when security vulnerabilities require immediate patching. 2) Executive Alignment: The department has established a Steering Committee to ensure software development is driven by executive-level strategy. This prevents departments from developing software in isolation and ensures that all technical projects align with the broader goals of city leadership.

Ms. Peel concluded the IT presentation by outlining the software development priorities for the upcoming fiscal year, focusing on two main pillars: expansion and critical system maintenance. Building on the momentum of the "My Orem" portal launch, the team plans to integrate business licensing into the centralized system. Additionally, work will continue on the Fitness Center project, a long-term initiative that remains a top priority for the department.

A significant portion of the coming year's efforts will be dedicated to the "lifecycle" of the city's core legacy systems. Ms. Peel identified several essential programs that require re-evaluation and stabilization, including: 1) Payroll: Ensuring the systems that pay all city employees remain reliable. 2) General Ledger: Maintaining the city's primary financial record-keeping systems. 3) Court System: Updating and securing the software used by the municipal judiciary. Recognizing the scale of these multi-year projects, Ms. Peel announced the

intent to onboard three new staff members during the next budget year: two software engineers and one specialized Database Administrator. The administrator's role will be specifically focused on "data hygiene"—ensuring that the information collected from citizens is organized, secure, and compliant with ever-changing legal and legislative requirements. This expansion is designed to provide the necessary manpower to modernize the city's most fundamental infrastructure while maintaining a high standard of security and efficiency.

The presentation concluded with Mayor McCandless and the City Council offering their congratulations on the successful launch of the "My Orem" portal. Councilmember Muhlestein expressed appreciation for the technical expertise of the IT team, noting the complexity of the work they perform for the city.

A key point of clarification was raised by Councilmember Millett regarding the transition to the new portal. Mr. Barton confirmed that while "My Orem" is a completely new system requiring users to set up a new login, residents will be able to link their existing city accounts to this central profile. To ensure a smooth rollout, the following support structures were highlighted: 1) 311 Support: City 311 agents have been trained specifically to assist residents with the account linking process. 2) Developer Support: The software development team is on standby to handle any technical escalations during the initial launch phase. 3) Public Relations Campaign: Mr. Wolfley and City Manager Bybee noted that a comprehensive PR campaign is scheduled to roll out at the end of the month to drive awareness and provide guidance to residents. Councilmember Mecham also expressed his enthusiasm for the portal and the clear direction provided on how to advise residents during this transition. Mayor McCandless thanked the IT team for the informative update and closed the session.

Mr. Nelson provided an overview of the City of Orem's fiscal 2026 tentative budget process, emphasizing "expansion requests"—initiatives that go beyond standard operational costs. He explained that a budget subcommittee reviews these requests starting in January, prioritizing those that can be funded by specific new revenue sources or internal reallocations. A significant portion of this year's expansions are concentrated in Information Technology and Public Safety.

Mr. Nelson detailed several key additions to city staff and services: 1) Legal Department: Due to the increasing complexity of third-party agreements and cybersecurity compliance, the city plans to add attorney positions. Mr. Nelson noted that these costs are often spread across various city funds (road, enterprise, etc.) rather than being borne solely by the General Fund. 2) Urban Forestry: To manage aging tree canopies and new planting initiatives, additional support is requested for the forestry group. 3) Civic Engagement & Public Safety: The city will now absorb the cost of Podium (a communication tool for 311 agents) previously covered by federal ARPA grants. Other increases include rising costs for the NUVAS Animal Services contract and a "sinking fund" for fire station equipment (beds, appliances) to avoid "robbing Peter to pay Paul" during emergencies. 4) Emergency Management: The city is setting aside funds to offset dwindling federal EMPG grants, ensuring the Emergency Management division remains fully operational.

Mr. Nelson presented a series of financial comparisons, noting that the transition to a separate Public Safety Special Revenue Fund makes "apples-to-apples" comparisons with previous years difficult. 1) General Fund Personnel: Costs show a percentage increase due to 3% merit/step raises, health insurance hikes, and the addition of new firefighters funded by service contracts with Vineyard and Lindon. 2) Enterprise Funds: A notable 9.9% decrease in certain debt lines reflects the payoff of 2005 and 2013 bond series. However, Water fund costs remain steady as specific water-only bond payments filled the gap left by the retired debt. 3) Solid Waste: Costs increased by 14.4%, driven by a recent "can count" audit and new contract finalizations.

The IT department, an internal service fund, will see budget impacts from the previously discussed personnel additions and the hiring of a privacy intern to assist with data compliance. Mr. Nelson also highlighted: 1) Transportation: New funding is earmarked for the lower cemetery trailhead and tree pruning to support the "My Hometown" initiative. 2) Capital Projects: Mr. Nelson clarified that most "big dollar" capital projects are funded by saved CIP transfers from previous years, meaning they do not appear as "new revenue" in the current budget. 3) HUD Grants: Funding for community and neighborhood services continues to decline annually, requiring careful management of the remaining grant award.

The budget process will continue with a work session on May 5 (focused on Fleet and Capital Improvement Projects) followed by the presentation of the Tentative Budget on May 12, 2026. Mr. Nelson and City Manager Bybee emphasized that while the IT and expansion costs are categorized separately, they provide essential support that "raises all boats" across every city department.

Short Term Rental Presentation *Presenter: D. Jacob Summers, Deputy City Attorney*

The presentation regarding short-term rentals (STRs) opened with Mayor McCandless establishing a clear objective: providing Mr. Summers with sufficient legislative direction to draft a formal ordinance for the May 12, 2026, meeting. The Mayor emphasized that the goal was to transition from years of study into actionable policy, noting that she and Mr. Summers had already conducted one-on-one "listening tours" with nearly all council members to gauge their individual thresholds for regulation versus prohibition.

Mr. Summers framed the policy challenge as a "quest" for balance, outlining four pillars of concern: neighborhood stability, fairness to property owners, operational enforceability, and public safety. He presented three distinct regulatory paths. Option 1 would solidify the current prohibition in the city's land use code by explicitly defining STRs as "transient lodging" and banning them in all residential zones. Option 2 introduced a compromise by allowing only "owner-occupied" STRs, where the owner must reside on-site for at least 183 days a year, obtain a discretionary annual business license, and pass safety inspections. Option 3 proposed a tiered system that would permit a limited number of "non-owner occupied" investment properties (suggested cap of 100 citywide) subject to strict density requirements, such as a 1,000-foot radial buffer between rentals and prohibitions within "safe walking zones" near schools.

Councilmember Muhlestein and Councilmember Millett voiced concerns and were initially favoring Option 1. Both expressed deep concern that shifting housing stock into investment vehicles would exacerbate Orem's affordability crisis and diminish the "family-friendly" character of neighborhoods. Ms. Muhlestein argued against any plan that relies on "neighbor-led enforcement," noting that residents should not have to act as the "neighborhood police" to protect the peace of their own homes. Ms. Millett supported this view, citing the Neighborhood Advisory Commission's preference for a total ban and highlighting the negative inflationary impact on home values when houses are appraised based on their short-term rental income potential rather than their utility as dwellings.

Councilmember Gale and Councilmember Mecham advocated for Option 3, suggesting that the city should regulate "behavior and impact" rather than "owner identity." Ms. Gale argued that a formal licensing system actually provides neighbors with a superior "toolkit" for enforcement—including a "three strikes" revocation policy—that currently doesn't exist under the unofficial ban. Mr. Mecham pointed out that STRs represent less than 1% of the city's housing units, suggesting that the "nuisance" concerns, while valid, could be mitigated through the strict guardrails Mr. Summers proposed. Both emphasized the property rights of owners who may need STR income to afford their mortgages or desire to host family for reunions.

Councilmember Killpack and Councilmember Lambson occupied a middle ground, largely aligning with Mayor McCandless in support of Option 2. Mr. Killpack expressed a strong desire to avoid "hotels in the middle of residential areas" but acknowledged that owner-occupied rentals could be managed successfully if the neighbors were supportive and the owners remained on-site to handle issues immediately. Mr. Lambson specifically noted that nearly every nuisance complaint the city has handled originated from non-owner-occupied units, leading him to favor a model that ensures an owner is physically present to maintain "neighborliness." While the council did not reach a unanimous verdict, a clear lean toward Option 2 (Owner-Occupied) emerged as the most viable path for a majority, with a tentative door left open for Option 3 only if significantly more restrictive caps were applied.

Mr. Summers led a detailed discussion with the Orem City Council regarding proposed regulations and enforcement mechanisms for STRs. The discussion focused on establishing specific mitigation measures to address neighborhood concerns, including limiting STRs to overnight accommodations only—prohibiting their use as event centers for weddings, corporate retreats, or large parties. To protect neighbor privacy and peace, Mr. Summers proposed strict lighting and shielding requirements to prevent light trespass, alongside a noise management plan. This plan includes "quiet hours" from 10:00 PM to 10:00 AM on weekends and 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM on weekdays, during which outdoor amenities like pools and hot tubs must cease operation. Additionally, every STR would be required to display a physical nameplate with contact information for a responsible party available 24/7 to respond to nuisances within 40 minutes.

The conversation then shifted to enforcement and penalties. Mr. Summers proposed a "three strikes" policy where an STR license would be revoked if an operator receives three

administrative citations within a rolling 12-month period. Proposed fines were set at \$500, \$750, and \$1,000 for successive violations. Councilmember Millett strongly challenged these amounts as too low to deter commercial ventures and advocated for an 18-to-24-month probationary period instead of 12. There was also discussion regarding the "reset" period; if a license is revoked, the owner would be barred from reapplying for three to five years. Mr. Summers emphasized that while the city relies on neighbors to report issues, the enforcement would be handled via an Administrative Law Judge, which requires a lower "preponderance of evidence" standard compared to criminal court.

The final topic involved occupancy limits. Mr. Summers presented a recommendation to allow one single family or up to eight unrelated individuals per STR. He explained that this number was chosen to accommodate traveling groups like co-workers or multiple couples, aligning with other city ordinances. However, Councilmember Millett expressed concern that allowing eight unrelated individuals moves away from the "family-centered" goal of STRs and matches the problematic occupancy levels seen in some "party houses." Mr. Summers also advised against a proposed "third option" that would allow higher occupancy for massive estates (e.g., 20,000+ sq. ft. on large acreage), warning that such a "mansion exception" could trigger litigation based on Federal Circuit Court precedents regarding the Commerce Clause. Due to the complexity of the occupancy and parking topics, Mayor McCandless and the Council agreed to extend the work session into the following week to ensure a deliberate and transparent process before presenting a final ordinance to the public.

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 Karen McCandless

ELECTED OFFICIALS

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

APPOINTED STAFF

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

CALL TO ORDER

INVOCATION / INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHT –Riley Ramsey

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / FLAG CEREMONY – Hailey Johnson

MAYOR’S REPORT/ ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL

Legislative Report *Presenter: Keven Stratton, Utah State Senator*

Senator Stratton provided a legislative report, opening with a reflection on the city's growth since his birth in 1962. He highlighted Utah’s national prominence, noting that the state has been ranked number one for overall performance and economic outlook for several consecutive years. He specifically praised Orem’s fiscal responsibility, citing the construction of the new City Center without incurring debt as a "great story" he shares with his legislative colleagues. Regarding the state budget, Senator Stratton reported a total expenditure of \$31.6 billion and noted that the legislature recently conducted an exercise to identify a 5% cut across departments to eliminate redundancies. As the Senate Chair of the Social Services Appropriations Committee—the state's largest budget at roughly \$9 billion—he noted that they successfully identified \$60 million to be redirected toward other priorities, including further tax cuts for Utah families.

The Senator discussed his specific committee assignments, which include Natural Resources, Agriculture, Environmental Quality, and the Federalism Commission. He emphasized a collaborative "Utah Way" of governing, where legislators of opposing parties work synergistically to find policy solutions. A significant focus of his recent work has been water conservation, specifically through water-wise landscaping legislation. He commended Orem for leading by example with its new landscaping at the City Center. Senator Stratton also mentioned his efforts to promote constitutional education through "Constitutional Month" each September. When asked about upcoming interim priorities, he identified immigration, voting integrity, and ongoing water management as key study items.

The council engaged Senator Stratton on several local concerns, particularly housing and taxes. Councilmember Millett thanked Senator Stratton for supporting municipal local control and discussed the potential removal of residential property tax exemptions for non-owner-occupied residences to improve housing affordability—a policy Senator Stratton indicated he is interested in exploring with help from local leaders. Councilmember Muhlestein inquired about the state's plan to balance aggressive growth with the water needs of the Great Salt Lake. Senator Stratton provided a detailed response, explaining that while Orem has exceptional water security due to historical water rights acquisitions, the state is looking at creative solutions such as regrading the west side of the Great Salt Lake to capture 60,000 acre-feet and removing non-native, water-intensive plants to recover another 80,000 acre-feet.

Councilmember Lambson and Mayor McCandless thanked Senator Stratton and his wife, Ruby for their shared service and sacrifice. City Manager Bybee added staff-level appreciation,

describing Senator Stratton as highly responsive and a consistent advocate for the "Orem Way" at the state level. Senator Stratton final remarks honored the legacy of former Orem officials and acknowledged the personal toll of public service on families, encouraging the council to continue their intentional and careful approach to city governance.

Green Grant Award Presentation *Presenter: Blake Leonelli, Public Sector Solutions Manager, Waste Management of Utah*

Mr. Leonelli presented the city with the Green Grant Award in recognition of Orem's long-standing commitment to recycling education. Mr. Leonelli praised the city for its innovative approach to waste management, specifically highlighting Orem's leadership in pioneering initiatives such as the "Top 10 in the Bin" campaign and film plastic recycling pilots. He noted that Orem has consistently maximized previous funds to enhance public awareness and improve local recycling habits.

To support the continuation of these educational efforts, Mr. Leonelli presented Mayor McCandless and the City Council with a check for \$5,000. The Mayor accepted the award with gratitude. The funds are intended to bolster the city's ongoing environmental outreach and recycling programs.

Arbor Day Proclamation and Video *Presenter: Bradley Day, Community & Sustainability Officer*

Mr. Day presented the city's Arbor Day celebration and a commemorative video highlighting Orem's status as a Tree City USA. Mr. Day noted the city's deep-rooted passion for its urban forest, citing the recent planting of trees at Geneva Heights and Sharon Park during the "My Hometown Days of Service," as well as the council's earlier participation in planting a new Freedom Tree at the city's Freedom Plaza to honor veterans.

The presentation featured a video message from Mayor McCandless and Urban Forester Josh Story, who revealed that Orem has been designated a Tree City USA for 33 consecutive years. Mr. Story explained that the urban forestry team maintains approximately 7,000 trees across parks, parkways, and city buildings, with a current long-term goal of planting 1,000 new trees over the next five years. He emphasized the environmental benefits of Orem's canopy, including sequestering carbon, filtering stormwater runoff, and lowering air temperatures.

Mayor McCandless highlighted the city's historic commitment to forestry, noting that Orem's very first city council meeting in May 1919 included an official act to hire a tree caretaker. To maintain its Tree City USA status, the city continues to meet four rigorous standards set by the Arbor Day Foundation: Maintaining a tree board (the Natural Resources Advisory Commission). Enforcing a community tree ordinance. Spending at least \$2 per capita on urban forestry. Holding an annual Arbor Day celebration and proclamation.

The session concluded with the Mayor officially signing the Arbor Day proclamation, reinforcing the city's intent to keep the "heart of the city green and clean." She encouraged

residents to stay tuned for future initiatives from the Natural Resources Advisory Commission to further expand the city's tree canopy.

Fire Fighter Appreciation Day (May 4) Presentation *Presenter: Marc Sanderson, Fire Chief*

Chief Sanderson presented on the significance of Firefighter Appreciation Day, traditionally known as International Firefighters Day (observed on May 4). Sanderson provided a detailed historical context for the day, noting its origins in 1999 following the deaths of five Australian firefighters during a wildfire. He explained that May 4 was chosen to coincide with the feast day of Saint Florian, the patron saint of firefighters and commander of the first known firefighting squad in the Roman Empire. The Chief highlighted the symbolism of the red and blue ribbons worn by the department, where red represents fire and blue represents water—colors recognized globally for emergency services.

Chief Sanderson used the occasion to express his deep gratitude to the Mayor, City Council, and city management for their ongoing support, which he credited as the foundation for the department's high service levels and its Critical Care Paramedic Program. As a token of appreciation, he presented the council members with custom ribbons featuring the Orem Fire Department logo. The presentation coincided with the department's quarterly awards cycle, where firefighters were recognized for exceptional service and milestones. Mayor McCandless congratulated the department on their recent service awards.

National Drinking Water Week (May 3-9) *Presenter: Chris Tschirki, Public Works Director; Reed Price, Assistant Public Works Director and Quinn Fenton, Water Manager*

Mr. Tschirki, Mr. Fenton, and Mr. Price, presented to the City Council in honor of National Drinking Water Week (May 3–9, 2026). The presentation featured a video showcasing Orem's diverse and high-quality water portfolio. Mr. Fenton explained that 40% of the city's supply comes from groundwater, and 15% of the annual supply is pristine spring water sourced directly from the side of Mount Timpanogos. This robust portfolio allows the city to switch to well water during dry years with low snowpack. Mr. Fenton highlighted the dedication of his 25-person team, who conduct over 1,400 bacteriological samples annually, and noted that the city's water system received a perfect score with no deficiencies in its last state survey.

A major highlight of the discussion was the recently completed water reuse facility, a project envisioned over 20 years ago. Mr. Price explained that the facility has the capacity to treat 15 million gallons of wastewater per day, allowing the city to "use the water twice." By using treated effluent to irrigate large areas like Sleepy Ridge Golf Course, Lakeside Sports Park, and eventually Springwater Park, Orem preserves its high-quality drinking water in mountain reservoirs and deep wells for residential use.

Council members expressed their appreciation for the reliability of the city's water infrastructure. In response to a query from Councilmember Millett regarding occasional "bubbles" in the water during spring, Mr. Fenton clarified that these are typically micro-oxygen bubbles caused by the extreme cold of the spring water as it travels from the mountain or

high-flow conditions from the "5,000-gallon-a-minute" runoff. He reassured residents that this is a sign of fresh, minimally treated spring water.

UMCA Awards for Traffic Tiger Team and Jennica Jones, Strategy and Innovations

Manager Presentation *Presenter: Keri Rugg, Deputy City Manager*

Ms. Rugg announced that Orem swept two of the three prestigious Utah City Managers Association awards. The Traffic Tiger Team received the Program Excellence Award for its interdepartmental success in resolving resident traffic complaints, a model so effective that other Salt Lake Valley mayors have requested to study it. Additionally, Strategy and Innovation Manager Jennica Jones was named Emerging Leader of the Year for her work in securing millions in grants and providing critical data-driven solutions for every city department.

CONSENT ITEMS

Meeting Minutes Approval - March 10, 2026, April 14, 2026, and April 15, 2026 (Joint Timpanogos School District Meeting)

Recreation Advisory Commission Appointment - Stephanie Whyte and Crissa Robertson

Ms. Millett moved to approve the consent items, **seconded** by Mr. Killpack. Those voting yes: Karen McCandless, Chris Killpack, Crystal Muhlestein, Jeff Lambson, Jenn Gale, LaNae Millett and Quinn Mecham. The motion **passed**.

PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Opened at 7:03 PM

Nicole Smith voiced concerns that the Belmont West development by Patterson Homes sits three to four feet higher than existing houses, creating a significant flood risk for her basement. After observing recent rain runoff, she requested that the city require the developer to install a proper drainage system to prevent water from flowing onto her property.

Elsie Call echoed concerns regarding the Belmont West development, noting that a steep 45-degree slope now runs from the elevated new home pads directly down to her fence line. Specifically worried about the two bedroom windows facing the development, she joined her neighbor in requesting a formal drainage solution to prevent runoff from the significantly higher properties from impacting her home.

Madeline Dorton, a fifth-grade student, identified a traffic hazard on 950 North, where narrow south-side lanes force drivers to cross the center line due to parked cars. After measuring the road, she proposed repainting the center line to create equal 19.75-foot lanes, ensuring safer travel for students and parents.

Jennie Hannebaum expressed concern that the Airbnb adjacent to her home compromises the "Family City USA" mission by introducing "stranger danger" and transient occupants. She argued that short-term rentals inflate housing costs, displace families with schoolchildren, and pose safety risks, citing incidents of strangers approaching children and trespassing. Ms. Hedbaum urged the Council to prioritize permanent residents over outside investors to preserve neighborhood security.

David Busath strongly opposed legalizing short-term rentals, arguing they accelerate "creeping urbanization" and neighborhood decay. He urged the Council to uphold the ban on transient lodging and prioritize housing for young families over outside investors to help revitalize local schools and community stability.

Nikko Romney advocated for formal licensing over prohibition. He emphasized that his business uses decibel meters, 48-hour stay minimums, and mandatory photo IDs to ensure safety and neighbor peace. He argued that regulation allows cities to better track and resolve issues through license oversight, noting that many guests are families or residents between home transitions. He currently operates one rental in Orem.

Jordyn Kauwe urged the Council to maintain the ban on short-term rentals, arguing they directly contradict Orem's mission to strengthen neighborhoods and support families. She noted that an STR in her area outbid two families, illustrating how these businesses displace permanent residents. Highlighting the impact on education, she estimated that the 522 existing rentals equate to nearly 38 lost families per elementary school boundary, further devastating declining school enrollment. Finally, she called on the Council to honor their previous commitments to small-town character by prioritizing citizens over transient profit.

Stephanie Hathaway described a "nightmare" experience living next to an illegal, whole-home Airbnb owned by non-residents. She detailed frequent guest harassment, drug use, property neglect, and safety hazards like open alcohol left near children. Warning that legalizing these rentals would invite crime and resident lawsuits, she urged the Council to prioritize permanent families over transient profits.

Val Juarez urged the Council to reject short-term rentals to prevent the commercialization of residential zones. He argued that STRs inflate housing prices and displace young families, contradicting the city's "Family City USA" mission. Citing a local "disaster" property that hosts busloads of people and blocks driveways, Mr. Juarez warned that converting homes into "hotel rentals" is incompatible with neighborhood safety and nearly impossible to reverse once legalized.

Marcilyn Gibby opposed legalizing short-term rentals, describing her experience living next to an unmonitored STR as being "next door to a commercial hotel." Her primary concern is the safety of her young children, noting that transient guests have held disturbing conversations with them over the fence. She argued that proposed regulations cannot fix the "stranger danger" of high-turnover rentals and urged the Council to require that all STRs be owner-occupied to protect neighborhood families.

Scott Johnson opposed legalizing short-term rentals, arguing they degrade safety by masking suspicious activity and burdening police with nuisance calls. Drawing from his experience with a nearby "party house," he noted that transient renters lack the community care shown by permanent neighbors. Mr. Johnson framed the issue as a choice between wealthy investors and "Family City USA," questioning the city's ability to enforce meaningful penalties against problematic operators.

Debbie Lamb presented letters from neighbors opposing short-term rentals (STRs). She argued that STRs erode long-term homeownership and generational continuity by turning neighborhoods into "unlicensed hotels." Challenging the Council to uphold their commitments to community strength, she noted that the 522 existing rentals worsen housing shortages and school enrollment declines. Ms. Lamb concluded that Orem is a "community, not a resort," and urged the Council to prioritize permanent residents over investor profits.

Tauni Merrell countered the "generalization" that all rentals are problematic, arguing they provide vital, affordable housing for large families visiting for events like BYU graduation. She explained that she rents her mother's home not for profit, but to cover expenses and keep the property in the family. Living next door to the rental, she questioned the city's proposed "owner-occupied" definition and urged the Council to create regulations that penalize "bad actors" without punishing responsible hosts who provide a community service.

Kayci Treu advocated for owner-occupied short-term rentals as a vital tool for housing affordability. She explained that renting her basement suite allowed her and her husband to purchase a home in Orem's high-cost market while maintaining flexibility to host their own large family. Ms. Treu highlighted that as a resident with young children, she is highly selective about guests and enjoys full support from her neighbors, contrasting her responsible local management with the issues posed by outside investors. She urged the Council to protect the rights of local families who rely on supplemental income to remain in the community and contribute to the local economy.

Teresa Horn reported that her owner-occupied short-term rental has been more successful than her previous long-term rentals, noting fewer neighborhood issues and less property "wear and tear." She emphasized that her neighbors were unaware the rental even existed due to her responsible management and high ratings. Supporting the fines and regulations discussed in the Council's work session, she urged a "happy medium" that targets disruptive party houses while allowing local hosts to continue contributing to the city's economy.

Kris Hammond argued that short-term rentals (STRs) are unfairly blamed for neighborhood decay, noting that their 50% average occupancy rates actually reduce utility and water strain compared to full-time households. She contested the accuracy of local rental counts due to duplicate listings and pointed to over 150 vacant long-term rentals on the market as evidence that STRs are not causing the housing shortage. Citing the newly signed Utah Senate Bill 108 (2026), she argued that STRs provide essential, accessible housing for families with disabilities that hotels cannot match. Dismissing comparisons to sober-living facilities, she urged the Council to collaborate with responsible hosts who contribute to the city's economic health.

Closed at 7:54 PM

SCHEDULED ITEMS

PUBLIC HEARING - Orem Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Annual Action Plan and Proposed Budget - Presenter: Bradley Day, Community & Sustainability Officer and Taylor Draney, Mountlands Association of Government (MAG)

Ms. Draney, representing the Mountainland Association of Governments (MAG), presented the proposed annual action plan and budget for Orem's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for the upcoming fiscal year. The total available funding is set at \$640,721, which consists of a \$563,721 allocation from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) supplemented by \$77,000 in rollover funds from previous years. The budget is divided into specific categories, including a mandatory 15% cap for public service funding and a dedicated portion for regional non-profit efforts coordinated with Provo City. These regional funds support several organizations, including The Refuge for domestic violence victims, Big Brothers Big Sisters, a local food pantry, Family Haven for child therapy, and the Fuller Center for Housing. Notably, Ms. Draney clarified that while these funds support regional non-profits, Orem only reimburses the organizations for services provided specifically to Orem residents.

The non-public service portion of the budget includes several infrastructure and administrative projects. Key allocations include \$170,000 for flooring replacement at the Senior Center, ongoing funding for code enforcement via the police department, and a critical home repair program. A new initiative introduced this year is a tree removal program managed by city arborist Josh Story, which utilizes single-family rehabilitation funds to remove trees that pose a threat to public health and safety. During the presentation, Councilmember Millett inquired about the specifics of this program, and it was clarified that the funds would cover the costs of hiring subcontractors for the removals.

In the public service category, the budget maintains \$30,000 for Victim Advocate salaries and provides small-scale resources for homeless services distributed by the police. Following the presentation, Mayor McCandless opened the floor for a public hearing to satisfy the required 30-day public comment period. Mr. Day confirmed that the 30-day "clock" had already begun, and the Council is scheduled to cast a final vote on the budget on May 26, 2026, with the official program year slated to begin on July 1.

Public Hearing open at 8:11 PM

No public comment

Public Hearing closed at 8:11 PM

PUBLIC HEARING - RESOLUTION - Declaring Certain Parcels of Real Property Located in the Vicinity of 1020 South 2300 West as Surplus and Authorizing the Execution

of an Agreement with the Utah of State to Convey the Surplus Parcels to the State in Exchange for a Lease of a Portion of the Properties to the City for a Period of 99 Years -

Presenter: Ryan Clark, Assistant City Manager and Sam Braeggar, Deputy Director of Utah Lake Authority

Mr. Clark and Mr. Braeggar presented a resolution to surplus city-owned property and enter into a 99-year lease agreement with the State of Utah. The proposal addresses a historical title discrepancy involving four parcels near Utah Lake. These properties were acquired by Orem in 2003 during the construction of the Sleepy Ridge Golf Course; however, recent research revealed that the previous owner did not hold a valid title, as the land sits below a 1856 meander line and is legally owned by the federal government.

To resolve this, the city will "surplus" and transfer its interest in these parcels to the state. In exchange, the federal government will transfer the clear title to the state, and Orem will receive a 99-year lease—the maximum term allowed by state law—to continue operating its golf course, stormwater outfalls, sewer facilities, and utility infrastructure on the land.

The primary driver for this cleanup is the Wakara Way Trail project, a long-planned shoreline trail that will connect Vineyard and Provo. Braeggar highlighted several key aspects of the project: 1) Connectivity: The trail will eventually circle Utah Lake, with over 25 miles already completed. This specific section will link the Orem trail network to the lake via a trailhead at the end of University Parkway. 2) Funding: Approximately \$12–\$16 million in MAG funding and additional state appropriations are already secured for planning and construction. 3) Regional Impact: The trail will facilitate access to a future Science Research and Nature Center planned in Lindon, a collaborative effort between UVU and local partners.

Council members expressed strong support for the "win-win" solution, noting that the agreement protects essential city utilities while advancing regional recreation and conservation.

Public Hearing open at 8:26 PM

No public comment

Public Hearing closed at 8:26 PM

Ms. Muhlstein moved to declare certain parcels of real property located in the vicinity of 1020 South 2300 West as surplus and authorizing the execution of an agreement with the State of Utah to convey the surplus parcels to the State in exchange for a lease of a portion of the properties to the City for a period of 99 years, **seconded** by Mr. Lambson. Those voting yes: Karen McCandless, Chris Killpack, Crystal Muhlestein, Jeff Lambson, Jenn Gale, LaNae Millett and Quinn Mecham. The motion **passed**.

PUBLIC HEARING - ORDINANCE-Request to Amend Portions of Article 22-6-8 of the Orem City Code Relating to Allowable Height of Primary Buildings in Single-Family Residential Zones *Presenter: Jared Hall, Planning Manager*

Mr. Hall presented a proposed ordinance to modernize residential building height regulations, shifting the focus from a single height limit to the "relativity" of a building's impact on its neighbors. The amendment introduces a distinction between roof types, reducing the base height for pitched roofs to 30 feet and flat roofs to 20 feet at minimum setbacks. To encourage greater separation between homes, the ordinance allows for a "one-to-one" height increase, where a property owner can gain one additional foot of height for every extra foot of setback, up to a maximum of 35 feet for pitched roofs and 24 feet for flat roofs. This tiered approach aims to prevent the construction of massive, box-like structures that dominate smaller residential lots.

The centerpiece of the proposal is the Graduated Building Height Envelope, a geometric rule designed to pull the bulk of a building away from property lines. This envelope starts at a point eight feet above the ground at the property line and slopes inward at a 45-degree angle. While the ordinance provides specific mathematical exceptions for architectural features like gables and dormers, the primary goal is to ensure that the "vertical mass" of new homes or additions does not loom over adjacent yards. Mr. Hall noted that while this addresses building volume, it does not solve the issue of artificial grade elevation, which he suggested should be handled separately in a subdivision ordinance.

Council members and city staff expressed strong support for the measure, with Councilmember Mecham noting that the Planning Commission was universally in favor of the change. City Manager Bybee praised the Planning Department for their creative, "outside the box" technical solution to the qualitative problem of neighborhood character. The Council agreed that although the math behind the 45-degree plane might appear complex, the visual result would effectively protect the privacy and sunlight of long-term residents while still allowing for modern construction and additions.

Public Hearing open at 8:42 PM

No public comment

Public Hearing closed at 8:42 PM

Mr. Killpack moved to approve the proposed amendments to Article 22-6-8 of the Orem City Code relating to allowable height for primary buildings in single-family residential zones., **seconded** by Ms. Millett. Those voting yes: Karen McCandless, Chris Killpack, Crystal Muhlestein, Jeff Lambson, Jenn Gale, LaNae Millett and Quinn Mecham. The motion **passed**.

CITY MANAGER INFORMATION ITEMS

City Manager Bybee announced a series of upcoming events to celebrate Orem's 107th birthday and the city's annual Kindness Week. The festivities officially begin with a birthday party on Wednesday at 6:00 PM, held at the City Center Park stage in conjunction with the opening night of the Orem Farmers Market. To mark the milestone, the neighborhood commission will serve 1,070 pieces of cake alongside live music and the market's sixth-year kickoff. Additionally, the city will host a community service project at Nelson's Grove the

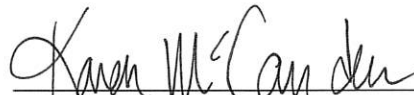
following Saturday at 9:00 AM, emphasizing that the best way to celebrate the city is through communal service.

ADJOURN

Mr. Lambson moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Killpack. Those voting yes: Karen McCandless, Chris Killpack, Crystal Muhlestein, Jeff Lambson, Jenn Gale, LaNae Millett and Quinn Mecham. The motion **passed**.

(These minutes were created with the help of AI)

PASSED and APPROVED on this 12th day of May 2026.



Karen McCandless, Mayor

ATTEST:



Teresa McKitrick, City Recorder



<u>COUNCIL MEMBER</u>	<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Mayor Karen McCandless	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chris Killpack	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crystal Muhlestein	<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"/>
Quinn Mecham	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

