

Minutes of the work session of the Ogden City Council held on Tuesday, August 18, 2026 at 5:00 p.m., in the Council Work Room, and via electronic meeting, located on the third floor of the Municipal Building, 2549 Washington Boulevard, Ogden City, Weber County, Utah.

Present:	Chair	Richard A. Hyer
	Vice Chair	Dave Graf
	Council members	Flor Lopez
		Kevin Lundell
		Jeremy Peterson
		Ken Richey
		Alicia Washington

Council Executive Director Glenn Symes
Council Assistant Executive Director Steve Burton
Council Senior Policy Analyst Clint Yingling
Council Communications Specialist Eric Davenport

Also present: Community and Economic Development Assistant Executive Director David Sawyer
Deputy City Recorder Jason Gould

The purpose of the work session was to review the agenda for the City Council meeting scheduled to begin at 6:00 p.m.; receive a presentation regarding the Utah State University Wellbeing Project – Ogden Survey; discuss Council business (Council Committee reports); and hear Council comments.

Agenda Review

Chair Hyer and members of Council staff reviewed the items listed on the agenda for the City Council meeting scheduled to begin at 6:00 p.m.

Utah State University Wellbeing Project – Ogden Survey Results

Council Executive Director Glenn Symes introduced the presentation and explained that Ogden had participated for the second time in the Utah Wellbeing Project, a statewide survey administered by Utah State University to measure community perspectives on well-being. He introduced Dr. Courtney Flint of Utah State University, Director of the Utah Wellbeing Project, along with Research Assistant Britton Miller.

Dr. Flint explained that the project is intended to provide local governments with information that can help guide planning and policy decisions while also contributing to broader statewide research. She reported that 57 Utah communities participated in the 2026 survey, and that 84 cities and towns have participated in the project since 2019. Ms. Flint stated that Ogden received 188 responses in 2026, compared with 780 responses in 2024. She cautioned that the smaller sample required care in interpretation and reviewed demographic patterns showing underrepresentation among younger adults, men, renters, Hispanic or Latino residents, and those without college degrees. She said respondents came from all four Council districts, though District 2 had fewer responses than the others. On general results, Ms. Flint reported that respondents rated their personal well-being at an average of 3.8 out of 5, while community well-being scored somewhat lower, which she said is common across communities. Compared with 2024, both personal and community well-being declined slightly, though she emphasized that the smaller response pool could affect comparisons. She reviewed domain-specific findings and said the most important areas of well-being to respondents were mental health, safety and security, living standards, and local environmental quality. Family life, safety and security, and connection with nature received the highest ratings. Local environmental quality was identified as both highly important and relatively low-rated, making it a notable area of concern. Related comments most often referred to air quality, open space, the Great Salt Lake, water issues, growth and development, and transportation. Ms. Flint also reported that there were modest improvements since 2024 in safety and security, living standards, and social connection, while connection with nature, mental health, physical health, and education declined somewhat. She noted that some of those trends may reflect broader conditions beyond Ogden alone.

A significant point of discussion was community connection. Ms. Flint said Ogden scored relatively strong in this area for a city of its size, with an average score of 3.4 out of 5. She reported that stronger community connection was clearly correlated with higher well-being and stronger mental health outcomes. By district, she said respondents in Districts 3 and 4 reported somewhat higher well-being than those in Districts 1 and 2. She also noted lower well-being, community well-being, and community connection among residents identifying as having a disability, and lower scores across all three measures among lower-income respondents. Ms. Flint reviewed recreation findings and said respondents were highly active in walking, biking, trail use, and park use. Participation in those activities, as well as community events and City recreation programs, was associated with increased well-being and stronger community connection. She said the results suggested that City investment in parks, trails,

active transportation, and community programming was producing positive returns. On growth and development, Ms. Flint said 58 percent of respondents felt population growth was too fast, though that was down from 67 percent in 2024, with more respondents now indicating growth was “just right.” Chair Hyer asked whether the survey distinguished between growth from births and growth from people moving into the area. Ms. Flint said the survey itself did not separate those categories, but other statewide data suggested both natural increase and in-migration were contributing factors, while public perception often focused more on newcomers. Ms. Flint then reviewed views on economic development, which she described as mixed and largely unchanged from 2024. She also discussed new questions on affordability, reporting that childcare was the most difficult expense among households for whom it was relevant, while housing and health care were the most difficult costs overall. Food, utilities, and transportation were also identified as difficult for a sizable share of respondents.

Vice Chair Graf asked for clarification about what was meant by “transportation options,” and Ms. Flint explained that respondents appeared to interpret that broadly to include public transit, road conditions, traffic, travel time, sidewalks and paths, and the cost of owning and operating a vehicle. Ms. Flint summarized key concerns identified in the survey. Air quality ranked highest, followed by water supply, the Great Salt Lake, affordable housing, open space, homelessness, water quality, climate change, wildfire, and employment opportunities. She noted that concern about the Great Salt Lake had risen substantially since 2024 and that homelessness appeared to be a comparatively high concern in Ogden relative to many other communities.

In reviewing open-ended comments, Ms. Flint said Ogden respondents were especially engaged and unusually likely to provide written comments. Residents frequently said they valued Ogden’s diversity, cultural opportunities, sense of community, proximity to nature, and access to recreation. Suggestions for improving well-being included sidewalk and road improvements, more street lighting, improved access to transportation, health care, and recreation for underserved populations, continued attention to public safety, environmental improvements, and additional community events.

Council member Peterson asked about the large drop in participation between 2024 and 2026. Mr. Symes explained that the survey timing limited the City’s ability to promote it through some of its usual outreach channels, such as the newspaper and utility billing, so outreach relied more heavily on social media. Chair Hyer and Vice Chair Graf asked about best practices for future engagement and whether the university had guidance to help cities improve response rates. Ms. Flint said communication methods continue to change over time, communities differ in how residents receive information, and a varied outreach approach is most effective. She added that the project team was working on developing better support materials for participating cities.

Vice Chair Graf asked when Ogden might participate again. Ms. Flint said the next likely opportunity would be 2028, assuming the project continues to receive funding, and she noted that the survey is now generally conducted every other year to reduce survey fatigue.

Council member Richey asked whether Ogden’s decline in participation was unusual compared with other cities. Ms. Flint said it was not, although some communities had seen increases where staffing and outreach were especially strong. Chair Hyer commented on the limits of survey research, especially when participation is uneven across districts, and said he remained concerned about how difficult it is to get input from District 2 residents. Ms. Flint agreed that the survey was not a scientific probability sample and should be used as one source of information rather than the sole basis for decisions. She said the team was transparent about who responded and who did not, and that stronger, more targeted engagement methods would be needed for more representative results.

Council member Lundell asked about the potential cost of conducting a more scientific survey. Ms. Flint described Utah State University’s drop-off/pick-up survey method, which uses random, stratified household sampling and typically yields stronger response rates. She estimated that a citywide scientifically designed effort could cost roughly \$20,000 to \$30,000, depending on scale.

Council member Peterson asked about the current survey’s margin of error, and Ms. Flint stated that it was listed in the report at 3.49 percent. She concluded by noting her additional role with the Utah Water Research Laboratory and said she planned to follow up with the City regarding Ogden’s expressed concerns about water supply and water quality.

Chair Hyer thanked the presenters and said the discussion had been informative. Council members agreed that future participation would benefit from earlier planning and stronger outreach strategies.

Council Business

Council Committee Reports: Council member Washington asked for a review of current committee assignments. Mr. Symes read through the current assignments for each Council member and noted that one previously discussed homeless committee had not yet been finalized. Council member Washington asked for the assignment list to be sent to her for reference and also requested clarification on the status of the homeless committee. Mr. Symes said staff had discussed the matter that day and that updates were still pending from the other parties involved.

Chair Hyer began the committee reports with an update on the sewer board. He said the major ongoing issue was the district’s significant plant expansion project and encouraged Council members to attend the forthcoming open house once scheduled. He reported that one major upgrade was the transition from chlorine to UV disinfection, eliminating the chlorine risk previously associated with the facility and improving operations. Council member Richey added that there were also construction coordination issues involving UDOT, though progress was continuing. He also noted that a proposed October 28 date for the open house would likely be changed because it conflicted with the Utah League of Cities and Towns conference.

Chair Hyer next reported on the Weber Area Council of Governments housing subcommittee, which he chairs. He said representatives from communities across the county were working on housing growth and housing needs, recognizing that each city had different priorities while also confronting shared growth pressures. He said the group was coordinating with the Wasatch Front Regional Council on a Wasatch Choice vision presentation related to long-range growth projections and was working

toward development of a countywide housing master plan to better prepare for projected population growth.

Council member Richey reported on the Legislative Policy Committee and related legislative affairs work. He said activity intensifies during the legislative session but continues year-round through various appropriations and policy subcommittees. He encouraged Council members to monitor those meetings electronically through the legislative website and said reports from those meetings would likely become more important as the annual Utah League of Cities and Towns conference approached. He also provided a brief update on the City's audit committee, noting that a recent gathering did not have a quorum and therefore did not conduct official business, but members discussed the upcoming annual audit. He said the next meeting was expected in December.

Vice Chair Graf provided an update on Utah Renewable Communities. He said he had expected the work to slow after participation by 16 communities, but activity had continued at a high level. He said the current focus was on communication and outreach to residents who may qualify for financial support through the program. He also noted ongoing work to identify who would build the infrastructure and continued negotiations with Rocky Mountain Power regarding valuation of the system assets. He stated that the program remained on schedule and that by January a \$4 increase on utility bills was expected to begin building the funds needed for future infrastructure and cost recovery. He also noted that Sustainability Coordinator Long had taken on a larger role in communication efforts on behalf of the City.

Council member Washington reported on the Ogden Nature Center. She said the center remained active with summer community events and announced the upcoming Wildwoods Bash Annual Fundraiser on September 11. She also reported on a recent fire near the north side of the Ogden Nature Center property and said it had been extinguished before reaching the site. She praised firefighters, staff, and the surrounding community for their response to the incident. She added that the center's board would be meeting the following evening.

Council member Washington then asked for clarification on committee appointments and terms, particularly regarding the consent agenda appointments to the Audit Committee and Board of Health. Chair Hyer and Mr. Symes explained that some committees require formal appointments by resolution or by the receiving body, while other committee assignments are internal Council assignments that are typically reviewed and adjusted by Council leadership near the end of the year for the following January. They also explained that some appointments continue for fixed terms and are not necessarily changed automatically if continuity is beneficial.

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

JASON GOULD
DEPUTY CITY RECORDER

RICHARD A. HYER, CHAIR

APPROVED: September 15, 2026