



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES March 10, 2026

The scheduled meeting of the Ontario City Council was called to order by Mayor Deborah Folden at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, in the Council Chambers of City Hall. Council members present were Deborah Folden, Susann Mills, Michael Braden, John Kirby, Adriana Contreras, Penny Bakefelt, and Ken Hart.

Staff present were Dan Cummings, Corinna Hysell, Laura Reyes, Kari Ott, Jason Cooper, Clint Benson, Tatiana Burgess, Al Haun, Marshall Pierce, and Andy Wood.

AGENDA

This Agenda was posted Friday, March 6, 2026. Copies of the Agenda are available from the City Hall Customer Service Counter and on the city's website www.ontariooregon.org.

MILLS moved, BAKEFELT seconded, **TO ADOPT THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED**. Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0.

CONSENT AGENDA

HART moved, CONTRERAS seconded, **TO ADOPT THE CONSENT AGENDA, WHICH CONSISTED OF ADOPTION OF THE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 24, 2026, AND PROCLAMATION #2026-101: BORDER TOWN COMIC CON 2026**. Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0.

Mayor Folden read the Proclamation into the record: *City of Ontario Mayoral Proclamation #2026-101 Border Town Comic Con Days: Whereas, with its colorful costumes, creative artistry, and imaginative storytelling, the world of comics and pop culture has captivated our hearts and imaginations for generations; and Whereas, and we are thrilled to celebrate its rich history and influence with Border Town Comic Con 2026; and Whereas, this event will showcase the talents, passion, and creativity of our local artists, writers, and cosplayers, and bring together a diverse community of comic book enthusiasts and pop culture lovers from near and far; and Whereas, as we gather to appreciate the wonders of this unique and vibrant world, let us also embrace the values of inclusivity, diversity, and creativity that make Ontario such a special place to call home; and Whereas, let us come together in the spirit of unity, joy, and celebration on these special days. And let us continue to support and uplift our local artists and creators, who make Ontario an amazing place to be. Now, therefore, be it resolved, that I, Deborah K. Folden, Mayor of Ontario, Oregon, do hereby proclaim March 14 and March 15, 2026, as Border Town Comic Con Days and invite all our citizens to join me in extending a warm welcome to all the guests and participants of the Border Town Comic Convention, and urge everyone to take part in the many exciting activities, panels, and performances that this incredible event has to offer.*

PRESENTATIONS

Life Saving Award: Gabe Galicia and Aden Marin

Jason Cooper, Police Chief, stated: *Thank you Madam Mayor and Council. It's an honor to take a moment tonight to recognize two officers whose actions represent the very best of our profession and the highest standards of public service, Officer Aden Marin and Officer Gabe Galicia. Law enforcement officers are called upon every day to respond to difficult, unpredictable, and often dangerous situations, but among those calls there are moments where the difference between tragedy and hope comes down to seconds, training, and the courage to act without hesitation. On December 21, 2025, officers Marin and Galicia faced one of those moments. At approximately 3:35 a.m., Officers Marin and Galicia responded to a residence in Ontario for a report of a one-year-old child, who was choking, unresponsive, turning purple, and unable to breathe. As any parent can imagine, the fear and desperation in that moment was overwhelming. Upon arrival, the officers immediately ran to the home, where they encountered a distraught mother at the front door, holding her child, and pleading for help. The infant was exhibiting extremely shallow breathing and was not making any sounds, clear signs that this was a life-*



threatening emergency. Without hesitation, Officer Marin took the child and immediately began administering life saving measures. Holding the infant facedown, he worked to clear the obstruction in the child's airway. After several critical interventions, Officer Marin was able to remove a copious amount of mucus that was blocking the child's breathing. Soon after, the infant began showing signs of improvement, and started making audible sounds, a critical and encouraging sign of recovery. Officer Marin then transferred the child to Officer Galicia, who continued to hold the infant facedown while carefully monitoring his condition. As the child's responsiveness fluctuated, Officer Galicia continued life saving measures to maintain an open airway. Together the two officers worked seamlessly, demonstrating confidence, composure, and exceptional teamwork during an incredible tense situation. Equally important, but was the compassion they showed throughout the incident, while focusing on the life saving care of the child, both officers reassured the child's mother, offering calm words and reassuring her that her child was responding to their efforts. In moments like these, professionalism is not measured by only skill and training, but also empathy and humanity. Shortly thereafter, medical personnel arrived on scene, and officers transferred care of the child so that he could receive further treatment at a local medical facility. I wanted to read a brief comment from Fire Chief Benson, as well: The gravity of this call should not be downplayed due to the obstruction apparently caused by mucus. Infants have small airways that are easily obstructed, especially when sick, and their systems can become overwhelmed by preventing normal reflexes like coughing and gagging. Patients turning color is a sign of hypoxia, which without timely intervention, can lead to brain damage, and possible death. Officers Marin and Galicia's first aid CPR training and quick response greatly contributed to a successful outcome. Their actions prevented a family from experiencing the enormous tragedy of losing a family member. Thank you, Chief Benson. The actions of Officers Marin and Galicia that morning embody what it means to serve a community. They demonstrated courage under pressure, compassion for those in crisis, and the professionalism that defines the Ontario Police Department. Officers Marin and Galicia, your actions undoubtedly made a lifesaving difference that morning. Your commitment to protecting life reflects great credit upon yourselves, the Ontario Police Department, and the City of Ontario. On behalf of the Ontario Polic Department and the City of Ontario, it is an honor to present you with a life saving medal. Thank you both.

SREDA Update

Jeff Carpenter, SREDA Executive Director, stated: Madam Mayor, Council, thank you very much for the time. Before I get into introductions, I'd like to make a presentation to the Mayor and the City of Ontario for being one of the founding members of the Snake River Economic Development Alliance. In recognition and valuable contributions to the Snake River Economic Development Alliance. (Presented a framed certificate to the Mayor). And so, as some of you know, my name is Jeff Carpenter. Some of you may know me as Dale Jeffries. Call me whatever you want, just don't call me late for happy hour, that's all I know. I am the new Executive Director for the Snake River Economic Development Alliance, also known as SREDA. We are an investor supported public and private partnership dedicated to promoting the Western Treasure Valley. We work to attract new investment businesses, jobs, and helping local businesses grow in our three-county area. We carry Malheur County, Payette County, and Washington County. You should have this in your packet; it's our 2025 annual report, and to go through it just real quick, just a lot of fun pictures that we've been involved in in the last year of 2025. One part that I'd really like to direct your attention to on page three, that's where the economic overview is. These statistics have been pulled from ESI reported for Malheur County, Payette County, and Washington County, the three counties that I represent, for November of 2025. A lot of people say, well, we are just little small towns. Well, in this little rural metroplex I call it, there is 70,748 people. So that is accumulated. It grew by 6,485 over the last five years, and is projected to grow by 7,055 over the next five years. So projected to see more of that growth coming our way. It's a good time to get into the U-Haul business. Total regional employment, jobs grew by 1,259 over the last five years, and are projected to grow by 1,362 over the next five years, representing 26,487 jobs in the tri-county area. The average earnings got a little ways to go on this one, average earnings of \$51,100 for yearly income. The regional average earnings are \$22.2k below the national average of \$83.3k per job. So, we've got a little ways to go there, but, you know, there's always hope for that. As more people grow, come into the area, it'll get bigger and bigger. Some of the takeaways from that overview were in 2023, the region's population increased by 10.1% since 2018, growing by 6,485, the population is expected to increase by another 10% between 23 and 2028, adding another 7,055 jobs. From 2018 to 2023, jobs increased by 5% in the three counties from 25,228 to 26,487. This change outpaced the national growth rate by 4.5% by a ½%, so we're growing fast with jobs than anywhere else. The labor force participation rate did decrease 61.6% to 56.2% between 2018 and 2023. Concerning educational attainment, 12.3% on the selected regions residents possess a Bachelor's Degree. This is below the national average, and 10.2 hold an Associate's Degree, which is 1.3 above the national average. Go TVCC! The top three industries of 2023 are education and hospitals, local government, restaurants and other eating establishments, local government, excluding education and hospitals. So that's kind of a quick overview of some of the statistics of 2025. We did have quite a few projects that we were involved in, all over Malheur County, and all over the tri-county area. 2026 has a good outlook for us. We've already got three or four projects that we're trying to help people out with, trying to find either locations,



funding, any assistance, if they want to grow their business so they come to us and then we start with that process and with the support of the cities and Councils and counties, I look forward to working with a lot of them on different projects, also with our Economic Director here for Malheur County, and getting all those directions going on. I'd also like to invite everyone, April 10th, to our Western Treasure Valley Economic breakfast. It's going to be at TVCC Weese Building, \$20 a ticket, and you can get those on Event Bright online. Our topic is transportation, so we're going to have a speaker from Union Pacific, one from the Idaho Trucking Association, and then we have the Economic Councilor from Salem that has been here a couple years, Damon, I mess up his name every time so I'm not even going to try it. But he's got a great economic outlook for us for Malheur County. So, please join us if you can. It's going to be at the Weese Building and doors open up at 6:30. It's going to be a great breakfast. So, I once again want to thank Madam Mayor and the Council and the City of Ontario for the support for the SREDA, and look forward to getting to work for you. I've only been at it for two and half months. Thanks, Chief, for the fire hose. I drank from it really well. Thanks for your time.

Revitalize Ontario

Tom Thompson, Revitalize Ontario, and Dan Cummings, City Manager, presented.

Mr. Cummings: Thank you, Mayor. I'll just start out a little bit. Within your packet, I included several documents that I got from Revitalize Ontario, kind of shows you some conceptual plans and the proposed stage that we have a picture up there on the screen that this is the stage that they chose that's actually in a park in Sisters, Oregon. It's a beautiful deal. What they'd be proposing, they got some numbers to talk about, but what we're kind of proposing is finding the funding to do what we're calling Phase One, which would be the stage and connecting sidewalks to it for ADA approved sidewalks and access to it, so at this time I'd like to turn it over to Tom, and he'll kind of give you an update of where we're at. At the last meeting, Tatiana gave you an update and request to go after a grant from the Border Board to help fund the foundation for the stage, and they're in that process still, trying to get that funding. They also mentioned, the Border Board mentioned that Revitalize Ontario should apply for a grant for the, to do an architect to do the master planning and the actual design of the state. So, he'll let you know if they plan on doing that as well, so, Tom, take over.

Mr. Thompson: Thank you, Mayor and Council, for having me here this evening. Dan kind of filled you in on the basics there. The projects moving pretty quickly just because granting needs to be done by 31st of March for that planning. We will be working with several players in the area. The Border Board has offered a grant writer to help us with that. That grant will include, as Dan mentioned, the master plan for the park, as well as the engineering required for the state awning section. We don't believe there's any engineering required for the sidewalk or foundation, but there'll definitely be a building permit necessary for anything above and beyond that. As he mentioned, we are planning on breaking this project out to three phases, and we'll be presenting a larger plan to the Parks Committee next week, so it goes through the proper channels. Phase One, obviously, he said we're doing the stage and the sidewalks. We're going to follow that up, depending on other grant opportunities we can find, with any other sidewalks. In terms of the park, park benches, fencing, any infrastructure there, and then finally, Phase Three will be planting trees and any landscape the Parks Committee is going through a tree study right now, so I think it'll line up quite correctly that they'll have the study done before we even get to the landscaping portion, and so it'll be nice to be able to work with them. Again, we're working with local folks as much as possible, Andrews is going to help us with the landscape materials, Mike from the Cultural Center garden is helping us with the design of the landscape, and that's kind of where we're sitting. Based upon our current projections of the stage and the sidewalks, at prevailing wage, we think that's going to run around \$275,000. Obviously, the more we can get done through volunteer work and things of that nature is great, but we do have to follow some rules since it's using maybe potentially city money and the city property. So, we're going to do our best to keep the cost down, but also follow all the necessary rules. That's kind of our quick update on it today. Again, I'll have more to put to the Parks Committee that goes through you guys. Any questions, I'd be happy to answer them.

Councilor Hart asked when he thought they'd have a firm financial request.

*Mr. Thompson: I would believe, we do have a quote now. We want to meet with them again in person, to give them exact dimensions. A lot of the *** received, they've just got a packet, that you received, and so they're, I'd call them guesstimates, and so I'd want to make sure they have the right cubic feet for the sidewalks and whatnot, and I would hope that we could have to that you by the next Council meeting. That way we can provide the basis at Parks next Thursday and then another packet and full presentation to you guys next week.*



Councilor Hart verified they were asking to get a sign off from the Parks Committee meeting, so they could weight in.

Mr. Thompson: *Correct, yes, and I'm actually a member of the Parks Committee, thank you for appointing me. I was out of town in Portland that week. So, yeah, we definitely want to follow the proper channels, and make sure, you know, everybody in Parks weighs in on the plan, and that it makes sense for the city.*

Councilor Kirby stated when Tatiana made her presentation, there was a timeline, so would this fit in that timeline?

Tatiana Burgess, Planning Director, stated they amended their project. They were going to amend that in their grant, and have that money triggered, released once the bid was awarded, but no later than 18 months.

Mr. Thomson: *I think their initial plan was to try to have it done (couldn't hear the rest as a phone was loudly ringing), and if at all possible, we would love to have to proceed to that timeline, but again, obviously, that depends on contractors and bidding and the ability for them to start the work, and timing.*

Councilor Bakefelt stated since he had mentioned the Sister's stage area, were they going to allow them to use some of their plans that were already designed, or did those need to be recreated.

Mr. Thompson: *From what we've found, those folks who built that are no longer in business, so I'm not sure where their plans are. Our stage is a little bit modified from theirs, and so I think using the architect that the Border Board would be willing to pay for, would be able to draw that pretty quickly. It's a simple structure, so I don't think it would take too long for that to get drawn up. We have, as you know from a subsequent page, we have the base drawing done. It just needs to get some fine touches on that for engineering purposes.*

Mr. Cummings stated to help answer Councilor Hart's question, under 7D, he planned to make a request for this, as the Council discussed the General Fund. He would hold comment until they reacted that area on the Agenda. But basically, he would be requesting a fund to be able to construct some of this. It would be a request that the funds were saved in the city, and the city would be doing the contracting to make sure all the rules were being followed. It would be up the Council to determine how much. He would suggest a number, and the Council could decide whether to fund it or not.

Possible Funding of Proposed Sports Complex

Dan Cummings, City Manager, stated: *Again, I was asked to bring this up. We have a picture up there that shows, this is out of our Parks Master Plan. This is the old city dumpsite that we just finished our grant on that did a Phase One and Phase Two study on it to let us know what we need to do to develop on that property. So now that we have that in place, and there's several options there, but whatever we end up choosing, of course, we'll have to consult with the contractors that we did the study with to make sure what we're proposing, but at this point I want to let everybody know, this is just a concept that came up during the charrette to do the master planning. That's not to say that's exactly what we're going to do. This stage is still a planning stage. Mr. Hart asked me to bring this up to, since we have that done, to put it on everybody's mind that this property was tagged to be a sports complex. My opinion is, and I think most people's are, this is a good stage now to involve the Parks Committee, the Recreation District, because if they choose to do just what's shown there, ball diamonds and soccer fields and stuff and not sure if those are badminton courts or whatever, but I think we need good input from the Recreation District because I believe we would want the Recreation District to take over this and fund part of it, or whatever the case may be, as time goes by to build this. So, again, since we've got the study done, it's time to refresh everybody's memory that that's what was planned for that property and so, again, I brought it here. Not sure if you want to ear tag any funding for this yet. We'll discuss that during that other process, but at least, bring it back on board and have the Parks Committee start thinking about it and get the Recreation District opinion if they want to take on another project or not. That's pretty much all I have on it. I'm open to questions.*

NEW BUSINESS**Fire Hydrant Application**

Andy Wood, Airport Manager, presented.

The City of Ontario Municipal Airport Layout Plan sets forth the improvements to the airport. Jacobs/Public Works assisted with the layout, design, and requirements to install hydrants to best utilize the coverage, water flow, and cost estimate. The Airport Committee, city staff, and City Engineers "JUB" had been working to find suitable grants to fund this project. The next stage was approval from the City Council to submit the grant applications for three grant applications with the final grant application closing at the end of October 2026.

The project would significantly reduce the time required for the Ontario Fire Department's vehicles to refill, improving response times and increasing the effectiveness of firefighting efforts in an emergency. This directly supported the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)'s policy of enhancing airport safety and future growth of Fire Station 2.

The Fire Hydrant Project was estimated to cost \$735,000.00. The Oregon Department of Aviation (ODAV) Critical Oregon Airport Relief (COAR) Grant maximum funding allocation was \$150,000.00 with a requirement of a minimum 10% applicant match. The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Connect Oregon grant funding allocation was \$339,500.00 and required a minimum 30% applicant match. The Eastern Border Board grant funding allocation was \$100,000.00 with no applicant match. The higher the match increased the application score. The remaining city match was \$145,500.00, and the city utility billing and utility recapture fees could be used to meet the match.

The ODOT Connect Oregon Grant applications would close March 27, 2026; Eastern Oregon Border Board Grant would close March 31, 2026; ODAV COAR Grant Cycle 11 applications were open late October 2026. The Fire Hydrant Project would meet all federal, state, and city fire regulations, including FAA, ODOT, and ODAV grant requirements.

Councilor Kirby stated it was a 30% match, which normally they were 10% for cities. There was usually a reserve for this type of construction, but this was much larger. Because of the scope of work, he wondered if this was a project, once they broke ground coming off the water supply, that it would have to be completed in its entirety, or could they do some stub-outs, maybe some hydrants and the remaining later. That 30% was a sizable chunk compared to the norm.

Mr. Wood stated for the CORE Grant and the ConnectOregon Grant, the city had to meet their terms and conditions. If they city wanted to go two years, they could put it out for two years, but they wanted to make sure that whatever the grant assurances were, the city would remain in compliance. Because they were applying for the grants, if anything happened, they were weren't committing to the \$145k. Once they had them, they could look at how to fund that. Some could be coming back from recapture fees when the land was developed, and some could come back from the city utilities when people connected. There were ways to reduce that down.

Councilor Kirby verified that FAA did not participate in a recapture on this?

Mr. Wood stated what they'd done was they had several projects happening this coming year, and because of the funding that was available, they had certain FAA funds that were still allocated, and they only had some bipartisan infrastructure grants that were available, and that amount was like a fixed figure. They runway rehabilitation project was what placed as a higher priority. That's where a lot of that funding was being directed to. They did a chart to determine the best-case scenario, and this was what they found. It meant the other projects were getting more expensive, and the percentages that had be matched. Some had 10%, some were at 30%. Whichever grant was used, they needed to maximize that percentage to benefit the city as much as possible.

Mr. Cummings stated the short answer was no. FAA did not fund underground infrastructure.

Councilor Mills stated it was her understanding that if the city received all the grants, the city was still obligated for \$145,500. Was there a specific amount of fire hydrants this would cover? Did that include all the sewer installation?



Mr. Wood stated it would not cover any of the sewer, just the water lines to get the hydrants working. Those water lines would be same ones that were used for doing water connections to private hangar spaces. That was one perk. Another perk was that with the system being continuous, it meant equal pressure at all hydrants because it was a looped system.

Councilor Mills asked how many hydrants.

Mr. Wood stated it would be five hydrants.

Councilor Kirby asked where they crossed the runway and taxiway, could that be done by boring, or would they have to disturb the asphalt.

Mr. Wood stated they'd normally try to do the best they could without digging it up, but if they had to, they'd have to cut through. There was a standard that it would have to be fixed again, which was part of the cost. Four of the five hydrants should be in an area that was future development, so they shouldn't have to worry about that too much.

Councilor Braden stated his experience on the dais was that a lot of private development had to pay for those utilities, including fire hydrants. But Mr. Wood had stated this allowed private hangar expansion, but the city was funding it, as a prepaid development cost. He liked getting 80% grant funded, and the city only paying 20%, but roughly looking at the coverage map showed them, what was the city's direct benefit to having the five hydrants versus how much of it was basically coverage for private development, that the Council might want to consider not doing, or maybe weigh differently than what directly benefited the city.

Mr. Wood stated the one hydrant that was out on its own, and the yellow line that went from the set side of Ozawa's through to where BLM was, that completed the loop for equal pressure. That hangar there, there was about 12 hangars in that area that it would cover. The cost of recapture fee for that would be split with those 12 hangars.

Councilor Braden confirmed they were looking to recapture.

Mr. Cummings stated for clarification, they could only recapture the city's funding. They could not recapture any grant funding.

Councilor Kirby asked if the proposed BLM center which would be to the south of that circle, or southwest, was their center predisposed that if the city had fire hydrants in there for their proposed expansion?

Mr. Wood stated yes, that had all been put in.

Councilor Kirby verified they had hydrants.

Mr. Wood stated yes.

Councilor Kirby stated where they saw the end that stopped, that's where the water was coming from. Mr. Wood was saying this was in a loop, but he wasn't seeing a loop. He was seeing dead ends.

Mr. Wood stated all the blue lines were the existing lines for the water lines. And where those connected in, it would tie the east side with the west side. There was a line coming in from the northwest corner, and a line coming in from the east side at Ozawa's.

Councilor Braden stated that in terms of the grant funding, usually when the city did FAA or anything else, they were locked in on the funding. Was there a reasonable or foreseeable chance that the city would not get one part of it funded, considering Mr. Wood was trying to pull three grants together.

Mr. Wood stated the Eastern Oregon Border Board grant would probably be the only one, he hadn't put in a grant to them before so that was new. In speaking with someone more familiar with the EOBB, he was told they could have more than one grant used for the same project. There were two rotations in a 12-month period.



Councilor Kirby stated with regard to the proposed motion, the Council would be basically approving the opportunity for Mr. Wood to apply for grants, but would also mean that if he didn't receive a grant, there could be consideration. Was that correct?

Mr. Wood stated they would have to regear and come back with some different figures.

Councilor Kirby stated if it was \$735k and the city received two out of three, the \$340k and the \$100k, then instead of \$145k from the city, they'd need to find \$300k. Was that correct? He was trying to piece them together to get to the full \$735k.

Mr. Wood stated he met with JUB to work out several different scenarios for all the funding options, and if they used all the grants, the city's match would be \$18,300, but that would jeopardize the rehabilitation, crack seal and fill for the runway. That's why they didn't go that direction. If they went with just the BIL, CORE, Connect Oregon, and EOBB, they'd still have \$63,300k. The third scenario, which they selected, was the \$150k for the CORE, \$339,500 for ConnectOregon, and EOBB would be the \$100k, would left the \$145k needed from the city. Other scenarios increased the amount the city would have to contribute.

Councilor Braden stated returning to recapture, that was significant when the city was looking at paying for a large infrastructure cost that could benefit private hangar development, where they had long-term, low-cost leases. Please explain how the city would consider recapturing part of this. If the one central hydrant benefited 12 hangars, but the other four hydrants didn't benefit any private property, then the city would look at its percentage of \$150k cost, or \$30k of the city's money, that could then earmark for repayment when those hangars were privately developed. Was that roughly the structure they'd be looking at?

Mr. Cummings stated that was correct. It would be the same set up as when the city ran power out there. Because they were using so many different grants, he'd want to make sure what the regulations were, so the city might not be able to recapture. He'd want to make sure.

Mr. Wood stated on CORE and ConnectOregon grants, the city would not be able to recapture on those. He was not sure of the rules for the EOBB.

Councilor Hart verified the sense of urgency was because of the deadline for one of the grants.

Mr. Wood stated it was two. One finished on March 27th, the other the 31st of March.

Councilor Hart verified that Mr. Wood was asking for the ability to apply, so he applied and was awarded, but some of the other funding didn't come through, they could say no, there wasn't enough for the match, so did that give the city a bad reputation with those granting authorities?

Mr. Cummings stated it was the norm to expect the applicant to have the necessary, but they did understand that it might be hard for some cities to commit to a budget they didn't have yet. If the Council wanted to commit the funds, it would have to be done under the current budget. It *could* give a bad mark, so it was best to make sure there were matching funds available.

Councilor Hart asked if there were other capital requests that were going to come out of the Airport Committee for the upcoming budget cycle?

Mr. Wood stated the project they were looking at was the rehab the runway and taxiway, which was coming up next on the Agenda.

Councilor Hart stated he was concerned that even if the city received all the grants, that \$145k, as much as he wanted the airport to be successful, it did lose money every year, and continuing to put money into it, and there were projects in front of the Council that would benefit a lot of people downtown, and there was money to fund that, the opportunity to fund sports parks which would benefit the kids in the community. He had a hard time with, even if they received funds from other people, to put in five hydrants at an airport that lost money with the idea that in the future some people who had airplanes would build a hangar. As a ROI, that return was a stretch. And there was also other capital requests that would come from the Airport to do other things, and while they had put a lot of money into the airport and they needed to maintain it to ensure it didn't deteriorate, but he was cautious about putting one-time capital dollars into just one piece of infrastructure.



Councilor Bakefelt asked the Fire Chief, the reason for the fire hydrants out there was if there was an incident, they'd have the water to deal with the situation to avoid liability towards the city, so did Chief Benson have a comment?

Chief Benson stated he was not sure how many of those hydrants would be protective.

Councilor Hart stated all the red circles on the map were existing fire hydrants that were already there and functional. The yellow would be proposed five new ones.

Chief Benson stated looping the water line did greatly enhance water supply to existing hydrants. Most of the circles were for future buildings, so as far as liability, he viewed that towards existing buildings. If the proposed buildings were to be built, then yes, the water supply would be needed. It delayed them when they had to lay 1000 feet of a five-inch line. That delayed several minutes to get water. The greatest advantage in reviewing the map was looping the system. Regarding new hydrants for buildings that weren't there, he saw no liability for that.

Mr. Cummings stated any area not covered by the red would require the Fire Chief to require the installation of a hydrant. But, looking at the map, under the existing hydrants, the city had the ability, there were currently six available sites for private hangars that fell within a hydrant, and there were three small commercial sites that were within a hydrant. He wanted Council aware that there were sites out there where people could build a hangar that would not require an additional fire hydrant.

Councilor Bakefelt verified they were not at critical mass. It didn't need to be done right now.

Mr. Cummings stated that was correct.

BRADEN moved, FOLDEN seconded, THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE THE GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR THE AIRPORT FIRE HYDRANT PROJECT. No vote.

Councilor Braden stated when he was weighing this decision, he was looking at was on a three-quarter million-dollar project, and the proposal being 80% grant funded. That was a lot of money coming into the community for construction, and it was an improvement to the city's airport that didn't directly or exactly benefit the city's operations, but paying 20% for that development as an infrastructure cost, was money well invested.

Councilor Mills stated if the city did not get the last two grants, would it come back to the Council for a vote to move forward, or would this be the final decision?

Mr. Wood stated whatever the next stage was. There was always an "out" clause.

VOTE ON MOTION:

Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-no; Contreras-no; Kirby-no; Bakefelt-no; Folden-yes. Motion failed 3/4/0.

Rehabilitate Runway, Taxiway, and Apron (Seal Coat & Crack Fill) Project

Andy Wood, Airport Manager, presented.

The City of Ontario Municipal Airport Capital Improvement Plan has scheduled for preventative maintenance and continued development of asphalt surfaces to meet performance requirements. The Airport Committee, city staff, and City Engineers "JUB" have been working to find suitable grants to fund this project for preventative maintenance and safety operations for the airport. The FAA guidance recommended pavement asphalt seal coat and joint sealing every three years on eligible AIP asphalt.

The most recent pavement maintenance was in 2022. The Pavement Condition Index (PCI) report estimated the condition to range from 55-85 being fair to satisfactory condition.

The rehabilitation project estimated cost was \$33,333.00. Companion Grant funding allocation was based on FAA BIL grant funding available \$274,000.00, FAA AIP grant funding \$26,000.00, ODAV COAR grant funding \$30,000.00, and city matching funds at \$3,333.00. The 2026-2027 budget would allocate matching funds if the grant was successful. FAA BIL grant had a \$274,000.00 remaining entitlement, FAA AIP had a \$150,000.00 entitlement remaining, ODAV COAR Grant Application would close at the end of October 2026.



The rehabilitation project would meet the FAA guidance recommendations for pavement asphalt conditions, and would meet the FAA and ODAV grant requirements.

HART moved, BAKEFELT seconded, THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION (FAA) COMPANION GRANTS AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (AIP) AND BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE LAW (BIL) GRANT, AND THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF AVIATION (ODAV) CRITICAL OREGON AIRPORT RELIEF (COAR) GRANT CYCLE 11 TO REHABILITATE RUNWAY, TAXIWAY, AND APRON GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR A SEAL COAT AND CRACK FILL PROJECT. Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0.

Resolution #2026-110: Carryover Projects

Kari Ott, Finance Director, presented.

The city held budget meetings in May 2025, and officially adopted the budget in June 2025. The city was on the modified accrual basis of accounting, which could make it difficult to estimate project expense timing. Due to this, there were a few projects that weren't completed by June 30, 2025, and needed to carry over to the 2025-2026 budget year. None of these were new projects, but were just carryover from projects that didn't get completed.

The details of projects with carryover funds that should be carried over to 2025-2026 were as follows: Recreation District Beck-Kiwanis Baseball Field - \$50,000; Enterprise Camera System - \$93,239; Cemetery Vehicle Purchases - \$83,000; Fire Station 2 Project - \$70,000; Sidewalk Incentive Program - \$9,280; Facade Grant - \$20,878; Police vehicle Equipment - \$33,766; Airport BLM Street Design - \$36,300; PERS Reserve payment - \$51,480; Police Rifles - \$32,250; Fire Turnouts - \$112,388; Chlorine Pumps - \$50,000; Reservoir Improvements - \$7,500; Phase 2 - Increase WTP Capacity - \$148,723; Aerators - \$377,302.

This resolution would increase each fund less than 10%, so no supplemental budget hearing was required. The total budget increase was \$1,068,528. Approval of this resolution allowed the projects to be completed. A formal resolution approved by the City Council was required to expend funds per ORS 294.

MILLS moved, CONTRERAS seconded, THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE RESOLUTION #2026-110: A SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR CARRYOVER PROJECTS. Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0.

General Fund Balance

Kari Ott, Finance Director, presented.

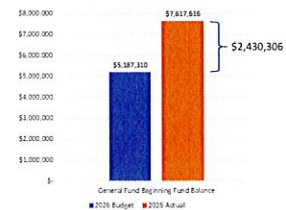


General Fund 25-26 Beginning Balance

2025-2026 BFB



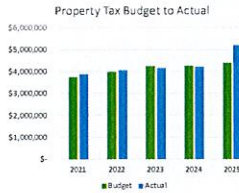
The 2024-2025 General Fund balance was higher than budgeted.



March 10, 2026



Why the differences?



Property Taxes \$810,191 over budget

Other Items



	AMOUNT OVER BUDGET
MARIJUANA TAX	\$345,060
INTEREST INCOME	\$186,060
FRANCHISE FEE INCOME	\$79,644
PARKS TOT TAX	\$38,377
GRANTS	\$58,030
SALARIES & OTHER EXPENSES **	\$1,436,008
PRIOR YEAR BFB	\$1,614,870

THESE ITEMS WERE CONSIDERED WHEN COMPUTING THE BFB. HOWEVER, WHEN COMPUTING IN MARCH, SOME OF THE ESTIMATED AMOUNTS WERE DIFFERENT THAN EXPECTED.

**THERE WERE POSITIONS BUDGETED MAINLY IN THE POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS THAT WEREN'T FILLED BY YEAR END.

NEXT STEPS?



COUNCIL CHOICES

- SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET RESOLUTION TO APPROPRIATE ALL OR SOME OF THE EXTRA FUNDS IN 2025-2026
- WAIT UNTIL BUDGET MEETINGS FOR 26-27 AND INCLUDE IT IN THE BEGINNING FUND BALANCE AND APPROPRIATE IN THE BUDGET PROCESS

CONSIDERATION: We are already in March 2026; there are only 3.5 months of the fiscal remaining.

PERS



CITY CONTRIBUTIONS	
5/21/2025	\$ 636,575.00
12/31/2024	\$ 606,880.00
12/31/2023	\$ 2,047,378.00
8/30/2021	\$ 1,500,000.00
5/14/2021	\$ 290,364.91
8/30/2019	\$ 1,743,103.94
7/20/2019	\$ 949,415.00
	\$ 7,196,095.35
EIF MATCHING	\$ 548,137.24
	\$ 159,142.25
	\$ 707,280.99
TOTAL SIDE ACCOUNT	\$ 7,963,336.14

	Tier 1/ Tier 2	OPSRP General	OPSRP Police & Fire
2025-2027 RATES (WITHOUT SIDE ACCOUNT)	51.41%	44.07%	49.34%
ACTUAL RATES	32.42%	25.08%	30.35%

Approximately \$777,746 annually in savings:

25-26 Budget has \$250,000 payment from the General Fund to PERS for a total side account payment of \$447,960.

PROJECTS FOR CONSIDERATION



- MOORE PARK
- SPORTS COMPLEX

Mr. Cummings proposed the Council fund some money from the current budget for the Moore Park Development Fund, so it would give the city some funding to consider the master plan and their phasing projects and use that money as seed money to help out on their projects. Staff believed they needed the business owners and the public to get involved in this park and the downtown area, and to start promoting that area. With this funding, he could help in promoting the downtown area again. Council had heard that night that Phase One could cost up to \$275k, but those were rough estimates. He was asking the Council to consider giving the Moore Park Development Fund between \$300-500k to have some money to work with the downtown people and get some projects moving down there. This would not be grant funds; staff would work with Revitalize Ontario on their projects. If it was warranted, staff would put it out to bid and help get it constructed. It was great that there were two downtown organizations working together. This was an opportunity to do something, since there was a little surplus. It was for the Council to decide.

Councilor Kirby agreed they needed to send some money aside for this organization. In reviewing the survey he'd conducted and categorizing things by comments, many concerns were there, but voiced in different ways. Problems were noted, but not necessarily solutions. If anyone wanted those results, he would be happy to provide them.

Councilor Bakefelt stated her support setting funds aside for Moore Park. They needed to support the businesses, and as there were funds to do that, now was the time. It would be a statement to the public that cool things could be done here in Ontario.

Councilor Hart asked if one of the amounts triggered the need for a public hearing.



Ms. Ott stated the amounts based on the city's funds, would not trigger a public hearing, but it would require a supplemental budget through a resolution. The public could attend the meeting, but it would not require a publication.

Councilor Hart stated he was also in support staff's recommendation. He'd like to do the half million. That would send a strong signal that it was important to the Council. He'd also like them to consider PERS. They had already budgeted an additional \$250k for this year, and anytime he saw how much they were saving annually because of unpopular moves by earlier Councils to take extra money to pay down the debt, that was the most important number. Hopefully, anyone watching, \$777k the city did not have to pull out of the General Fund to pay for PERS, because they had already paid it down. He'd also like to see them put additional money into PERS, above what had been already budgeted. Maybe double it from the \$250k, which had not been paid yet, so maybe increase that to \$500k.

Councilor Braden asked Ms. Ott if matching funds were available under the EIF?

Ms. Ott stated there were none that she was aware of.

Mr. Cummings stated in his opinion for the sports complex, maybe they hold off doing anything funding on that until the next budget cycle, to give staff time to get it before the Parks Committee and the Recreation District, to get their input. He was also in support of the PERS recommendation.

Mayor Folden stated she was in support of the \$500k for Moore Park development, and the additional funding going into PERS.

Ms. Ott stated she would like a consensus from the Council on what they wanted, and she'd bring a resolution to the next meeting. She verified they wanted to put \$500k towards Moore Park, and \$250k for PERS.

Councilor Braden stated with reference to PERS, the city had been making payments into the side account since 2019. He was on the Budget Committee during that time to present. Every year, they made a hard decision to pay money towards a debt that was owed to former employees. This year, was a tight budget, and they did \$250k out of the General Fund, plus other funds, for a total of \$447k. That was the second lowest in the last seven years of PERS side account contributions. The city was now looking at a surplus of money that made the Councilors who fought over money feel like it was a little like Christmas. He agreed with Moore Park. Everyone was sharing that they agreed with that. However, his feelings that he'd like the Council to hear was that they would match PERS what they were willing to put towards Moore Park. So, when they'd said \$500k and \$500k, yes, he liked that, because they were getting some fun with the park, and they were also honoring their debt obligation towards PERS. He'd like the two numbers to match whatever number they decided on.

Councilor Hart clarified he meant \$500k more? They'd already budgeted an extra \$250k, so was it an additional \$500k.

Councilor Braden stated that grew the side account and saved that \$777k next year, and made it close to a million. That was pretty spectacular.

Mayor Folden stated she believed they were all in agreement on that.

Councilor Kirby stated in doing some research, larger cities had paid it off in full, so were debt free. But another option was that some cities bonded their debt to pay it off. It appeared Ontario was doing better than most.

Mayor Folden requested a consensus for the two figures.

Mr. Cummings asked for an actual motion, so there was no confusion on the amounts.

HART moved, BAKEFELT seconded, THE CITY COUNCIL HAVE STAFF BRING BACK A RESOLUTION TO PUT \$500,000 INTO A MOORE PARK DEVELOPMENT FUND AND ADD AN ADDITIONAL \$500,000 TO THE CITY'S PERS SIDE ACCOUNT PAYMENT FOR THIS FISCAL YEAR. Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0.



DEPARTMENT HEAD UPDATESCommunity Development

Tatiana Burgess, Planning Director, presented. She also reminded everyone that there was currently a vacancy on the Planning Commission.

HAND-OUTSMinutes

Airport: 02-02-2026

County Court: 02-18-2026

CORRESPONDENCE, COMMENTS, AND EX-OFFICIO REPORTS.

Mayor Folden thanked the Fire Chief, along with the entire Fire Department, for the annual fire benefit dance fundraiser. It was successful and a lot of fun.

Councilor Kirby asked about the new Captain in the Police Department.

Chief Cooper stated the department had hired now Captain Cal Kunz. He was a previous employee with the City of Ontario, bringing over 30+ years of law enforcement experience back to this community. He was a great addition to the Ontario team.

Chief Benson stated gave a huge thank you to the Council, Chief Cooper, and to Dan Cummings. The department was onboarding with Lexipol, which had been approved by the Council, using Public Safety Funds about a month ago. It was about a year long process, and they were currently in Phase One, which was the highest liability type policy. It was way better than he ever imagined. There were about 600 trainings available online, and he got to assign them – which his crew just loved. EMS wise, they used to really search for EMS classes, and now they could all be done with Lexipol. He seriously was so thankful, and believed they were on a great track liability-wise. It was going to make a huge difference.

ADJOURN

MILLS moved, BAKEFELT seconded, **THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED**. Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0. Meeting concluded at 7:51pm.

ACCEPTED:

Deborah K. Folden, Mayor

ATTEST:

Tori Barnett, MMC, City Recorder

