

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY OF ALBERT LEA
October 27, 2025 – 7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Mayor Rich Murray, Councilors Rachel Christensen, Larry Baker, Jason Howland, Reid Olson, Keith Van Beek, Brian Anderson, Public Works Director Steven Jahnke, City Attorney Joel Holstad of Lakes National Law LLP, and Deputy City Clerk Karla Tukua

ABSENT: City Manager Ian Rigg and City Clerk Daphney Maras

ADDITIONAL STAFF PRESENT: Sergeant-at-Arms-Police Chief Darren Hanson, Fire Chief Jeff Laskowske

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL - Mayor Murray called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Deputy City Clerk Tukua administered roll call.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - Mayor Murray asked all in attendance to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

CEREMONIAL ITEMS

A. Oath of Office – Firefighters Kyo Htoo and Blair Bonnerup

Fire Chief Jeff Laskowske introduced both Kyo Htoo and Blair Bonnerup, giving a history of their experience and welcomed them to Fire and Rescue. Deputy City Clerk Tukua formally administered the Oath of Office.

B. Proclamation – Crash Responder Safety Week – November 17-21, 2025

Mayor Murray read the Proclamation aloud, proclaiming November 17-21, 2025 as Crash Responder Safety Week. Emergency Responder representatives were present to accept the proclamation.

Police Chief Darren Hanson spoke on the importance of highlighting the men and women who respond to crashes on our interstates and highways, and to remind people to be careful around crash scenes.

PUBLIC FORUM

Jeff Dahlen with Freeborn County Veterans Services spoke about Operation Green Light. Each November as Veterans Day approaches Freeborn County recognizes the men and women who serve our nation and military. Operation Green Light is recognition of their service and lets our veterans know they are seen and appreciated. From November 4th through November 11th counties across the nation will illuminate their buildings in green and Freeborn County will light up their Veterans Memorial and County buildings in green. He encourages residents and businesses in the City of Albert Lea to turn on a green light to show Albert Lea's support of veterans in our community.

CONSENT AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- A. Approve Minutes of the October 13, 2025 Regular Council Meeting
- B. Approve Minutes of the October 13, 2025 Work Session
- C. Approve Minutes of the October 18, 2025 Strategic Planning Meeting
- D. License & Permits
- E. Appointment of Pam Schmidt to the Heritage Preservation Commission
- F. Resolution Supporting Operation Green Light for Veterans

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve the consent agenda as read, seconded by Councilor Howland. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-180
Included with these minutes)

PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Ordinance 25-147 Amending Zoning and Landuse Map from R-2 to B-2 - 642 Marshall and 437 Bridge Avenue (2nd Reading)

This is the final reading of proposed amendments to Zoning and Landuse Map from R-2 to B-2 at 642 Marshall and 437 Bridge Avenue. Security Bank Minnesota applied to re-zone 642 Marshall Street and a portion of 437 Bridge Ave (a parcel with split zoning) from One to four Family Residence (R-2) to Community Business (B-2) to allow for future expansion of parking and building areas for Security Bank. A portion of 437 Bridge Ave is already zoned (B-2), which eliminates the concern for spot zoning.

In addition, the 2040 Comprehensive Plan identifies this area as commercial, which includes both large-scale and local serving uses. Planning Commission recommends approval of this 2nd reading.

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Van Beek. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Ordinance 25-147
Included with these minutes)

B. Ordinance 25-148 Amending Zoning and the Landuse Map From Single Family Residence District (R-1) to Interstate Development District (IDD) for Property Located at 21133 and 21135 775th Ave. (2nd Reading)

This is the final reading of the proposed amendment to the zoning and landuse map from single family residence district (R-1) to interstate development district (IDD) for property located at 21133 and 21135 775th Ave. Terri Jensen, ALC, a listing broker on behalf of the property owners at 21133 and 21135 775th Ave applied to re-zone the properties from Single Family Residence (R-1) to Interstate Development District (IDD) to proactively plan for future sale and development of the properties. Property directly across Interstate I-35 is currently zoned IDD, which eliminates the concern for spot zoning. Planning Commission recommends approval of this final reading.

Motion made by Councilor Christensen to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Anderson. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Ordinance 25-148
Included with these minutes)

Councilor Baker asked that if anything does develop there, that there is proper screening to soften the look of the industrial area across the street from a residential area.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Public Hearing Regarding Declaring Property Without Public Purpose, Waive Planning Commission Review, and Authorizing Sale – 917 S. Broadway Avenue

Mayor Murray opened the public hearing with a staff report. He called for public comment three times. Hearing None, he closed the public hearing.

A1. Resolution 25-181 Declaring Property Without Public Purpose, Waive Planning Commission Review, and Authorize Sale – 917 S. Broadway Avenue

This resolution is to declare the property at 917 S. Broadway Ave. (PID 34-033-0580) as no longer serving a public purpose and to authorize its sale. The property, located in the B-2 Business District, previously housed a blighted structure that has since been demolished. The property will be divided between adjacent landowners for future business expansion. Staff recommends approval.

Motion made by Councilor Anderson to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Olson. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-181
Included with these minutes)

B. Resolution 25-182 Accepting Donations as Presented to the City of Albert Lea

The City of Albert Lea is generally authorized to accept donations pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 465.03 for the benefit of its citizens. Staff recommends acceptance of the following donations as submitted for Council review and approval.

- Chevron – Renewable Energy Group of Glenville – Albert Lea Fire Department

Motion made by Councilor Christensen to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Anderson. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-182
Included with these minutes)

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS:

First Ward, Councilor Christensen reported:

- Ward Items – None
- Committee Update – Senior Center has met with their advisory group to review 3 proposals received for a possible new facility. They took a tour of 2 of the facilities and will meet later this week to discuss their options.
- Public Comments – met with Age Friendly Freeborn County and they will bring back Tech Tuesday, sponsored by AT&T.
- National Vitality Center, the funding arm of Blue Zones met to get refocused with the Blue Zones project in our community.
- Worksite Wellness Committee a subgroup of Blue Zones is also meeting.

Second Ward, Councilor Baker reported:

- Ward Items – He had one ward item that he gave to Police Chief Hanson.
- Committee Update – HRA meeting tomorrow.
- Public Comments – Last Tuesday he went on the Freeborn Mower Electric bus tour to Dairyland Power in La Crosse, WI. He was able to tour their facility, it was very informational and it was a great facility. They also toured the power station in Alma, WI and was shown the control panel that manages the power in 5 states, stating it was very impressive. He thanked Freeborn Mower Electric for offering this tour.

Third Ward, Councilor Howland reported:

- Ward Items – None.
- Committee Update – Attended the city council retreat to help come up with plans for the Strategic Plan for the city. Thanked all those involved in putting the meeting together and City Staff that was there.
- Last week attended the Park and Rec Board meeting and was able to tour the update at the City Arena. Nystrom Arena now has ice and it is getting used quite a bit. The second sheet of ice should be in in January in the Colstrup Arena. He thanked staff for coordinating the ice time for all the different groups.

Fourth Ward, Councilor Olson reported:

- Ward Items – None
- Committee Update – None
- Public Comments – Congratulated the fall sports teams on great seasons, football, volleyball and the girls soccer team.

Fifth Ward, Councilor Van Beek reported:

- Ward Items – None
- Committee Update – HRA meeting tomorrow.
- Public comments – meeting with John Schipper regarding the Eddie Cochran festival, later this month will meet with the Ride for Heroes.

Sixth Ward, Councilor Anderson reported:

- Ward Items – None
- Committee Update – HRA meeting tomorrow.

MAYOR REPORT:

Attended the following meetings:

- ALEDA project review meeting
- Met with Watershed Committee
- Joined crime victims crisis center on their walk to New Denmark Park
- Visited the St. Croix Hospice group, close to 30 employees there
- ALEDA is beginning their Executive Search
- Strategic Planning meeting
- Ground Breaking for Affinity Credit Union for their new location on East Main
- Chamber Annual Meeting, congratulated Cargill, Children’s Center and Three-Oak Winery on businesses of the year honors. Met the new Chamber Director and will be going on visits to various business with her.
- Interview with Peter Cox with MPR, he noted that Peter got his start at the Albert Lea Tribune.
- Bonding Committee Meeting to prepare for the House Bonding Committee visit next week.
- Echoed Councilor Olson sentiments with fall sports teams on their success. Also mentioned Andrew Scholl going to state in Cross Country.

Mentioned the upcoming events and said they are also listed on the City’s website.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

- City Manager Rigg is at a conference and will be back for our next Council Meeting.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

- A. **Resolution 25-183 Approving Claims**
(1). Presentation of Claims Over \$25,000

The attached resolution directs the Mayor and City Treasurer to issue the payment of claims as presented in the Detail of Claims report. In addition, Tukua displayed a list of claims over \$25,000 for the public's viewing, transparency and education.

Motion made by Councilor Baker, to approve the claims, seconded by Councilor Van Beek. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-183
Included with these minutes)

Councilor Howland motioned for adjournment; Councilor Anderson seconded. That there being no further business, the Council meeting adjourned until the next regular meeting of the Albert Lea City Council at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, November 10, 2025. On voice call vote, all councilors voted in favor of said motion.

Mayor Murray declared the motion passed and the meeting adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:29 P.M.

Mayor Rich Murray

Karla Tukua
Secretary Pro Tem