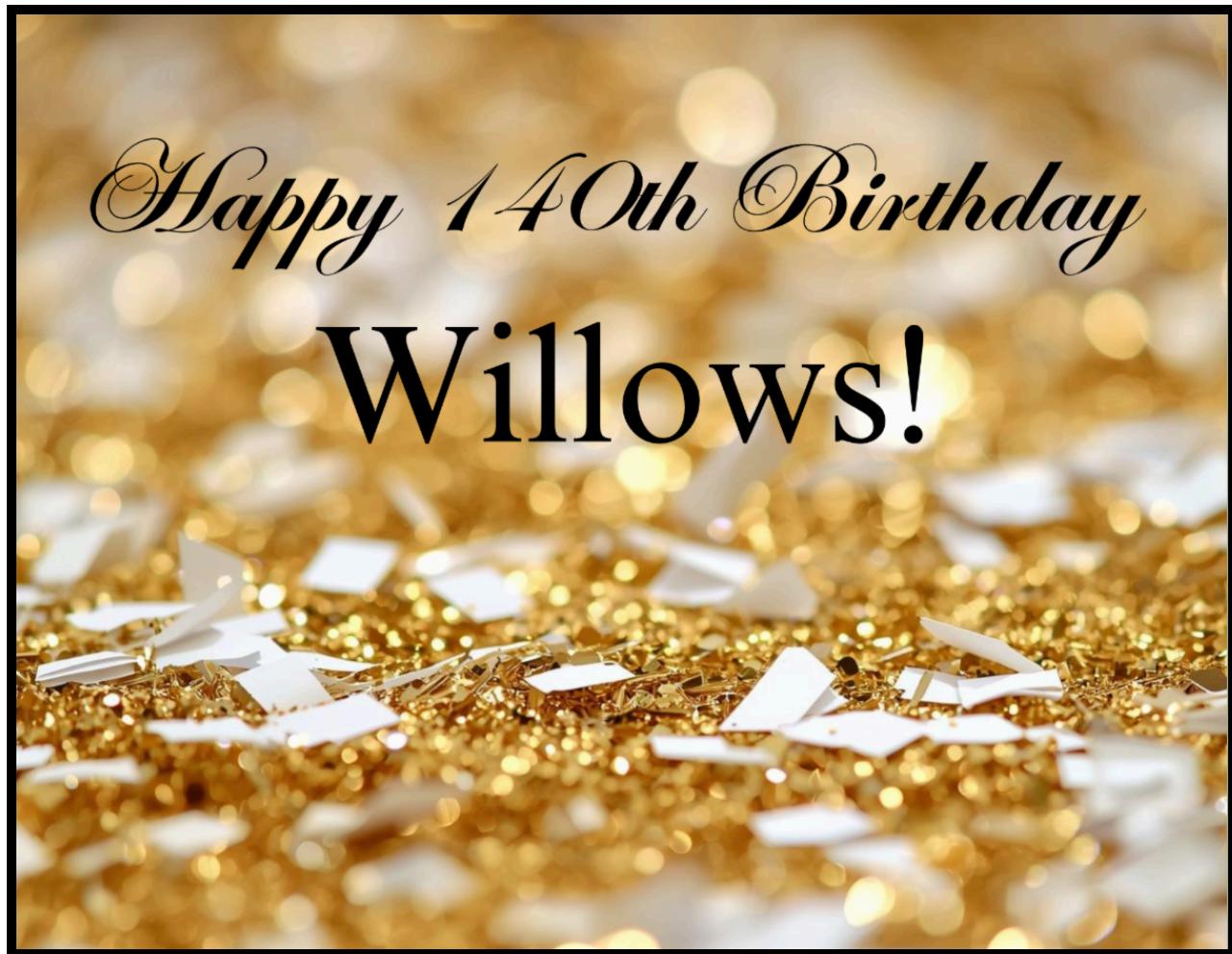




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## Willows Monthly Newsletter - January 2026

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### Top Stories:

- **City of Willows Celebrates its 140th Birthday!**
- 2025 Highlights by Department
- Youth Basketball - Open Registration
- New Finance Director Appointed
- Fire Departments' "Battle of the Bulbs" Winners

# Upcoming Meetings

## City Council

- **January 13** - Regular Meeting @ 5:30pm
- **January 27** - Regular Meeting @ 6:00pm

## Planning Commission

- **January 21** - Special Meeting @ 6:00pm
- **February 3** - Regular Meeting @ 6:00pm

## Finance and Measure I Committee (FMiOC)

- **January 20** - Regular Meeting @ 5:30pm

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## ADMINISTRATION

### General Operations, City Clerk's Office & Economic Development

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#### **City of Willows Celebrates its 140th Birthday!**

The City of Willows is turning 140 years old, and the community is invited to celebrate this historic milestone on Friday, January 16, 2026, at the City of Willows Civic Center from 5:30 to 9:00 pm!

The birthday celebration will feature horse-drawn carriage rides, live string music, children's games and activities, a photo booth, curated historical displays, historic city artifact gifts, a cash bar, and appetizers prepared and served by Red88. A champagne toast will be shared and birthday cake served at 7:00 p.m. with the Mayor, City Council, community members, and city staff.

This free community event is made possible thanks to the generous support of our local sponsors and partners including Masters Gallery Foods, WM, Thunderhill Raceway Park, California Water Service, and Walmart. We encourage residents, families, and visitors to join us in honoring 140 years of history, resilience, and community pride.

For more information, please see the city's [press release](#).



YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO

# *City of Willows*

## 140th Birthday Celebration

JAN

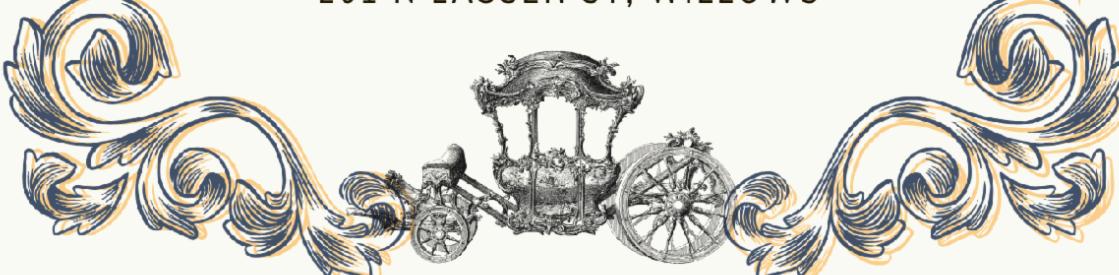
FRIDAY

**16**

5.30 PM

2026

**CITY HALL**  
201 N LASSEN ST, WILLOWS



### **City Council & Administration - 2025 Highlights**

- City holds Measure I Townhall Meeting
- City welcomes New City Attorney, Andrew Plett
- City Celebrates National Public Works Week at Corporation Yard
- Council Updates its Priorities and Goals
- City hosts National Night Out Event in Central Park

- City welcomes new City Librarian, Christine Watson
- City celebrates Wildlife Refuge Week with Hawks, Honkers & Hoots
- Council approves 2 Retail Cannabis Dispensaries
- City holds Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the Sewer Lift Station Project
- City holds Community Workshop for Zoning Code Updates



Councilmember Busby  
and City Librarian  
Christine Watson



Sewer Lift Station Rehabilitation Project  
Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



Hawks Honkers &  
Hoots enjoying the  
display

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SERVICES

### Building, Code Enforcement, Engineering, Planning, Public Works, Sewage, Public Facilities, Fleet and Capital Projects

### Code Enforcement Division - 2025 Highlights

#### Code Enforcement Advancements Strengthen Community Safety

In 2025, the City's Code Enforcement Division focused on protecting public health and safety while improving overall community standards. Staff addressed and abated unsafe living conditions and a wide range of code violations that posed risks to residents and surrounding properties, ensuring issues were corrected and brought into compliance.

Notable accomplishments include the demolition and removal of Naomi's Bar on Tehama Street, the abatement of a residence on Baywood Way, and ongoing efforts at 600 North Humboldt Avenue to address unsafe living conditions and begin correcting deficiencies within the complex. The Division also successfully abated countless nuisances throughout the city, including the tagging and removal of abandoned vehicles and trailers.

These efforts were carried out in coordination with the Glenn County Sheriff's Office, Willows Fire Department, PG&E, and Cal Water. In addition, code enforcement placed a strong emphasis on ensuring businesses within city limits maintain proper licensing and comply with zoning requirements, supporting a safe, orderly, and thriving community.



Illegal Food Vendor



Code Enforcement - Before



Code Enforcement - After

## Engineering Division - 2025 Highlights

### **Jensen Park ADA Improvements**

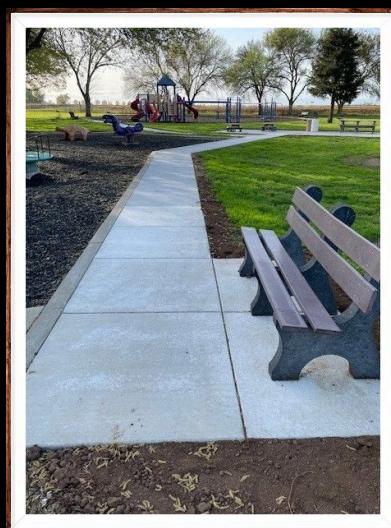
The City of Willows upgraded Jensen Park to improve accessibility for all users. ADA improvements included enhanced pathways and better access throughout the park. These upgrades support the City's commitment to creating inclusive and accessible public spaces for the community.

### **Sewer Lift Station Rehabilitation Project Completed!**

The City of Willows completed a major rehabilitation of all five wastewater lift stations—critical facilities that move wastewater through the system to the treatment plant. The \$2 million project modernized equipment that had been in service for more than 30 years, including new pumps, guiderails, control systems, and fall protection. It also added remote monitoring and real-time data through a new Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system, allowing staff to identify issues sooner and respond more efficiently.

### **Sewer Replacement and Rehabilitation Project Completed!**

The City of Willows completed sewer main replacement work along Yolo Street between Oak Street and Sycamore Street, on Sacramento Street, starting at the GCID canal and continuing to Sycamore Street, the alley in front of ITF and the alley to the rear of North Valley Indian Health. Locations for these upgrades were carefully selected based on detailed inspections using closed-circuit television (CCTV) footage of the underground pipes. The majority of sewer lines in the city are close to 100 year old clay pipe that is in dire need of replacement.



ADA Improvements at Jensen Park



Sycamore Street Lift Station Completed

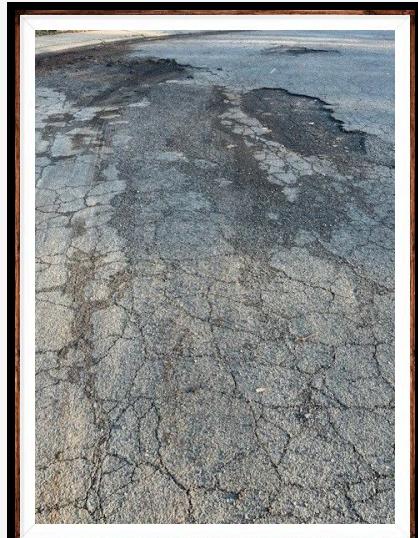


Sewer Main Replacement

## Update: Road Improvements Planned for West Oak Street and Madrone Manor

The City is currently developing Plans, Specifications, and Bid Documents for upcoming road improvement projects on West Oak Street, from South Marshall Avenue to South Murdock Avenue, as well as the Madrone Manor cul-de-sac. These projects will involve a complete removal and replacement of the existing roadway to improve safety, durability, and long-term performance.

The preparation of Plans, Specifications, and Bid Documents is fully funded through a grant awarded to the City. Once the design and bidding process is complete, construction is anticipated to begin in summer 2026. These improvements represent a continued investment in the City's infrastructure and commitment to maintaining safe and reliable roadways for the community.



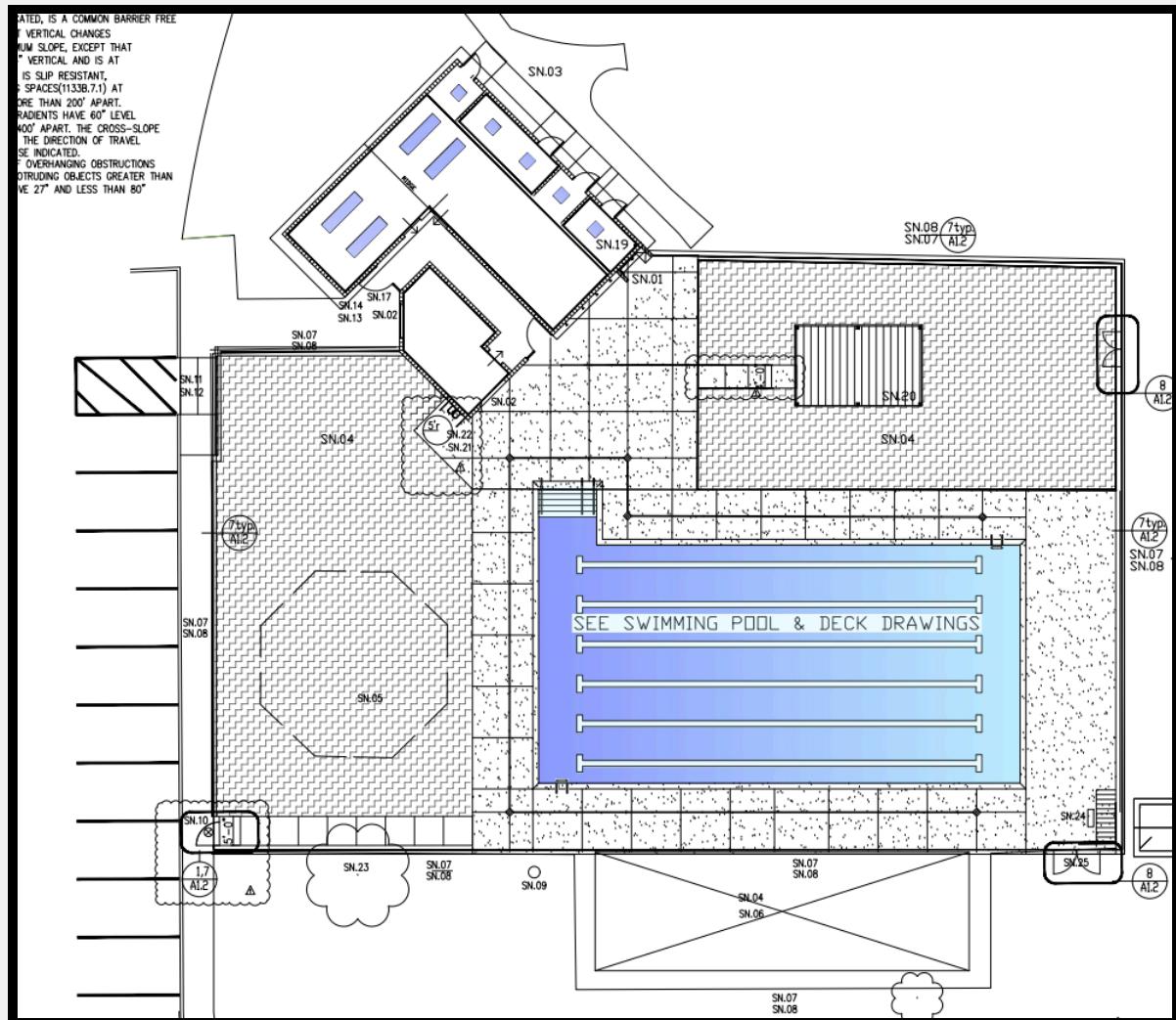
## Update: Sycamore Park Improvement Project

The Sycamore Park Improvement Project is out to bid for construction and will deliver major upgrades throughout the park, focused on accessibility, safety, and expanded recreational opportunities. Improvements include new curb ramps and more than 2,000 linear feet of new sidewalks around the perimeter of the park, along with replacement of approximately 2,100 linear feet of interior walking paths to improve circulation and ADA access. The project also enhances recreation amenities by resurfacing the tennis court area and converting two existing courts into six new pickleball courts with stadium lighting, along with the installation of additional trash receptacles and picnic tables throughout the park.

Significant improvements are also planned for the City Swimming Pool complex, including reconstruction of the concrete deck around the main pool, replastering, upgrades to mechanical, disinfection, and filtration systems, and electrical improvements. Additional

upgrades include a portable lifeguard stand, an ADA pool lift, a new roof on the pool house, ADA-compliant renovations to the pool house, and new perimeter fencing.

To maintain public access to summer swimming while construction is underway, the City will rent the Willows High School pool beginning in June. The City anticipates the municipal pool work will be complete by the fall of 2026.



and drought-tolerant landscaping; the project's design review and lot merger were approved by the Planning Commission in 2025.

## **Title 18 Municipal Code Workshop**

Contract planners, Harris & Associates, hosted an interactive workshop in early December to gather public input on Title 18 of the zoning and planning elements of the Willows Municipal Code. They used poster boards to display and explain portions of the existing Code alongside suggested updates, helping participants understand potential changes and improvements. Attendees had opportunity to share their ideas and feedback directly through sticky notes and comment cards, creating a hands-on and collaborative experience.

## **725 North Tehama Multi-Family Triplex Completed**

The Conditional Use Permit Amendment and Design Review were approved for the construction of a Triplex in early 2025 and construction is complete. The applicant completed the conversion of 17 motel units to apartments in 2024, bringing the total number of units to 20.

## **Hotel Conversion to Spark by Hilton**

The Deluxe Inn at 457 North Humboldt Avenue will be rebranded as a Spark by Hilton and expanded by 36 rooms, bringing the total to 73. The project brings new investment and jobs, adds lodging options for I-5 travelers, and features updated building and sign design for a cleaner streetscape. Overall, it increases the city's hospitality capacity and boosts the tax base through more overnight stays and local purchases.

## **Retail Cannabis Licenses**

The City Council approved two Cannabis Retail/Dispensary licenses. Cali Love has received all local and state approvals and will operate at 157 North Butte Street, with operations expected to begin in early 2026. WWCRS, Inc. is currently awaiting their state approval and will operate at 130 North Butte Street. In addition to the City's sales tax, these dispensary businesses will also contribute a percentage of their gross monthly income to the City's General Fund, as well as increasing potential foot traffic in the downtown area.

## **Black Bear Diner EV Charging Station**

A new electric vehicle (EV) charging station was approved in 2025 and is planned at 246 North Humboldt Avenue. The site will feature five Level 3 DC fast chargers with overhead canopies, the project will provide reliable, high-speed charging compatible with all EV models.

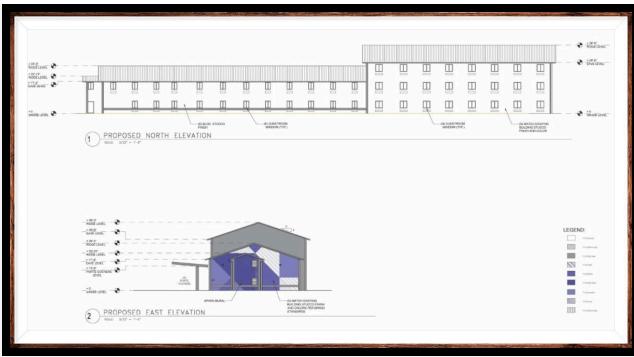
## **2025 Planning Commission Appointments**

The City of Willows proudly welcomed Keith Corum, Christine Ocampo, and Michael McNeil to the Planning Commission in 2025. Each new commissioner brings a wealth of knowledge, diverse experience, and a shared commitment to guiding the City's growth and development.

Their dedication to ensuring that Willows continues to flourish—while remaining consistent with the City’s General Plan and Willows Municipal Code—will be a valuable asset to the community. The City looks forward to the contributions and leadership of these commissioners as they help shape Willows’ future.



Black Bear Diner EV Station



Spark by Hilton Concept

## Public Works Division - 2025 Highlights

### Stop Signs, Street Name Signs and Wayfinding Signage

Staff completed the installation of new solar-powered LED stop signs and poles at the intersection of Tehama Street and Road 57. This intersection has been identified as a high-incident location, and the new flashing stop signs are designed to increase visibility for approaching drivers during both day and night. New street name signs have been purchased to replace all existing street name signs. Installation has begun and will continue into 2026. Wayfinding signage was approved in 2025 and is currently is under the design review process. Staff anticipate replacing and installing new wayfinding signage by early 2026.

### Leaf Pickup and Flood Mitigation

In 2025, Public Works supported another storm readiness year by running seasonal leaf pickup and targeted cleanup in problem areas to keep gutters and storm drains clear. Crews performed routine storm drain maintenance—inspecting and cleaning catch basins, culverts, ditches, and outfalls—so the system could carry runoff effectively. During storms, staff monitored conditions and responded to reports by clearing plugged inlets, removing debris, placing barricades, and addressing roadway hazards like ponding or washouts. Flood mitigation focuses on life-safety and keeping key routes open while reducing localized impacts where feasible with rapid debris removal and temporary measures. After storms, crews complete post-storm inspections, remove sediment and debris, and document damage for follow-up repairs and longer-term improvements.

### Community Clean Up Event

In 2025, Public Works also assisted Waste Management in hosting the City of Willows Annual Community Clean Up Event. During this event, residents bring their solid waste, mattresses, e-waste and scrap metal to be disposed of for free! Below are the 2025 event total metrics:

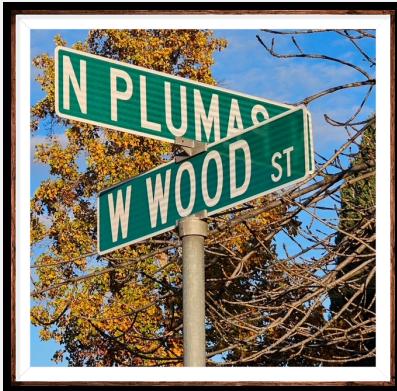
- Solid Waste - 22 Tons,
- Freon - 59 Pounds,
- Ewaste - 1.5 Tons,
- Scrap Metal/Appliances - 30,000 Tons, and
- Mattresses - 36.

## New Equipment

Thanks to grant funding attained by the Willows Fire Department, in 2025, the City was able to purchase a new stump grinder, wood chipper and tusk claw to assist with vegetation removal.



LED Stop Sign



New Street Signs



New Wood Chipper

## Recreation Division - 2025 Highlights

### Youth Recreation Programs Thrive in 2025!

Recreation Services offered a full year of youth programming in 2025, with strong participation and engagement across multiple seasons. Youth Basketball ran from January 18 through March 8 and served 73 participants. Spring Soccer welcomed 126 participants, while Fall Soccer ran from September 27 through November 1 and included 102 participants.

Through these sports programs, youth had opportunities to stay active, build coordination and endurance, practice teamwork and sportsmanship, and develop confidence through structured practices and game play. Beyond physical fitness, these programs promoted healthy routines and provided positive, safe environments for participants to connect with peers and adult mentors.

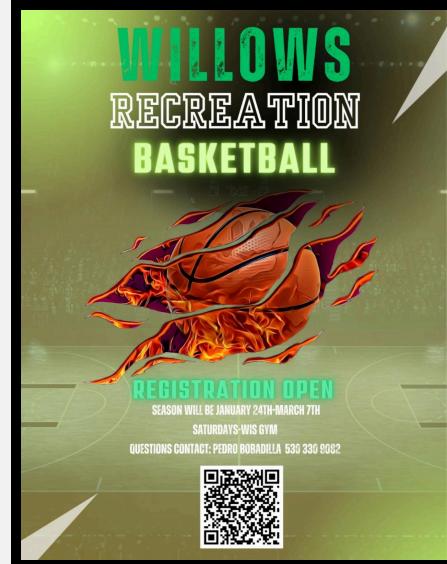
In addition to sports, the Jump Start program averaged 13 students per week. Through a combination of arts and crafts and indoor and outdoor play, Jump Start supported early childhood development by strengthening social skills, cooperation, communication, and emotional growth, while also helping children build confidence and school-readiness skills.

Activity	Participants
Youth Basketball	73
Youth Spring Soccer	126
Jump Start Program	13 (weekly average)
Summer Swim Program	Not available
Youth Fall Soccer	102

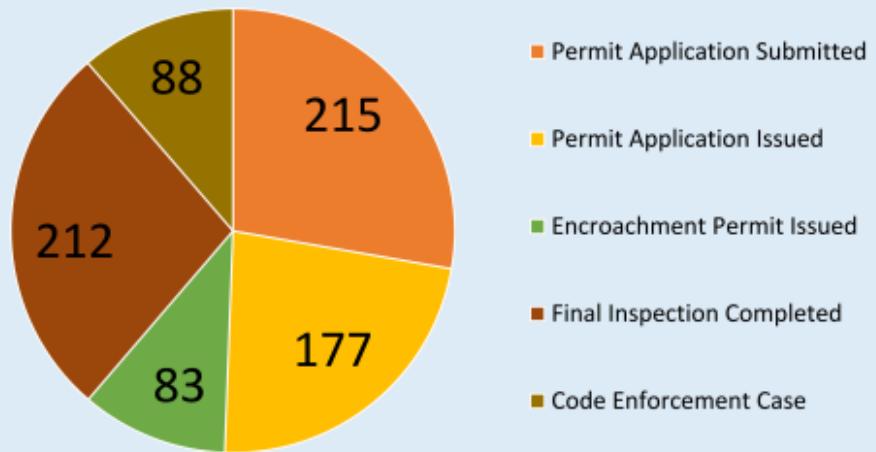
## Youth Basketball - Registration Now Open!

Youth Basketball registration is now open for the upcoming season, running from January 24 through March 7 at the WIS Gym. This program offers young athletes a fun and structured environment to stay active, build skills, and learn the values of teamwork and sportsmanship.

Participants will develop coordination, confidence, and endurance through practices and games led by supportive coaches. Families are encouraged to register early to secure a spot and take advantage of this exciting recreational opportunity.



Community Development Activity  
January – December 2025



## Public Works Division Activity January – December 2025



Trees/Stumps- 85



Sprinklers Replaced – 51



Sewer Calls for Service - 11



New USA Markings – 462



Cold Patch - 24 Tons

## FINANCE - 2025 Highlights

### **City Launches New Recreation Software (Tyler Technologies)**

The City of Willows successfully launched its new Tyler Technologies recreation software and web page integrating program payment with the City's financial software.

### **City Launches New Business License Software (Tyler Technologies)**

In late 2025, the City of Willows successfully launched its new business license software after a few technical glitches. By moving to Tyler Technologies, the City was able to bring issuance of new business licenses and annual renewals in house to be managed by the City's Finance Department (instead of a third party vendor).

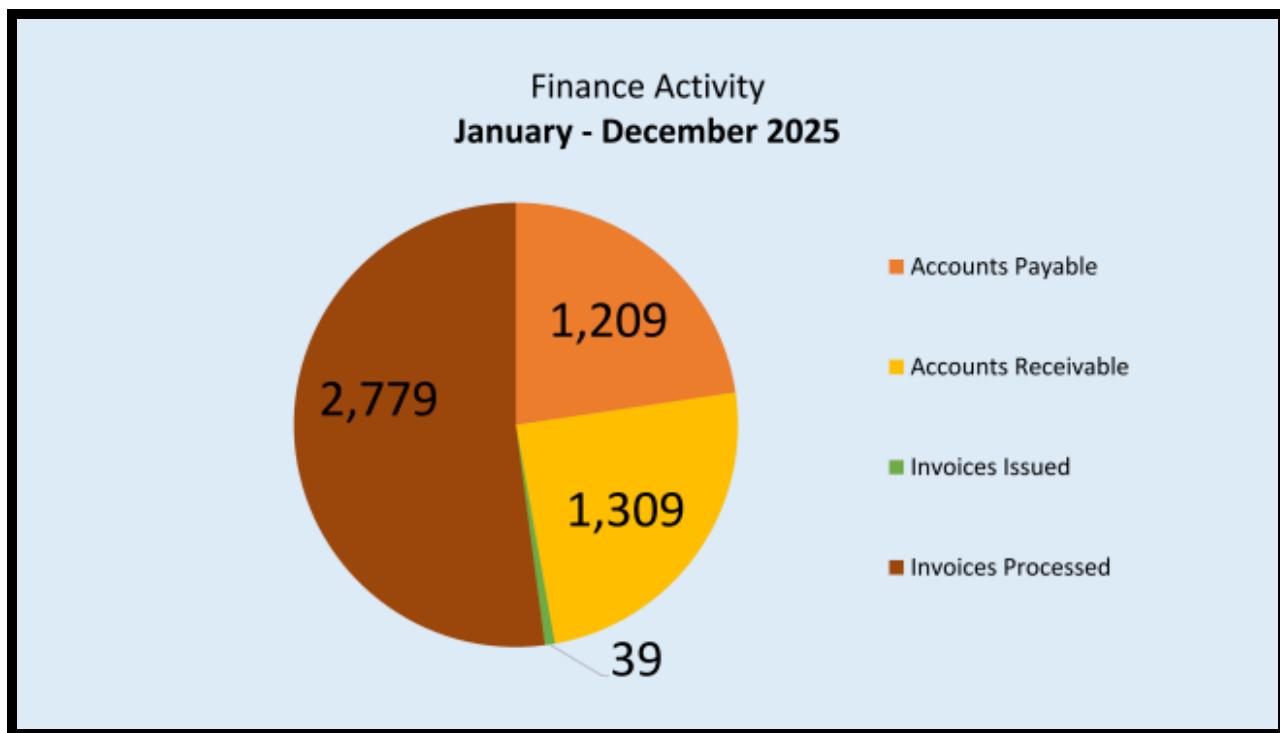
### **Finance & Measure I Oversight Committee (FMIOC)**

In 2025, the first four quarterly meetings of the newly established Finance and Measure I Oversight Committee took place. During these meetings, staff presented an overview of city finances, updates and progress on Measure I revenue generation, and other finance related research and updates as directed by the Committee.

### **New Finance Director Appointed!**

Joanne Moore, former Finance Director, announced her resignation in October 2025 concluding her service with the City as a full-time employee on November 21, 2025. Upon her announcement, a successful recruitment for a new Finance Director was immediately initiated and, as a result of those efforts, the City of Willows is pleased to announce that Joie Harrison has been selected as the City's next Finance Director. Joei will begin her new role on January 12, 2026. Previously working in government and non-profit organizations, she

has a strong background in both public and private sector finance, especially Fund Accounting. Most recently, Joei was the Chief Financial Officer for an engineering consulting firm. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Accounting and a Masters of Business in Economics & Management.



## **FIRE - 2025 Highlights**

### **Fire Response, Prevention & Emergency Medical Services**

#### **Maintenance and Station Projects**

The WFD completed annual hose nozzle ladder and pump testing of all fire pumps, fire hoses, nozzles and ladders as required. With the new mechanic, the Fire Department has been able to rapidly catch up on deferred maintenance of fire apparatus ensuring the WFD fleet is always ready for any emergency.

Willows Firefighters, with assistance of Public Works, completed removal and replacement of the badly damaged rear concrete apron at the fire station. This effort not only increased the functionality of the space but saved the tax payers a significant sum of money by completing the work using skilled city staff.

#### **Advanced Life Support Non-Transport Medical Services**

On November 18 2025, the Willows Fire Department began providing Advanced Life Support (ALS) non-transport services to the Willows area.

The non-transport ALS model allows Willows Fire to deploy ALS-trained personnel on fire apparatus and quick-response units, working in coordination with local ambulance providers

for continued care and patient transport. This system ensures a seamless blend of rapid intervention and continuity of care throughout an emergency.

The implementation of the ALS program also helps address a critical gap created by the closure of Glenn Medical Center. With no local hospital available, ambulance transport times have increased significantly due to longer travel distances and higher call volumes throughout the region. The new ALS capability ensures that advanced medical interventions can begin immediately—even when transport units are delayed—providing vital care during those extended response and transport intervals.

### **Vial of Life Program**

In 2025, the Vial of Life program was launched. The Program is designed to give First Responders quick access to a resident's critical medical information in an emergency. These forms are placed in a magnetized packet on the refrigerator, where they can be easily found during an emergency. Residents should reach out to the Fire station for more information on the Willows Fire Department Vial of Life Program.

### **Strike Team and Preposition Assignments**

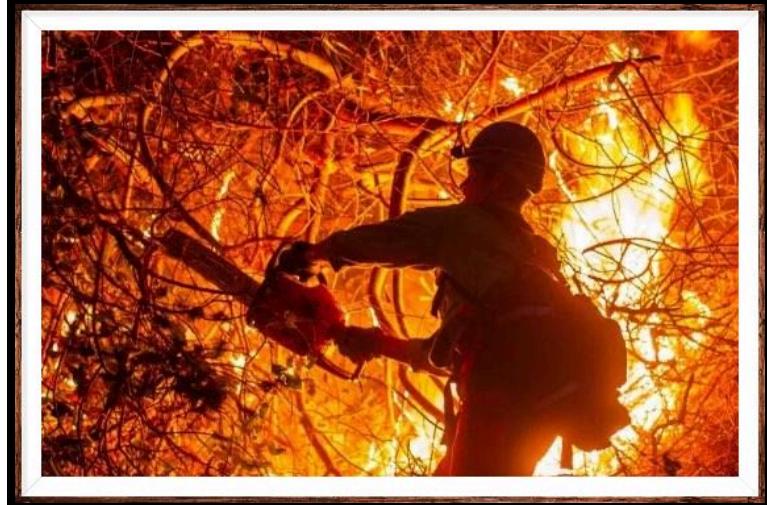
The City of Willows participated in 13 separate mutual aid and strike team assignments in 2025 including the devastating Palasades Fire. At times, the Department sent multiple apparatus and equipment to help mitigate emergencies around the state. These assignments reimbursed the City approximately \$300,000 for the use of Fire Department equipment and apparatus.

### **Grant Packages Awarded**

Willows Fire Department continued its aggressive pursuit of grant funding. In 2025, the Department authored multiple grant packages and was awarded six grants for a total of \$856,000. These grants included partial funding for a Type 1 Fire Engine through the generous support and direct appropriation authority of the late Congressman Doug LaMalfa.

### **Infant Delivery – A Life-Saving Response**

On March 7, 2025, the Willows Fire Department responded to a medical emergency involving a woman in preterm labor on South Culver Street. Firefighters arrived within minutes, provided immediate care, and assisted Enloe Paramedics during a Code 3 transport to Glenn Medical Center, where a healthy baby boy was delivered two months early. In May, firefighters were able to reunite with the infant and his mother at the fire station, celebrating a powerful reminder of the impact of rapid response, teamwork, and local emergency care.



Battling the Palisades Fire



Special Delivery

### "Battle of The Bulbs" Winners

On November 24, the Willows Fire Department initiated the holiday season with a friendly social media reminder encouraging the Orland Fire Department to begin decorating their station for Christmas.

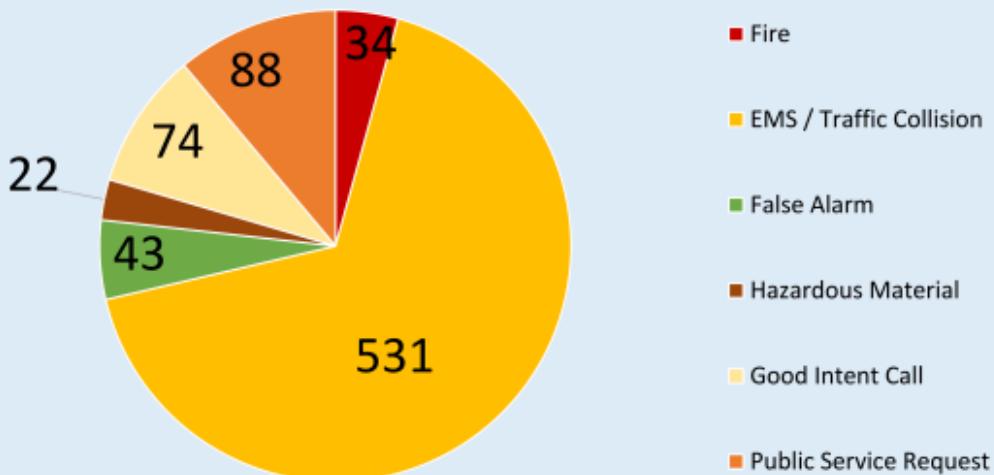
The Orland Fire Department promptly responded by launching a full-scale social media competition formally challenging the City of Willows and the Artois–Glenn County Fire Protection District to compete for the title of most festive fire department. With that, the "Battle of the Bulbs" was underway.

Over the following days, what began as a lighthearted exchange developed into a spirited holiday decorating competition among Orland, Artois, and Willows. The friendly rivalry quickly gained widespread attention, even being featured by Action News Now (Chico), extending holiday cheer beyond city boundaries.

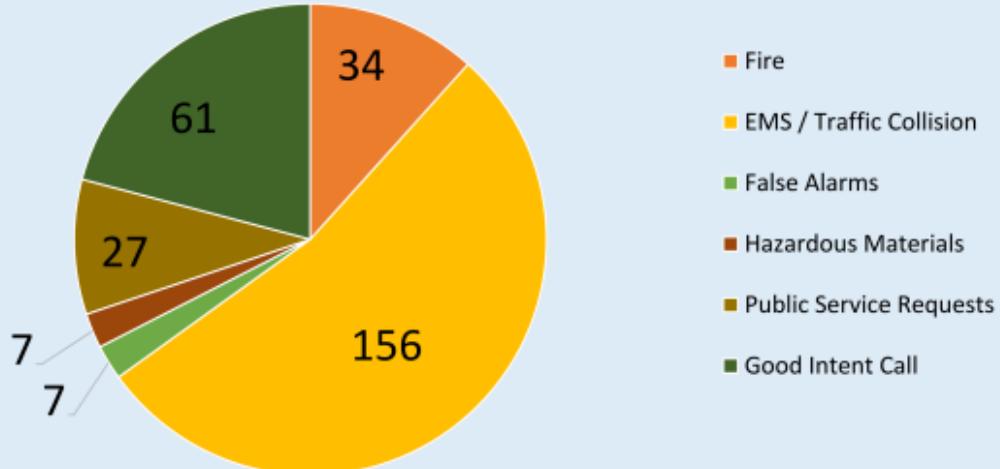
At the conclusion of the competition, the Orland Fire Department was presented with the Fully Lit Award in recognition of their impressively decorated fire engine. In a closely contested vote, the Willows Fire Department earned the People's Choice Award, prevailing by a narrow margin of five votes. The Battle of the Bulbs Grand Champion Award was awarded to the small but mighty Artois Fire Department, honoring their spirited holiday display. The video can be viewed [here](#).

Congratulations to all participating departments for spreading holiday cheer and exemplifying outstanding community spirit throughout the season!

### Willows Fire Department Activity January - December 2025



### Willows Rural Fire Protection District Activity January - December 2025



## LIBRARY - 2025 Highlights

### Awards and Achievements

The library was awarded numerous grants and resources throughout 2025 which helped to support library initiatives for the community. Local, county, state, and federal awards and donations from collaborators like the Willows Community Thrift Shoppe, the Carnegie Foundation, and several California State Library grants, made programming possible for the library and supplemented the purchase of library materials. The library continues to provide

California State Park Passes, function as a warming and cooling center, and provide accessible free internet access to the community.

The year-long renovation of the library backroom continues and is near completion. Programming for children and adults will be possible using this updated space. In 2026, staff also have big plans to update the available technology throughout the library ensuring patrons have access to the tools necessary for modern living.

The library, under new leadership since late August, has evaluated the collection, effectively administered children's programming, while also managing the acquisitions and administration of the staff and library.

A 'Big Thank You' to the Library's 2025 Partners, including:

- CA Parks Pass (CA State Library)
- Carnegie Foundation
- CENIC Internet (CA State Library)
- CA Library Literacy Services (CA State Library)
- First 5 Glenn County
- Lunch @ the Library (CA State Library)
- Northnet Library System Professional Development
- Pilcrow Grant
- Quality Counts Glenn County
- Rural Health Connections (CA State Library)
- Willows Community Thrift Shoppe
- Zip Books (CA State Library)



Storytime with Santa



Maker Time - Ornaments



Storytime - New Years Fireworks



Clifford the Big Red Dog

## January 2026 Library Updates

### Children's Librarian

The library is excited to add a full-time Children's Librarian position to the library staff to support more programming and outreach for the library's youngest community patrons. First review of applications start January 12, 2026. In the meantime and until the new full-time position is filled, staff will continue to provide children's programming with a weekly storytime and maker time for the month of January.

### Adult Health Related Materials and Programming

Through the Rural Health Connections grant, sponsored by the CA State Library, the library was awarded \$1,400 for adult health related materials, a blood pressure monitoring kit to checkout, and several hybrid adult health related programs planned for the spring of 2026. Please stay tuned for more information about these adult serving programs and opportunities in the months ahead.

### Library Collection Expansion & Zip Book Program

As the renovation of the storage spaces comes to a close, the library plans to add numerous titles to the collection. However, all suggestions and requests will be honored as our budget allows. Library staff encourage patrons to use remaining Zip Book funds in an effort to reach the library's goals for the year. For those who speak Spanish, are over the age of 65, or who have never tried the library's Zip Book Program before, are especially encouraged to participate!

## January Calendar

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1  Library Closed	2	3
4	5	6	7 Storytime @ 2pm Squirrel's New Year's Resolution	8 Maker Time @ 4pm All the Stamps	9	10
11	12	13	14 Storytime @ 2pm Puff the Magic Dragon	15 Maker Time @ 4pm Mini Paintings	16	17
18 MLK Jr. Day	19	20 Movie @ 3pm Happy Feet	21 Storytime @ 2pm Martin's Big Words	22 Maker Time @ 4pm Car, Train, & Plane Painting	23	24
25	26	27	28 Storytime @ 2pm Snow	29 Maker Time @ 4pm Block Party	30	31

## Library Activity January - December 2025



Door Count: 7,163



Public Computer Use: 498



New Library Card: 196



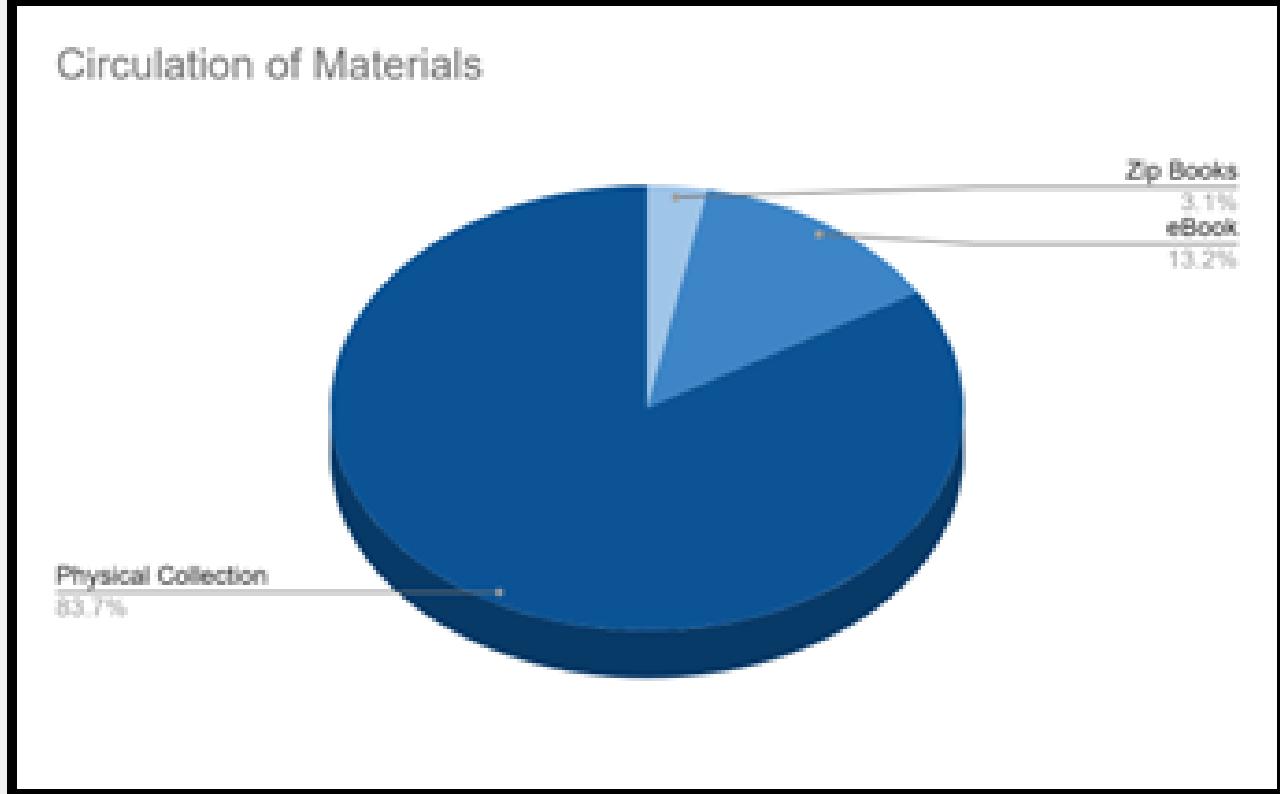
Items Added to Collection: 810



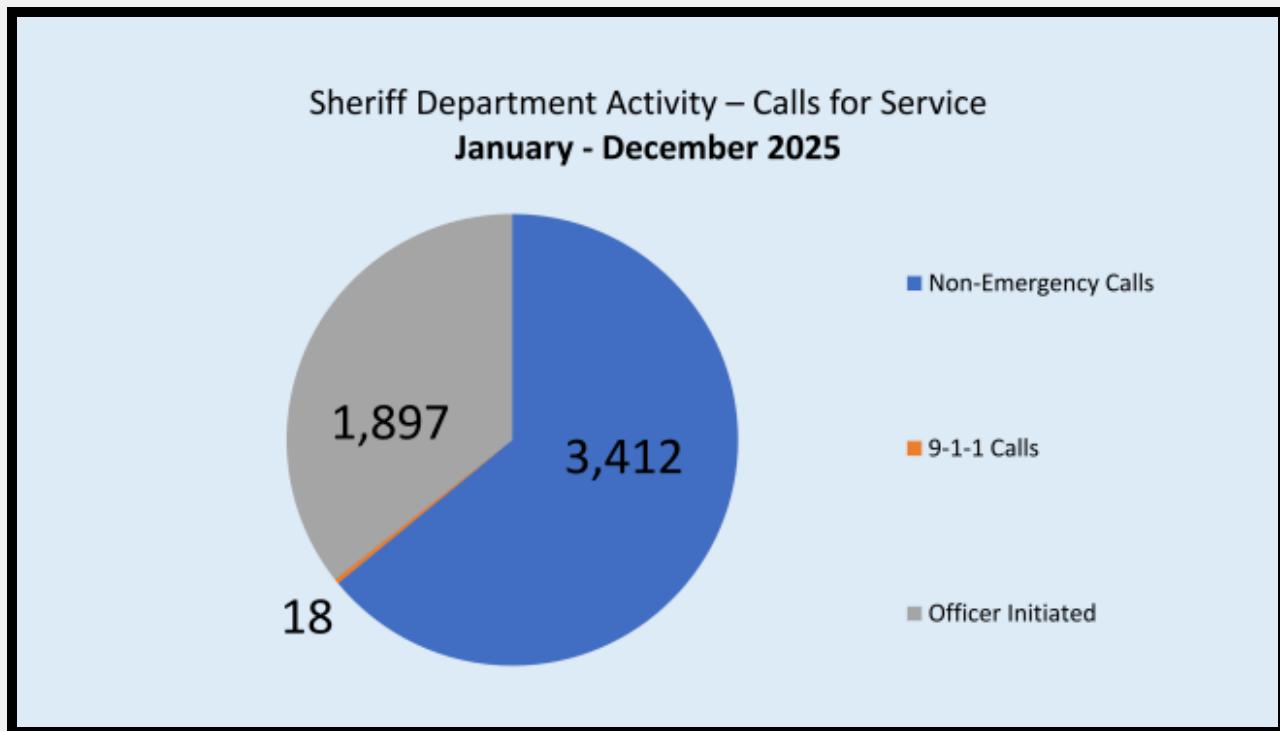
Program Participants: 392

\*57 recorded programs  
(3 months of missing data)

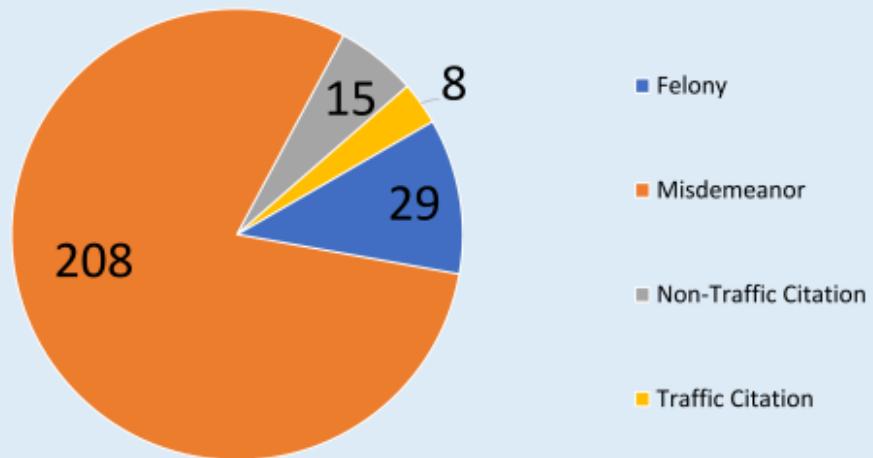
## Circulation of Materials



## SHERIFF - 2025 Highlights



Sheriff Department Activity – Arrests & Citations  
January - December 2025



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