

Proposal for the Municipal Secession of Orihuela Costa and a Plan of Local Needs

Alternative document for Municipal District Boards X and XI

Proposal submitted by Ms Priscilla Cromie and Mr Roman Jimenez | September 2026

The report submitted to these District Boards identifies genuine problems, but it is limited to listing incidents and partial measures, many dating from 2024 and scheduled for 2025. It offers no demographic, territorial or budgetary perspective, sets out no multi-year planning and fails to identify funding, responsible authorities, verifiable deadlines or consequences for non-compliance. Orihuela Costa needs a structural solution and, while that process is under way, an immediate programme of services and infrastructure.

1 Diagnosis and proposal for municipal secession

In 2026, Orihuela Costa has approximately 31,500 registered residents, a much higher estimated habitual resident population and summer peaks well in excess of 100,000 people. Its urban and demographic growth requires an administration that is close to residents, stable and capable of planning. The current model is failing to provide that response.

The problem does not depend on any particular governing party, but stems from a persistent institutional inability to act. Over the last fifteen years, only six municipal budgets have been approved. The Sindicatura de Comptes confirms that the 2018 budget was repeatedly rolled over from 2019 to 2024; that the 2024 and 2025 budgets were approved after the statutory deadline; and that, in 2024, only 47.1% of the final expenditure budget and 11.0% of the capital investment chapter were executed. It also recommends reviewing management procedures because of the low rate of budget execution. These figures show that allocating funds does not guarantee that public works and services will actually reach residents.

This institutional weakness is compounded by persistent shortcomings in street cleaning, water supply, sewerage, education, healthcare, public safety, emergency services, transport, culture and urban maintenance. The distance from the main administrative centre, the territorial discontinuity and an actual population far greater than the number of registered residents all intensify the imbalance. According to our own estimates, which must be verified through geographically disaggregated municipal accounts, Orihuela Costa contributes around EUR 60 million each year and receives services and expenditure worth approximately EUR 25-30 million. Each year, approximately 3,500 new residents register locally, contributing around a further EUR 3.5 million to municipal revenue. Within approximately six to eight years, Orihuela Costa will have 60,000 registered residents.

For these reasons - because of the persistent inefficiency of this administrative system and the extensive shortcomings that can be observed - the District Boards must request the municipal secession of Orihuela Costa and its establishment as an independent municipality. This is neither a symbolic gesture nor a reaction to temporary circumstances, but an administrative reform: government closer to residents, its own budget, direct political accountability and planning tailored to a rapidly growing international coastal city.

Proposed structural resolution

1. Municipal secession. Request that the Plenary Council of Orihuela Town Council and the Valencian Regional Government promote and process, within their respective powers, the establishment of Orihuela Costa as an independent municipality.
2. Technical dossier. Request that, within no more than six months, the necessary legal, territorial, demographic, economic, asset-related and feasibility studies be provided, including geographically disaggregated accounts of revenue, expenditure, investment, assets, staff and debt.
3. Transition commission. Establish a commission comprising municipal and regional government representatives, technical experts, residents' representatives and political representatives to define boundaries, services, assets, funding and administrative continuity, without delaying urgent investment.

2 Plan of Local Needs 2026 to 2035

Municipal secession will have its own procedure and timetable. Until it is resolved, the Town Council and the other competent public authorities must guarantee services equivalent to those of a city matching Orihuela Costa's actual size, such as the city of Orihuela. The following measures are proposed.

1 Water supply sewerage and drainage

Build a second water-supply connection with sufficient capacity for the projected growth; audit reservoirs, distribution networks, pumping systems and discharge points; conduct a thorough investigation and eliminate grey-water and sewage discharges reaching coves and beaches; implement rainwater collection and urban drainage; and take action in the La Glea and Cañada de las Estacas ravines and at all other flood-prone locations. Every new development must first demonstrate adequate water supply, sewerage and drainage capacity, as well as genuine access to all other services, including education and culture.

2 Education

Urgently build the permanent public school needed to replace the current temporary modular facilities, together with a further school, and expand secondary education and vocational training provision as requested by the Town Council's current councillor for education; publish a plan to absorb waiting lists and the growing number of pupils; and ensure safe routes to the secondary school, school transport, shade, climate control, canteens, maintenance and sports facilities.

3 Healthcare

Accelerate the second health centre, using temporary modular units so that it can enter service before the date currently announced; immediately increase staffing, paediatric care, emergency care, mental health services, ambulance provision and seasonal coverage; and coordinate with the Valencian Regional Government on a specific plan to address pressure on healthcare services in Orihuela Costa and at Torrevieja Hospital. Object to the proposed expansion of Torrevieja Hospital and request instead a public hospital in Orihuela Costa, to be built within two years rather than the proposed six years.

4 Public safety and emergency services

Increase Local Police operational capacity and provide 24-hour coverage, with staffing and resources calculated according to the actual and summer populations; request the opening of a 24-hour Guardia Civil or National Police station in Orihuela Costa, located in the emergency centre; establish a fire station and strengthen Civil Protection, defibrillator provision, evacuation plans and the response to fires, flooding, earthquakes and coastal hazards.

5 Street cleaning waste and maintenance

Set contract capacity, fleet size, staffing and collection frequencies for year-round demand and summer peaks; introduce the fifth waste container and a fully operational permanent household recycling centre; remove illegal dumping and bulky waste within maximum response times; strengthen inspections and penalties; and approve regular programmes for road resurfacing, pavements, street lighting, pruning, tree planting and parks.

6 Mobility accessibility and territorial connections

Build the pedestrian and cycle bridge over the AP-7; introduce an urban bus network with suitable frequencies, night services and direct connections between residential developments, beaches, schools and the health centre; and establish a permanent bus service connecting Orihuela Costa with Torrevieja and Pilar de la Horadada every 20 to 30 minutes, according to demand. Increase and organise taxi services and ranks; complete accessible pavements, safe crossings, cycle lanes and park-and-ride facilities; reach an agreement with the motorway operator allowing residents of Orihuela Costa and neighbouring areas to use the motorway free of charge; and agree with La Zenia Boulevard that motorway costs may be offset through discounts on purchases made at the shopping centre.

7 Coastline environment and green spaces

Publish official bathing-water analyses and discharge test results in real time; fully investigate and permanently remedy the incidents at Cala Mosca and Cala Estaca; establish an annual plan covering seaweed, foot-washing facilities, access, lifeguard services and erosion; create a continuous accessible coastal promenade; protect Cala Mosca, watercourses and natural areas; and implement a planting programme of approximately 1,000 trees and shrubs each year to provide shade and support climate adaptation.

8 Public facilities culture and resident services

Reopen and complete the Ramón de Campoamor Civic Centre, closed since 2019, and establish within it museums dedicated to Ramón de Campoamor and Miguel Hernández; create a library, study room, cultural centre with a conservatoire and music classroom, and a multipurpose auditorium; improve facilities for older people, young people and social services; expand sports facilities; and transform the municipal offices on the coast into a genuine one-stop public service centre covering the registry, population register, planning, local taxes, police services and multilingual assistance.

9 Responsible planning and service capacity

Make new development conditional upon public capacity reports covering water supply, sewerage, mobility, education, healthcare, public safety and green spaces. Review major pending developments, including Mil Palmeras and Villamartín, against these criteria; ensure the formal adoption and maintenance of residential developments; reserve land for public facilities; and approve a territorial infrastructure plan with a 2035 horizon.

10 A dedicated budget transparency and delivery

Create a geographically disaggregated budget programme for Orihuela Costa, with named investments, secured funding and a timetable; publish quarterly information on budget allocations, procurement, completed works and variances; ensure that revenue from the sale of publicly owned plots on the coast is transparently allocated to infrastructure on the coast; guarantee that no further municipal plots will be sold and provide information on the municipal plots currently held; and guarantee easy access to District Board minutes, files, requests and recordings.

Mandatory planning criteria

All projects must be based on the registered population, actual resident population, seasonal variation, existing housing stock and projected growth. Each measure must identify the responsible public authority, budget, source of funding, tender date, completion date and a public delivery indicator. Merely including a budget line without a project, sufficient funding and a timetable will not be regarded as delivery.

3 Implementation programme and resolutions submitted for approval

Timeframe	Priority measures	Required outcome
0 to 6 months	Open the municipal secession dossier and prepare geographically disaggregated accounts. Provide urgent service reinforcement and publish official beach analyses.	Named responsible authorities, allocated funding and a public monitoring dashboard.
6 to 18 months	Tender or begin work on the health centre, school, AP-7 bridge, recycling centre, Civic Centre, sewerage works and emergency-services base.	Contracts and works with binding deadlines.
2027 to 2030	Second water-supply connection, drainage, buses, public facilities and permanent public safety provision.	Services scaled to the actual population.
2030 to 2035	Territorial plan and completion of the transition to the new municipality.	A sustainable city with its own administration.

Resolutions

1. First. Approve the request for the municipal secession of Orihuela Costa and its establishment as an independent municipality, and refer it to the Plenary Council of Orihuela Town Council and the Valencian Regional Government.
2. Second. Approve this Plan of Local Needs 2026 to 2035 as the joint position of District Boards X and XI, replacing the list initially submitted.
3. Third. Require the Town Council, within sixty days, to provide a reasoned response to each measure, identifying the competent public authority, budget, funding and timetable.
4. Fourth. Include a geographically disaggregated programme for Orihuela Costa in every budget and publish its physical and financial execution quarterly.
5. Fifth. Establish a quarterly monitoring commission to publish progress and report delays and blockages to the Plenary Council.
6. Sixth. Forward the resolution to the Mayor's Office, municipal political groups, the Valencian Regional Government, Alicante Provincial Council, the Provincial Fire Consortium and all other competent public authorities.

Conclusion

Orihuela Costa needs the power to make its own decisions and, until that is achieved, commitments that are funded, time-bound and verifiable. Municipal secession is the structural solution; this plan is the immediate obligation.

Principal sources

2024 Annual Report of District Boards X and XI. Sindicatura de Comptes de la Comunitat Valenciana, Audit Report on Various Aspects of the Management of Orihuela Town Council for the 2024 Financial Year, published on 3 September 2026. Demographic, fiscal and service data supplied by various sources.

Proposing representative: _____ Signature: _____