



## **CITY OF ORLAND STAFF REPORT**

### **MEETING DATE: May 15, 2026**

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**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Scott Drexel, City Attorney and Jennifer Schmitke, City Clerk

**SUBJECT:** **The City's Transition to District Based Elections**

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On December 2, 2025, the City Council initiated the transition to district-based elections through the adoption of Resolution 2025-20. The process of transitioning to by-district elections required a series of five public hearings, which the City held on March 3, March 17, April 7, April 21, and May 5, 2026. The final step in this process is the adoption of an ordinance writing the by-district election system into the City's Municipal Code.

### **BACKGROUND**

On December 2, 2025, the Council passed Resolution 2025-20, declaring its intent to transition from an at-large election system to a district-based election system. This decision was primarily made to avoid the potential of what would likely be a prohibitively costly legal challenge to the City's at-large elections under the provisions of the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA).

To facilitate this transition, the City engaged National Demographics Corporation (NDC), an expert demographic firm, to assist with drafting the district maps and ensuring compliance with

all legal requirements. The City's transition to election districts is mostly governed by Elections Code section 10010, pursuant to which, the City Council is required to hold at least five public hearings prior to approving a final election district map and adopting an ordinance to implement district-based elections. The City has also posted all draft district maps and related process information on a dedicated webpage to encourage public participation.

At its May 5th meeting the Council selected Map 501 as its preferred map, designated Districts 2, 4 and 5 to hold elections in 2026 and every four years thereafter, and designed Districts 1 and 3 to hold elections in 2028 and every four years thereafter. Tonight the Council is asked to introduce an ordinance amending the City's Municipal Code to formally establish by-district elections in the City starting with the November 2026 election.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

None.

## **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION**

Tonight's hearing is a continuation of the City's process of converting to district-based elections in accordance with Resolution 2025-20.

## **ACTIONS FOLLOWING APPROVAL**

The Council to formally introduce an ordinance to implement the selected district map.

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Draft Ordinance
2. Ordinance Exhibit A (Selected Map 501)

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff is asking the City Council to introduce an ordinance establishing by-district elections formally making the transition to by-district elections using the district map and election sequence selected by the Council at its May 5th Council meeting.