



CITY OF ORLAND STAFF REPORT
MEETING DATE: May 5, 2026

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Scott Drexel, City Attorney

SUBJECT: 5th Public Hearing followed by the Introduction of Council election districts ordinance

ANALYSIS:

The City Council is currently elected under an at-large election system, whereby Council Members are elected by voters of the entire City.

On December 2nd, 2025, the Council adopted a Resolution of Intent to Change Election Systems. Moving to by-district elections would require a Council Member (and all candidates for that position) to reside within a designated district boundary, and each Council Member would be elected only by voters of the appropriate district.

The districting process

As required by Elections Code Section 10010, on March 3 and March 17 the City held two (2) public hearings prior to the release of draft maps of Council election districts. Tonight's public hearing is the first of at least an additional two (2) or more public hearings to solicit public input regarding the content of the draft maps and the proposed sequence of elections. Then an additional public hearing will be held to select a map and election sequence prior to the approval of an ordinance implementing a Council election district map.

Today's hearing partially fulfills the requirement of California Elections Code Section 10010 that states:

"(2) . . . The political subdivision shall also hold at least two additional hearings over a period of no more than 45 days, at which the public is invited to provide input regarding the content of the draft map or maps and the proposed sequence of elections . . .

No draft maps were received from the public. The maps shown tonight were drawn by the City's demographer. These draft maps are intended as starting points for discussion, and the public and Council are encouraged to offer feedback on the maps and to request revisions. The public is also welcome to propose complete districting maps, but it is not required.

This hearing will also remind residents of the City's public mapping tool and interactive map review website, provided by our districting consultant (National Demographics Corporation, or NDC). These tools are located on our project website, at DrawOrland.org. The tools have been updated to allow residents to draw both 4- and 5-district maps.

At the prior hearing (April 21), the Council indicated a preference for 5-district maps. At the April 21 hearing, the Council also indicated its preference for the first by-district election to occur in the regular 2026 election (rather than postponing implementation to the regular 2028 election).

Draft Maps

For consideration at this meeting there are two maps labeled 501 and 502. Both maps fully comply with state and federal requirements, and each has a different geographic orientation:

Map 501 has two districts east of 4th Street and Railroad Avenue; two districts primarily between 4th Street / Railroad Avenue and Papst Avenue, with Walker Street dividing them; and a 5th district primarily east of Papst Avenue.

Map 502 has three districts entirely or primarily north of Walker Street, and two districts entirely south of Walker Street. In the east, District 3 crosses south of Walker Street only for population balancing.

These draft maps, are published on the project website's "Draft Maps" page at draworland.org/draft-maps/

Election sequencing

Elections Code Section 10010 requires that draft maps be accompanied by a draft election sequence. For now, a generic draft election sequence is provided as follows:

5-district maps: Districts 1, 3 and 5 in 2026 and Districts 2 and 4 in 2028.

The FAIR MAPS Act requires that maps be drawn and selected while not "favoring or discriminating against an incumbent, potential candidate, or political party," and the draft maps were drawn by the City's demographer without any attention to incumbent Councilmember locations.

Once a map is selected, however, Councilmember locations may be considered in the selection of a final election sequence (in addition to other considerations).

Thus, these initial draft election sequences are likely to change prior to final adoption.

By the end of June, the County Registrar must finish the implementation work with whatever map the Council adopts. To allow sufficient time to avoid mistakes in that implementation process, it is recommended to have final adoption of a map by the end of May.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Conduct the public hearing to receive public input on the draft maps and potential election sequencing.
2. Provide direction on the Council's preferred map (501 or 502).

3. With input from the demographic consultant following the selection of a preferred map, discuss and provide direction on the election sequence (which 3 districts will hold elections in 2026, and which in 2028).

4. Incorporate the Council's direction on map selection and election sequence into the draft ordinance and vote to formally introduce the ordinance.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

No environmental review is required because the proposed action is not a project governed by the California Environmental Quality Act.