



CITY OF ORLAND STAFF REPORT
MEETING DATE: April 7, 2026

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Scott Drexel, City Attorney

SUBJECT: 3rd Public Hearing requesting public input regarding the composition of potential Council election districts

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.

Draft maps with 4 districts are named with a "4" as the initial digit: 401 and 402.

Draft maps with 5 districts are named with a "5" as the initial digit: 501 and 502.

These proposed election sequences, along with the 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:

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

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.

Council Preferences

While not required, it is recommended that the Council provide direction tonight on its preference for 4 districts with a citywide-elected Mayor, or for 5 districts with a rotating Mayor. Giving such direction now allows residents to focus on the advantages and disadvantages of specific draft maps at the later hearings.

Additional Hearings

Additional hearings are already scheduled:

- April 21 4th public hearing, and second discussion of draft maps (any additional draft maps to be considered at this hearing will be posted by April 14)
- May 5 5th public hearing and selection of map and election sequence (which districts will be up for election in which years)

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 and receive public input regarding the composition of the potential Council election districts and the draft maps.
2. Provide direction on the Council's preference for 5 Council districts with a rotating Mayor, or for 4 Council districts with a citywide-elected Mayor. If 4 districts with a Citywide-elected Mayor is preferred, provide guidance on whether the Mayoral term should be 2 years or 4 years.
3. Provide direction to potentially narrow the list of draft maps to a subset of "focus" maps, and/or direct that the demographer develop any new or revised maps for consideration at a subsequent hearing.

FISCAL IMPACT OF RECOMMENDATION: None

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

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