



# STAFF REPORT

AGENDA NO: 9j

MEETING DATE: December 15, 2025

**To: Honorable Mayor and City Council**

**Date: December 15, 2025**

**From: Meaghan Hassel-Shearer, City Clerk – (650) 558-7203**

**Subject: Adoption of a Resolution Establishing the Campaign Contribution Limits and Voluntary Expenditure Limits Effective January 1, 2026**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommend that the City Council adopt a resolution establishing the campaign contribution limits and voluntary expenditure limits effective January 1, 2026.

## **BACKGROUND**

On December 20, 2021, the City Council adopted Ordinance 2001 entitled “An Ordinance of the City of Burlingame Amending Chapter 2.25 of Title 2 of the Burlingame Municipal Code Regarding Limits on Campaign Contributions.” Ordinance 2001 amended several portions of the City’s regulations regarding campaign contributions including:

- Making the contribution limits the same for individuals and organizations
- Establishing a \$25 escalator every two years for the contribution limit
- Adding language to the definition of in-kind contributions to make it clear that the City adopts the definitions and interpretations of the State Political Reform Act
- Establishing that all contributions from an individual or organization totaling \$50 or more must include the following information:
  - Full name
  - Address
  - Occupation/name of business
  - Date of contribution
  - Contribution amount
- Creation of voluntary expenditure limits that are adjusted each election period by 25 cents (\$0.25).

Pursuant to Ordinance 2001, the City Clerk is required to bring forth a resolution adjusting the campaign contribution limits and voluntary expenditure limits each odd-numbered year to take effect on January 1 of each even-numbered year.

**DISCUSSION**

Pursuant to Section 2.25.020 of the Burlingame Municipal Code, it is unlawful for any individual or organization to make contributions to any single candidate or to any single controlled committee totaling more than \$350 in an election period. The Code requires that this dollar amount be adjusted by the City Clerk each odd-numbered year by \$25. In 2023, the City increased campaign contribution limits from \$350 to \$375 for the 2024 election period.

The attached resolution proposes to increase the campaign contributions for the 2026 election period to \$400 in accordance with Section 2.25.020(e) of the Burlingame Municipal Code.

Pursuant to Section 2.25.050 of the Burlingame Municipal Code each candidate has the option to voluntarily limit their campaign expenditures in accordance with the rules laid out in the section. The candidates who agree to abide by the voluntary campaign expenditure limit receive the following benefits and incentives at no cost to themselves:

- The City's website will clearly identify which candidates agreed to the voluntary expenditure limit
- The City will publish on social media and in the eNews which candidates agreed to the voluntary expenditure limit. This notice will be published twice.
- The City will publish Chinese, English, and Spanish notices in newspapers of general circulation the candidates who agreed to the voluntary expenditure limit.

Section 2.25.050(d) of the Burlingame Municipal Code outlines how the voluntary expenditure limit is calculated and adjusted. Each candidate who agrees to the limit shall not make qualified expenditures exceeding \$5 per resident (not per registered voter) in their electoral district. Residency of each electoral district is determined by the latest decennial census population figures available for that district. For the purposes of the 2026 election period, the last decennial census population was 2020. Additionally, the Code states that beginning in December 2025, the City Clerk shall in odd-numbered years increase the expenditure ceiling amounts by twenty-five cents (\$0.25) per resident.

On January 18, 2022, the City Council adopted Ordinance 2003 which established the City's five districts and the order of election for each district. Map D was selected with the following population numbers:

- District 1 (D on Map) – 6,464
- District 2 (E on Map) – 6,225
- District 3 (C on Map) – 6,278
- District 4 (A on Map) – 6,082
- District 5 (B on Map) – 6,367

Utilizing these numbers from the decennial census, the attached resolution proposes to increase the voluntary expenditure limits for the 2026 election period as follows:

	Calculation	District 1 6,464	District 2 6,225	District 3 6,278	District 4 6,082	District 5 6,367
Voluntary Expenditure Limit	\$5.25 x population	\$33,936	\$32,681.25	\$32,959.50	\$31,930.50	\$33,426.75

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact.

Exhibits:

- Ordinance 2001
- Ordinance 2003
- Map D with Statistics
- Proposed Resolution