



STAFF REPORT

AGENDA NO: 9j

MEETING DATE: May 4, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

Date: May 4, 2026

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

Subject: Adoption of a Resolution Ordering and Calling for the November 3, 2026, General Municipal Election to Fill Three (Full Term) City Council Vacancies in Council Districts 1, 3, and 5; Requesting Consolidation of Elections, and Specifying Certain Procedures for the Consolidated Election; Requiring Payment of Prorated Costs of Candidates' Statements; and Providing for Giving Notice of Election

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the attached resolution ordering and calling a general municipal election to be held on November 3, 2026, to fill three (full term) City Council vacancies in Council Districts 1, 3, and 5; requesting consolidation of elections, and specifying certain procedures for the consolidated election; requiring payment of prorated costs of candidates' statements; and providing for giving notice of election.

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Burlingame Municipal Code Section 2.18.005, the general municipal election for the City of Burlingame must be held on the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November of even-numbered years for the election of City Councilmembers.

On January 17, 2020, the City of Burlingame received a letter from Kevin Shenkman, of the law firm Shenkman & Hughes, alleging that the City's at-large election system violated the California Voting Rights Act of 2001 ("CVRA"). In order to avoid the time and costs of litigation, the City Council opted to move to by-district Council elections. On March 16, 2020, the Council adopted Resolution Number 032-2020 reflecting its intent to transition from at-large to by-district Council elections.

Over the course of 2021, the City Council and staff worked to engage the public regarding the process of transitioning to district elections. Staff held several public outreach meetings in order to not only inform the public about the transition but also to gain community feedback on what the boundaries should be for the five districts. The Council held five hearings to review the public's feedback and the demographer's proposed districts.

At the January 18, 2022, City Council meeting, the Council adopted Ordinance 2003, which established by-district elections, selected Draft Map D as the boundaries for the five districts, and numbered the districts one through five.

Pursuant to Ordinance 2003, on November 8, 2022, the City held elections for Districts 1, 3, and 5. On November 5, 2024, the City completed its transition to district elections by placing District 2 and District 4 on the ballot.

DISCUSSION

The following Council seats will expire this December:

- District 1
- District 3
- District 5

In accordance with Chapter 2.18 of the Burlingame Municipal Code, the City will hold elections for the three seats listed above on November 3, 2026, each for a four-year term.

The filing period for nomination papers and candidate statements is from July 13, 2026, through August 8, 2026. To file to run for one of the three seats, prospective candidates must live and be registered to vote in the district in which they are seeking office.

Pursuant to Resolution 147-2025, campaign contribution limits are set at \$400 for both individuals and organizations. The voluntary expenditure limits for the 2026 election period for each district are as follows:

	Calculation	District 1 6,464	District 3 6,278	District 5 6,367
Voluntary Expenditure Limit	\$5.25x population	\$33,936.00	\$32,959.50	\$33,426.75

FISCAL IMPACT

Staff contacted the County Elections Office regarding the cost of putting three City Council seats on the November 3, 2026, ballot. The estimated cost is between \$67,000 and \$80,400. These figures translate to \$5.55 per registered voter for the low estimate and \$6.66 per registered voter for the high estimate. This cost will be included in the FY 2026-27 Budget.

Exhibits:

- Resolution to Call the Election
- Resolution Number 147-2025
- District Map