

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Nov. 28, 2017**

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**City of Oxnard Begins Process to Move to District-Based Elections**

**Oxnard, California** - The Oxnard City Council on Monday adopted a resolution declaring its intent to transition to district-based elections, a move that would enable city voters to elect a council member who lives in their district.

The City presently uses an at-large voting system, in which four council members and one mayor are elected by registered voters of the entire City. Under a district election system, the City would be divided into separate districts, with each district electing a council member from that district. The mayoral position will continue to be elected on an at-large basis.

“While the City believes its current election system is consistent with the law and does not reflect racially-polarized voting in violation of state or federal voting rights, the cost of litigation to defend the at-large system, coupled with the track record of other municipalities that have fought similar challenges, is too great,” said City Attorney Stephen Fischer.

If successful, a lawsuit would force a district-based election system upon the City, with districts drawn and election dates for each district determined by the courts, Fischer said. Other municipalities that have fought challenges to their own at-large voting systems incurred upwards of \$4.5 million in legal fees.

To assist in the drawing of districts that meet legal requirements, the City also agreed to retain the services of National Demographics Corporation, for an amount not to exceed \$70,000. National Demographics will coordinate public outreach at public hearings and through the online interactive system, which would allow the public to draw and submit proposed districting plans for the City Council’s consideration.

Pursuant to Elections Code Section 10010, the City of Oxnard will conduct a series of public hearings over the next 90 days to receive community input on the proposed electoral districts for City Council seats. The tentative date for the first public hearing is Dec. 12, to take place in the Council Chambers.

Information on the process, as well as future public hearing dates, will be available in English and Spanish on the city website: [www.oxnard.org/districts](http://www.oxnard.org/districts). For more information, contact Michelle Ascencion at [Michelle.Ascencion@oxnard.org](mailto:Michelle.Ascencion@oxnard.org) or at 805-385-7803.

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