



## Memorandum

**To:** Elections Commission  
**From:** John Arntz, Director  
**Date:** December 13, 2024  
**RE:** Director's Report: December 18, 2024, Elections Commission Meeting

Following is a brief listing of the work and related information in which the Department of Elections (Department) has been engaged since the previous report issued in relation to the Elections Commission meeting on November 15, 2024.

### **I. The Department concluded the Official Canvass and certified the November 5 election.**

- A. On December 3, 2024, the Department certified the local results for the November 5, 2024, Consolidated General Election. The total voter turnout for the election was nearly 79%, with 412,231 of San Francisco's 522,265 registered voters casting ballots. Of those who voted, 85.76% cast a vote-by-mail ballot, and 14.24% voted in person at a polling place on Election Day.
- B. Following the election certification, the Department submitted the required election certification documentation to the California Secretary of State and the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, and posted the Statement of the Vote as well as other detailed election results reports on [sfelections.gov](https://sfelections.gov).
- C. In addition to the election results reports, the Department posted images of each voted ballot card cast in San Francisco, along with the "Ballot Audit Review" application. This application allows members of the public to sort ballot images by specific precincts, districts, and contests, providing transparency on how the voting system records and reports every vote cast in the election.
- D. The Department applied a SHA-512 cryptographic function to the November 5 election results reports and documents to assure the public that all election documentation is secure, consistent over time, and authentic.
- E. Throughout the official canvass leading to election certification, the Department upheld full operational transparency by making all ballot counting and canvassing activities open to public observation. The Department issued seventeen multiformat preliminary results reports and ballot counting updates, all of which were announced via press releases and social media. Additionally, members of the media and the public had the opportunity to attend question-and-answer sessions with Director Arntz during each results report release.
- F. Enclosed with this report are the November 5 election documents responsive to the Commission's request for information to be included in post-election reviews, as adopted on 9/21/2022. The following reports are included: Vote-By-Mail Report (Attachment 1), Provisional Ballot Report (Attachment 2), Conditional Voter Registration Report (Attachment 3), Election Day Incident Report (Attachment 4), Data and Graphs (Attachment 5).

### **II. The Department continues to carry out its operations and general administrative functions.**

- A. The Department has begun compiling its budget proposals for the FY 2025-26 and FY 2026-27 cycles.

1. This month, the Mayor's Office issued its fiscal outlook and budget instructions for the upcoming two fiscal years, indicating that the City's rate of expenditure growth significantly exceeds general fund revenue, resulting in a two-year deficit of \$876 million (\$253 million in FY 2025-26 and \$623 million in FY 2026-27).
  2. In response to the deficit, City departments have been instructed to implement ongoing, permanent spending reductions of 15% starting in FY 2025-26.
  3. The Department must submit final versions of its FY 2025-26 and FY 2026-27 budget proposals to the Mayor's Office and the Controller's Office by the Charter-mandated deadline of Friday, February 21, 2025.
  4. Per San Francisco Administrative Code §3.3, these proposals must undergo public review during at least two public meetings. The first meeting must take place at least 15 days before the meeting at which the Elections Commission approves the proposals.
  5. To comply with these requirements, the Elections Commission will need to schedule a BOPEC meeting no later than Tuesday, February 4 for the initial review of the budget proposal. The Commission can then approve the final budget during its regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday, February 19.
- B. On December 3, the Department received a Notice of Intention to recall the District 4 Board of Supervisors Member and is currently reviewing the Notice. A recall of an officer must adhere to specific procedures and timelines outlined in state and local election laws, as detailed in the [Guide to Recalling Local Elected Officials](#) posted on the Department's website.
- C. The Department continues its voter roll maintenance, which includes processing of registration and maintenance messages through the state's VoteCal system and mailing of voter notification cards.
1. Next week, as part of voter roll maintenance, the Department will mail multilingual pre-cancellation notices to approximately 50,000 voters who meet the criteria for cancellation under state election law and the National Voter Registration Act. These criteria require that all of the following conditions are met: (1) failure to vote in the November 8, 2022 election or any subsequent election; (2) failure to respond to the Department's address confirmation postcard; and (3) failure to notify the Department or the state of continued residency in California.
  2. The forwardable postcard will outline the reasons for cancellation, the date the voter's registration is set to be canceled, and the options available to prevent cancellation. These options include returning the postage-paid postcard attached to the notice or contacting the Department within 15 days to affirm continued residency. Registrations that are not affirmed within the timeframe will be canceled. Any voter whose registration is canceled may reinstate it by contacting the Department or submitting a new voter registration form, provided they still meet the registration qualifications.
- D. The Department has begun developing a project plan to comply with the anticipated certification of Vietnamese as a required language under the 2023 Language Access Ordinance (LAO) Amendments. In accordance with these amendments, the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) language population threshold in San Francisco will decrease from 10,000 to 6,000 individuals, effective January 1, 2026. As a result, Vietnamese is expected to meet the certification requirements starting in 2026. Among the projects the Department will need to undertake next year are:

1. Translating all official election materials currently produced in Chinese, Spanish, and Filipino into Vietnamese. These materials include:
    - a. Ballot instructions and office titles: paper, touchscreen, and audio
    - b. Voter Information Pamphlet: common pages
    - c. Forms, notices, comment forms, ballot envelopes, ballot inserts, etc. (The Department currently utilizes over 70 different forms)
    - d. Voter outreach materials: evergreen forms, flyers, etc.
    - e. Polling place signage
  2. Translating all webpages and voter tools that are currently offered in Chinese, Spanish, and Filipino into Vietnamese.
  3. Creating outreach messages and developing an outreach campaign to inform the public about the provision of official election materials in Vietnamese, which will begin with the 2026 elections.
- E. The Department is processing separation paperwork for approximately 400 seasonal employees who worked during the November 5 election cycle. Additionally, the Department is responding to information requests from the Employment Development Department related to unemployment benefit claims filed by these separated employees.

**III. The Department is preparing to transition its website to the new content management system (CMS).**

- A. The City's Digital Services held a meeting to discuss the upcoming transition of SF.gov to a new CMS, designed to provide enhanced flexibility, security, and functionality for staff managing SF.gov webpages.
- B. Digital Services will freeze access to departments' websites between January 6–21, during which editors will be unable to make changes to existing content or post new content.
- C. Starting January 21, the new CMS and site design will be fully live and ready for use.
- D. This transition will require the Department, along with all City departments, to complete several steps, including participating in training sessions to familiarize staff with adding and updating content using the new CMS, migrating all existing pages to the new CMS, and redesigning all voter-facing tools to align with the City's updated digital standards.

**IV. Responses to the Commission's request for information to be included in the Director's monthly report.**

*Data on registration rates and outreach events: 1) Total new registrations, 2) New registrations by supervisory districts, 3) Tactics employed (outreach, community engagement, grant funding, etc.) and in which districts, 4) Tactics employed by districts.*

- A. Between November 1 – November 30, the Department processed affidavits for 11,798 new registrants, residing in the following Supervisorial Districts (SD): SD 1 – 939, SD 2 – 1,462, SD 3 – 1,562, SD 4 – 635, SD 5 – 1,285, SD 6 – 1,522, SD 7 – 1,102, SD 8 – 855, SD 9 – 877, SD 10 – 830, SD 11 – 729.
- B. Between November 1 – November 30, the Department conducted 13 outreach events; which had approximately 625 people in attendance collectively. The number of such events by Supervisorial District was: SD 3 – 1, SD 5 – 2, SD 6 – 2, SD 8 – 1, SD 9 – 5, SD 11 – 2.