

Voter Approval for Waterfront Development Height Increases

The City and County of San Francisco, through its Port Commission, owns and controls about 7-1/2 miles of the San Francisco waterfront along the San Francisco Bay. That property includes piers, land near the piers, and land on the west side of The Embarcadero roadway. The City holds most of its waterfront in public trust for the benefit of all the State's people, and this public trust restricts the allowable uses of that property. In 1990 the City's voters adopted Proposition H, which required the City to prepare a comprehensive waterfront land use plan with maximum feasible public input. Consistent with Proposition H and the public trust requirements, the Port Commission adopted a comprehensive land use plan that governs acceptable waterfront uses. The City's zoning laws regulate development of buildings and other structures on that property, including the maximum allowed height. Generally, changes in the height limit require approval of the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

This measure would prevent any City agency or officer from permitting development on the waterfront to exceed the height limit in effect as of January 1, 2014, unless the City's voters approve the height limit increase. The measure defines "waterfront" as public trust property that the State transferred to the City to be placed under the control of the San Francisco Port Commission, as well as any other property that the Port owns or controls as of January 1, 2014 or later acquires. This measure also would require that the ballot question on a measure to increase height limits on any part of the waterfront specify both the existing and proposed height limits.

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