

Words You Need to Know
by the Ballot Simplification Committee

10-year Capital Plan (Proposition A): The San Francisco Administrative Code requires the City to prepare and adopt a 10-year plan to meet the City’s capital infrastructure needs. The plan includes a timeline for issuing new bonds.

Advisory committee (Proposition L): A committee created by the City to obtain the views of San Franciscans and make recommendations.

Affordable housing (Propositions D, K): Residential units that persons or households within a certain range of incomes would be able to afford. (See also “Low-income household,” “Moderate-income household.”)

Amend (Propositions B, C, D, I, J): To change.

Artificial turf (Propositions H, I): A surface made of synthetic fibers designed to look like grass.

Audit (Proposition A): A formal examination of financial or management accounts and information.

BART (Proposition A): Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) is a heavy rail transit and subway system serving the San Francisco Bay Area.

Base Amount (Proposition B): The amount of money the City is required to transfer from the General Fund to the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency each year. The City adjusts this amount each year based on its overall revenue.

Beverage-dispensing machine (Proposition E): An automated device that mixes syrups or powders with liquid to make drinks. A soda fountain machine, such as those found in fast-food restaurants, is an example of a beverage-dispensing machine.

Boarding islands (Proposition A): Raised islands in the street that allow public transit vehicles to use a center lane to pick up and drop off customers at transit stops.

Bond (Propositions A, L): A bond is a promise by the City to pay back money borrowed, plus interest, by a specific date. If the City needs to raise a large amount of money to pay for a library, sewer line, school, hospital or other project or program, it may borrow the money by selling bonds. (See also “General Obligation Bond.”)

Bulb-outs (Proposition A): See “Curb bulb-outs.”

California Coastal Commission (Proposition H): A state agency with regulatory oversight over land use and public access on the California coast.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Proposition F): A state law that requires state and local agencies to identify significant environmental impacts of their actions. Agencies are required to prevent or mitigate those impacts, if feasible.

Charter Amendment (Propositions B, C, D): A change to the City's Charter. The Charter is the City's Constitution. The Charter can only be changed by a majority of the votes cast.

Citizens' General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee (Proposition A): A nine-member body that monitors the City's use of funds generated by issuing general obligation bonds. Members of this committee are appointed by the Mayor, the Board of Supervisors, the Controller and the Civil Grand Jury.

Civil Grand Jury (Proposition A): A 19-member body consisting of San Francisco residents who serve for a one-year period. Its primary function is to investigate the operations of City government.

Consumer Price Index (CPI) (Proposition L): A measure that examines the average price of goods and services. It is used to assess changes in the cost of living.

Curb bulb-outs (Proposition A): A bulb-out extends the sidewalk into the roadway to provide additional pedestrian space. They can be at corners or at mid-block locations.

Daytime population (Proposition B): The number of people who work in San Francisco.

Declaration of policy (Propositions K, L): A statement or expression of the will of the voters.

Demand-responsive pricing (Proposition L): Demand-responsive pricing allows the SFMTA to adjust rates at parking meters: when demand is high, the rates increase; when demand is low, the rates decrease. The goal is to increase parking availability.

Displacement (Proposition K): The forced departure of people from their homes, sometimes due to eviction or the increased cost of housing.

Environmental impact report (Proposition I): A report that identifies and assesses the likely environmental effects of a proposed project.

Fiscal year (Propositions B, C): The City's 12-month budget period, starting July 1st and ending June 30th of the following calendar year.

General Fund (Propositions B, C, L): That part of the City's annual budget that can be used for any City purpose. Each year, the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors decide how the General Fund will be used. Money for the General Fund comes from property, business, sales, and other taxes and fees.

General obligation bond (Proposition A): A promise issued by the City to pay back money borrowed, plus interest, by a certain date. The City repays the money, plus interest, with property taxes over a period of years. General obligation bond measures must be approved by the voters.

Height limit (Proposition F): A limit set by the City as to how tall a building or structure may be built.

Housing Trust Fund (Proposition K): A fund established by San Francisco voters to pay for affordable housing programs. The City is required to contribute to the Fund every year.

Household (Propositions F, G, K, L): The people living together in a house, condominium or apartment.

Infrastructure (Proposition A): The basic structures and facilities (e.g., buildings, roads, and power supplies) needed for operation.

Initiative (Propositions F, H): A proposition placed on the ballot by voters. Any voter may place an initiative on the ballot by gathering the required number of signatures of registered voters on a petition.

In-law unit (Proposition G): A separate dwelling unit located within a residential building that generally is much smaller than the primary unit.

Low-income household (Propositions F, K): Household with an income between 0% and 80% of the median income according to federal guidelines for San Francisco. For a four-person household, this income would be \$0 up to \$77,700.

Middle-class (Proposition K): Household with an income 120% to 150% of the median income according to federal guidelines for San Francisco. For a four-person household, this income would be between \$116,500 and \$145,650.

Minimum wage (Proposition J): The lowest hourly amount of money a worker must be paid.

Mixed-use project (Proposition F): A project with multiple uses, such as residential, office, retail, arts spaces, public open space and recreation areas.

Moderate-income household (Propositions F, K): Household with an income between 80% and 120% of the median income according to federal guidelines for San Francisco. For a four-person household, this income would be between \$77,700 and \$116,500.

Nighttime population (Proposition B): The number of San Francisco residents.

Ordinance (Propositions E–J): A local law passed by the Board of Supervisors or by the voters.

Park Code (Proposition I): A portion of the San Francisco Municipal Code that includes rules and regulations for most City parks, walkways, playgrounds and athletic fields.

Pass through (Proposition A): To recover an increase in property taxes by passing on a portion of the cost to tenants.

Planning Commission (Proposition H): The City commission responsible for adopting and maintaining a comprehensive, long-term general plan for future improvement and development.

Port Commission (Proposition F): The City commission responsible for managing and maintaining Port property.

Property tax (Propositions A, C, K): A tax assessed by the City on buildings and land.

Proposition (Propositions A–L): Any measure that is submitted to the voters for approval or disapproval.

Provisional ballot (Frequently asked questions): A ballot cast at a polling place that will not be counted until the Department of Elections verifies the voter's eligibility to cast that ballot.

Redevelopment Agency (Proposition D): A state agency that promoted economic revitalization and affordable housing in San Francisco. On February 1, 2012, the California Legislature dissolved all redevelopment agencies throughout the State. A Successor Agency was created to wind down the affairs of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency.

Residential Parking Permit program (Proposition L): A program that allows residents in some neighborhoods to purchase a permit to park in their neighborhood for longer than the posted time restrictions. Vehicles without a permit can park on street but are subject to posted time limits. The price for these permits is set in accordance with state law.

Retiree Health Care Trust Fund (Proposition D): An account that is kept separate from other accounts and contains assets that can only be used to pay retiree health care costs.

San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) (Propositions B, L): The City department responsible for the management of all ground transportation in San Francisco, including Muni (Municipal Railway), parking and traffic, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and the regulation of taxis.

Set-aside (Proposition C, K): A requirement in the City Charter that the City transfer money every year from the General Fund into a separate fund.

Successor Agency (Proposition D): An agency created by the State of California to wind down the affairs of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency.

Supplemental nutrition product (Proposition E): A product designed as extra nutrition or a meal replacement; for example, Ensure.

Transfer tax (Proposition G): A tax on the passing of property from one person or entity to another.

Transit-First Policy (Proposition L): A policy in the City Charter establishing that the City's top transportation priorities are public transit, bicycling and walking.

Transit-only lanes (Proposition A): Travel lanes that are designated exclusively for the use of public transit vehicles.

Transportation Task Force (Proposition A): A panel of transportation and financial experts and community advocates who studied San Francisco's transportation system and developed recommendations on how to improve and expand it between now and 2030. The task force set priorities for specific infrastructure projects and funding sources.