

Neighborhood Commercial Districts and City Permitting*

Digest by the Ballot Simplification Committee

Status: Draft for Consideration
On: Tuesday, August 4, 2020
Members: Packard, Anderson, Girardin, Patterson

Deadline to Request Reconsideration: TBD

The Way It Is Now: The City Planning Code sets forth uses permitted in residential, commercial, or industrial-zoned districts. Zoning rules regulate how each of these districts may be used: bars and restaurants, offices or retail. Each zoning district use may either be permitted, conditionally permitted or not permitted. Conditionally permitted uses require extensive review and approval by the Planning Commission.

A neighborhood commercial district (NCD) is typically a commercial corridor located outside of San Francisco's downtown area, with commercial uses on the ground floor and other uses on upper floors.

A person who applies for building permits to change the use of property located in an NCD must notify nearby property owners of the proposed change. The notices must be posted for 30 days, during which the City may not issue permits and members of the public may ask the Planning Commission to review the permit.

To open a new business in San Francisco, a business owner may need approvals from several City agencies, such as the Department of Building Inspection for construction or remodeling and the Department of Public Health for the sale of food.

The Proposal: Proposition ____ would amend the Planning Code for Neighborhood Commercial Districts to:

- Increase the types of permitted and conditionally permitted uses to include arts activities, community facilities, social services and restaurants;
- Allow restaurants to provide workspace on days when the restaurant is open;
- Expand the use of outdoor areas in certain businesses;
- Eliminate the public notification process for persons who want to start a permitted use;
- Require an expedited approval and inspection process for permitted uses; and
- Temporarily allow retail uses within bars and entertainment venues for up to four years.

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want to amend the planning code for Neighborhood Commercial Districts to: *increase permissible uses, *eliminate public notification processes for new permitted uses, *require the development of an expedited approval and inspection process for permits, and *temporarily allow retail in bars and entertainment venues.

A "NO" Vote Means: If you vote "no," you do not want to make these changes.