

Neighborhood Commercial Districts and City Permitting*

Digest by the Ballot Simplification Committee

Status: Approved digest
On: Tuesday, August 4, 2020
Members: Packard, Girardin, Patterson

Deadline to Request Reconsideration: 4 p.m. on Wednesday, August 5

The Way It Is Now: A Neighborhood Commercial District 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.

The City Planning Code sets forth uses permitted in residential, commercial, or industrial-zoned districts. 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.

To open a new business in San Francisco, a business owner may need permits 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.

A person who applies for building permits to change the use of property in certain districts must notify neighbors 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.

The Proposal: Proposition ___ would change 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;
- Expand the use of outdoor areas in certain businesses;
- Eliminate the public notification process for people who want to start a permitted use;
- Require an expedited approval and inspection process for permits; and
- Allow restaurants to provide workspace on days when the restaurant is open.

In addition, Proposition ___ would make certain Planning Code changes citywide to 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 change the City Planning Code for Neighborhood Commercial Districts to increase permissible uses, eliminate public notification processes for new permitted uses, and require an expedited process for permits.

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

**Working title, for identification only. The Director of Elections determines the title of each local ballot measure; measure titles are not considered during Ballot Simplification Committee meetings.*