

Holding City Elections in Even-Numbered Years*

Digest by the Ballot Simplification Committee

Status: Final Digest
On: Friday, July 29, 2022
Members: Packard, Anderson, Merrill

The Way It Is Now: The City holds elections for local offices in even- and odd-numbered years. The mayor, sheriff, district attorney, city attorney and treasurer are elected every four years in November of odd-numbered years. The last regular election for these offices was in November 2019, and the next scheduled election for these offices will be in November 2023.

The City holds elections for assessor-recorder, public defender, members of the Board of Supervisors, School Board and City College Board every four years in November of even-numbered years. Elections for state and federal offices are also held in even-numbered years.

Local ballot measures can be on the ballot in both even- and odd-numbered years. Voters may place a City ordinance or declaration of policy on the ballot by submitting enough signatures from San Francisco voters on an initiative petition. To qualify for the ballot, the petition must include signatures from San Francisco voters equaling at least 5% of the votes cast for all candidates in the preceding election for mayor. As of July 2022, these petitions require a minimum of 8,979 signatures.

The Proposal: Proposition __ would require that the City hold elections for the mayor, sheriff, district attorney, city attorney and treasurer in November of presidential election years. As a result, the City would hold elections for all local offices in even-numbered years only.

If this proposal is approved, there would be no regularly scheduled 2023 election. The current terms of the mayor, sheriff, district attorney, city attorney and treasurer would be extended by one year. The next election for these offices would be in November 2024. The City would then hold elections for those offices every four years.

Under Proposition __, the City could place measures on the ballot only in even-numbered years or in special elections.

Proposition __ would also change the minimum number of signatures required for City initiative ordinances and declarations of policy from 5% of the votes cast in the last mayoral election to 2% of registered voters in San Francisco, which was 9,948 as of July 2022.

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want the City to hold elections for mayor, sheriff, district attorney, city attorney and treasurer in November of presidential election years, to hold elections for local ballot measures only in even-numbered years or in special elections, and to change the minimum number of signatures required for voters to place ordinances and declarations of policy on the ballot. There would be no regularly scheduled 2023 election, and the current terms of the mayor, sheriff, district attorney, city attorney and treasurer would be extended by one year.

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.*