

Creating a Task Force to Recommend Changing, Eliminating or Combining City Commissions*

Digest by the Ballot Simplification Committee

Status: Final Digest
On: Monday, July 29, 2024
Members: Packard, Anderson, Wong, Troy, Wang

The Way It Is Now: The City currently has about 130 boards, commissions and advisory bodies (commissions) that make policy and other decisions for the City or provide nonbinding advice to City officials and departments. Most City commissions that are created by ordinance do not have the authority to make City decisions and instead provide nonbinding advice to City departments and officials.

Members of the Board of Supervisors (Board), the Mayor and City departments have authority to introduce an ordinance, which must be approved by a majority of the Board. The Mayor has authority to veto it. Voters may also approve an ordinance and require their approval for any change to a voter-approved ordinance.

Other commissions are established by Charter amendment. Only voters may amend the Charter. Most of these Charter commissions oversee City departments and have authority to set City policy and make binding decisions.

The Proposal: Proposition __ is a Charter amendment that would create a Commission Streamlining Task Force (Task Force) to review the structure of the City's commissions and recommend to the Mayor and the Board by February 1, 2026, how the City could change, eliminate or consolidate commissions to improve the administration of City government.

The Task Force would include five members:

- the City Administrator or a designated employee of their department;
- the Controller or a designated employee of their department;
- the City Attorney or a designated employee of their department;
- a public sector organized labor representative appointed by the President of the Board; and
- a person with expertise in open and accountable government appointed by the Mayor.

Proposition __ would also require the Board's Budget and Legislative Analyst to prepare a report on how much it costs the City to support each current commission, and how much it would save if certain commissions were eliminated or consolidated.

Proposition __ would authorize the Task Force to implement its recommendations in these ways:

- If the Task Force recommends changes to commissions established by ordinance, the Task Force may introduce ordinances to make those changes.
- Any ordinance the Task Force introduces would take effect 90 days after introduction unless the Board rejects it by supermajority vote of at least eight members.
- If the Task Force recommends changes to commissions established by voter-approved ordinance, those changes may also require voter approval at a future election before the City may implement them.

**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.*

- If the Task Force recommends changes to commissions established by Charter amendment, the City Attorney would be required to prepare a Charter amendment implementing these recommendations for the Board to consider placing on the ballot for a future election.

The Task Force will end 24 months after its first meeting.

If Proposition ___ passes with more votes than Proposition ____, then Proposition ___ would have no legal effect.

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want to create a Task Force with authority to make recommendations by February 1, 2026, on ways the City could change, eliminate or consolidate commissions to improve the administration of City government; require a financial report on the City's commissions; and give the Task Force authority to introduce ordinances to implement its recommendations, and if necessary, require the City Attorney to draft Charter amendments to submit to voters at a future election.

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