

July 23, 2026

Ballot Simplification Council
Via email: BSC.Clerk@SFGov.org
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
City Hall, Room 48
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Chair Packard and Members of the Ballot Simplification Council:

Thank you for your work to ensure that San Francisco voters can more easily understand the ballot measures they are presented with. I am writing to respectfully request changes to the legislative digest pertaining to the measure covering the **City Administrator's Authority and Changes to City Contracting**. These requested changes would both help clarify the substance of the proposed measure and correct inaccuracies in the adopted digest.

Requested Change #1 (The Way It Is Now)

FROM:

The City Administrator's Office is responsible for most of the City's contracting.

TO (Tracked Changes):

The City Administrator's Office is responsible for most of the City's contracting. However, authority for the City's purchasing and technology is shared amongst the City Administrator's Office, the Board of Supervisors, the Mayor, and some City departments.

TO (Clean):

The City Administrator's Office is responsible for most of the City's contracting. However, authority for the City's purchasing and technology is shared amongst the City Administrator's Office, the Board of Supervisors, the Mayor, and some City departments.

Rationale:

A major aim of the proposed measure is to consolidate authority for purchasing with the City Administrator's Office. This provides context so that voters can understand the intended change.

Requested Change #2 (The Way It Is Now)

FROM:

- Rules Regulating Contracts and Grants: The Board of Supervisors (Board) may adopt ordinances that set the rules about how the City selects contractors, enters into contracts for goods and services, public works, and grants (referred to below as Purchasing).

TO (Tracked Changes):

- ~~Rules Regulating Contracts and Grants~~Purchasing: The Board of Supervisors (Board) may adopt ordinances that set the rules about how the City selects contractors, and enters into contracts for goods, ~~and services, construction~~public works, and grants (referred to below as Purchasing).

TO (Clean):

- Rules Regulating Purchasing: The Board of Supervisors (Board) may adopt ordinances that set the rules about how the City selects contractors and enters into contracts for goods, services, construction, and grants (referred to below as Purchasing).

Rationale:

Consistent use of “purchasing” to describe the relevant functions. Fixes typographical errors.

“Construction” is a more understandable term than “public works”.

Requested Change #3 (The Way It Is Now)

FROM:

- Board Approval of Various Agreements: With some exceptions, the City’s Charter requires the Board to approve:
 - Contracts and leases that bring in \$1,000,000 or more in revenue to the City, and
 - Contracts that cost the City \$10,000,000 or more.

The Board must approve all contracts and leases that last more than 10 years, even if they do not meet these thresholds. The Board must also approve certain amendments to these agreements

TO (Tracked Changes):

- Board Approval of Various Agreements: With some exceptions, the City’s Charter requires the Board to approve:
 - Contracts and leases that bring in \$1,000,000 or more in revenue to the City, and
 - Contracts that cost the City \$10,000,000 or more.

~~The Board must approve all contracts and leases that last more than 10 years, even if they do not meet these thresholds.~~The Board must also approve certain amendments to these agreements.

TO (Clean):

- Board Approval of Various Agreements: With some exceptions, the City’s Charter requires the Board to approve:
 - Contracts and leases that bring in \$1,000,000 or more in revenue to the City, and
 - Contracts that cost the City \$10,000,000 or more.

The Board must also approve certain amendments to these agreements.

ALTERNATIVE SUGGESTION (Tracked Changes):

The Board must approve all contracts lasting more than 10 years and leases ~~that lasting a period of 10 or more than 10 years~~, even if they do not meet these dollar thresholds. The Board must also approve certain amendments to these agreements.

ALTERNATIVE SUGGESTION (Clean):

The Board must approve all contracts lasting more than 10 years and leases lasting 10 or more years, even if they do not meet these dollar thresholds. The Board must also approve certain amendments to these agreements.

Rationale:

The time-period change proposed in this measure produces de minimus practical impacts, and doesn't merit inclusion. However, if the Council prefers to include reference to the one-day time threshold change, the suggested rewording would fix the factual inaccuracy in the adopted digest.

Requested Change #4 (The Way It Is Now)

FROM:

- City Administrator's Authority: The City Administrator contracts for goods and services for City departments, except for some goods and services purchased by the Municipal Transportation Agency (MTA), Public Utilities Commission (PUC), Port Commission, some arts departments, and as limited by other laws. The City Administrator also manages disposal of City property and oversees City technology policies.

TO (Tracked Changes):

- City Administrator's Authority: ~~The City Administrator contracts for goods and services for City departments, except for some goods and services purchased by the Municipal Transportation Agency (MTA), Public Utilities Commission (PUC), Port Commission, some arts departments, and as limited by other laws. The City Administrator also manages disposal of City property and oversees City technology policies.~~ The City Administrator sets Purchasing rules and processes governing goods and services, oversees technology policies, and manages disposal of City personal property for most departments.

TO (Clean):

- City Administrator's Authority: The City Administrator sets Purchasing rules and processes governing goods and services, oversees technology policies, and manages disposal of City personal property for most departments.

Rationale:

The current digest is inaccurate because the City Administrator does occasionally contract for goods and services for the departments noted. The revised language makes it more clear that the City Administrator currently has rule-making authority only over some departments.

Requested Change #5 (The Proposal)

FROM:

- Rules Regulating Contracts and Grants: Give the City Administrator exclusive authority to propose ordinances that set rules on how the City selects contractors, enters into contracts for goods and services, public works, and grants (Purchasing). The Board and Mayor would not be allowed to amend the ordinances and they would become law unless rejected within 60 days by the Board or the Mayor. Ordinances that mainly address wages and workplace health and safety, utilization of local business, or labor agreements would not be subject to this proposal and approval process.

TO (Tracked Changes):

- Rules Regulating Contracts and Grants~~Purchasing~~: Give the City Administrator exclusive authority to propose ordinances that ~~set rules on~~ change how the City selects contractors ~~and~~; enters into contracts for goods, ~~and services, public works~~construction, and grants (Purchasing). ~~The Board and Mayor would not be allowed to amend the ordinances and they would become law unless rejected within 60 days by the Board or the Mayor.~~ The Board and the Mayor may:
 - Approve but not amend the ordinances.
 - Reject the ordinances within 60 days, or
 - Take no action within 60 days and the ordinances will be considered approved.Ordinances Proposition ____ does not change the current Board authority for Purchasing ordinances that mainly address wages, ~~and~~ workplace health and safety, utilization of local business, or labor agreements. ~~would not be subject to this proposal and approval process.~~

TO (Clean):

- Rules Regulating Purchasing: Give the City Administrator exclusive authority to propose ordinances that change how the City selects contractors and enters into contracts for goods, services, construction, and grants (Purchasing). The Board and the Mayor may:
 - Approve but not amend the ordinances,
 - Reject the ordinances within 60 days, or
 - Take no action within 60 days and the ordinances will be considered approved.Proposition ____ does not change the current Board authority for Purchasing ordinances that mainly address wages, workplace health and safety, utilization of local business, or labor agreements.

Rationale:

There are three pathways for ordinances under the proposed measure. This clarifies those pathways, rather than inadvertently emphasizing only one of them. It also more clearly explains the carve-outs from the proposed authority change.

Requested Change #6 (The Proposal)

FROM:

- Board Approval of Various Agreements: Increase the dollar amount requiring Board approval to:
 - Contracts and leases that bring in \$4,500,000 or more in revenue to the City,
 - Contracts that cost the City \$25,000,000 or more.

Starting in 2032, the City's Controller would adjust these dollar amounts every five years for inflation.

Proposition __ would only require Board approval for major amendments to these agreements.

TO (Tracked Changes):

- Board Approval of Various Agreements: Increase the dollar amount for when the ~~requiring~~ Board ~~approval~~ must approve to:
 - Contracts and leases that bring in \$4,500,000 or more in revenue to the City;
 - Contracts that cost the City \$25,000,000 or more.

Starting in 2032, the City's Controller would adjust these dollar amounts every five years for inflation.

Proposition __ would ~~only~~ require Board approval for major amendments to these agreements.

TO (Clean):

- Board Approval of Various Agreements: Increase the dollar amount for when the Board must approve to:
 - Contracts and leases that bring in \$4,500,000 or more in revenue to the City;
 - Contracts that cost the City \$25,000,000 or more.

Starting in 2032, the City's Controller would adjust these dollar amounts every five years for inflation.

Proposition __ would require Board approval for major amendments to these agreements.

Rationale:

Clarify when Board action is required. "Only" suggests that there are no other Board approvals needed, which is incorrect.

Requested Change #7 (The Proposal)

FROM:

- City Administrator's Authority: The Municipal Transportation Agency (MTA), Public Utilities Commission (PUC), Port Commission, and some arts departments will now be subject to the City Administrator's authority regarding Purchasing, technology policies, and disposal of property.

Proposition ____ would also authorize the City Administrator to set citywide Purchasing rules and technology policies that would override conflicting rules and policies established by other departments.

TO (Tracked Changes):

- City Administrator's Authority: ~~The Municipal Transportation Agency (MTA), Public Utilities Commission (PUC), Port Commission, and some arts departments~~ The City Administrator would set Purchasing rules and processes for all goods, services, construction, and grants that all departments must follow. All departments will now be subject to the City Administrator's authority regarding Purchasing, technology policies; and the disposal of City personal property. Proposition ____ would also authorize the City Administrator to set citywide Purchasing rules and technology policies that These rules would override departments' conflicting rules and policies established by other departments.

TO (Clean):

- City Administrator's Authority: The City Administrator would set Purchasing rules and processes for all goods, services, construction, and grants that all departments must follow. All departments will now be subject to the City Administrator's authority regarding technology policies and the disposal of City personal property. These rules would override departments' conflicting rules and policies.

Rationale:

This better explains the change that the measure proposes.

Thank you for your consideration, and for your service to San Francisco voters.

Sincerely,

Alicia John-Baptiste