

Charter Reform Summary

Proposed reforms will clean up outdated, duplicative, and specific operational provisions across San Francisco's City Charter. The measure addresses a range of practical problems that have accumulated over decades, including obsolete language and rules that no longer reflect how departments across the City operate.

- 1. Modernization and clean-up:** true charter clean-up, updating to reflect current conditions and out of date provisions.
- 2. Department-specific pain points:** solving department-specific operational procedures and making improvements to processes to allow for the delivery of better city services.
- 3. Commissions:** A select number of changes that stem from the work of the Commission Streamlining Task Force, which spent months conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the structure, performance, and effectiveness of the City's boards and commissions.

Examples: Modernization and Clean Up

Old fashioned, out of date provisions

8.103; Law Library

Replace “Bookbinder” with “Technical Services Manager” and “books and periodicals” with “legal research materials.”

8B.120; Public Utilities Commission

Updates description of the functions of the SFPUC with the Department’s most current operations.

8A.104 (o), (q); Municipal Transportation Agency

Removes two sentences in subsections o and q which were determined to be invalid in recent court decisions.

Examples: Department-Specific Pain Points

Operational improvements requested by City departments to better enable service delivery

8A.103(c)(1)(2); Municipal Transportation Agency

Updates Muni's charter-mandated service standards to reflect how modern transit agencies measure performance. The current 'on-time performance' metric in the charter has been increasingly recognized as an incomplete measure of rider experience. This amendment allows MTA to adopt other standards such as wait assessments, which measure how long riders wait between vehicles, providing a more accurate picture of service quality.

4.105; City Administrator

Deletes language mandating the Planning Department to consult with the City Administrator in creating special neighborhood plans to carry out the Planning Department's General Plan. This is not a core function of the City Administrator (CAO) and eliminating it allows Planning to better deliver on General Plan initiatives while freeing up CAO staff for work better suited to their responsibilities.

Department-Specific Pain Points (cont)

Operational improvements requested by City departments to better enable service delivery

F1.103; Controller

Eliminates redundant and specific description of the Controller's City Services Audit Unit Management Practices section by replacing language with '*conduct analyses of the City's management and employment practices.*' The current provision duplicates and specifies in detail audit functions either already performed by the Controller's office in different audits or are unnecessary audit functions. This change provides clear and flexible authority while preserving the original intent of the section.

Commissions

Changes that stem from the work of the Commission Streamlining Task Force, which spent months conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the structure, performance, and effectiveness of the City's boards and commissions

12.100; Retirement Board

Adds a provision to clarify how elected members may be removed if they engage in serious misconduct. This amendment applies the same removal standard used for elected members of other City commissions. The Retirement Board has no current process for elected member removal – this is closing that gap and establishes a safeguard against corruption and misconduct.

Article XV; Public Utilities Citizens' Advisory Committee

Moves this body from charter to the administrative code, which allows for the body to be adjusted and changed over time through the legislative process, instead of going back to voters for any small change.

Commissions (cont)

Changes that stem from the work of the Commission Streamlining Task Force, which spent months conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the structure, performance, and effectiveness of the City's boards and commissions

4.139; Sanitation and Streets Commission

Eliminates the Sanitation and Streets Commission. It was established in 2020 to oversee the newly created Department of Sanitation and Streets. Two years later, Proposition B reversed that plan, merging the new department back into the Department of Public Works but retained the commission. As a result, the commission now oversees a division within Public Works, rather than an independent department. The commission has thus fulfilled its original purpose.

4.141; Public Works Commission

Eliminates the Public Works Commission. The PWC's role overlaps with other City commissions overseeing departments that rely on DPW's services. The Commission President also recommended the body's elimination.

Modernization and Clean Up

1	2.101	Board of Supervisors	Delete obsolete transitional language dealing with terms of the Board of Supervisors members who were in office when the 1996 charter was modified.
2	2.104	Board of Supervisors	Clarify the vote threshold to say that the Board of Supervisors shall act by a majority, unless a different vote threshold is specified. Clarify the rule against abstention applies to emergency meetings. Codify the current interpretation that a body can require a member to sit out a matter where it would violate a conflict of interest law.
3	2.109	Board of Supervisors	Update reference to 1932 Refuse Ordinance to reflect its current form. <i>The Refuse Ordinance says that the Mayor, the Board of Supervisors shall approve by ordinance or reject any rate, fee or similar charge to be imposed by any department, official, board or commission, except those rates, fees and similar charges established by the Port or Airport Commissions, or under the Refuse Collection and Disposal Ordinance No. 17.083.</i>
4	3.103	Office of Mayor	Clarify the Mayor has the power to veto emergency ordinances.
5	4.104	Boards and Commissions	Add a provision clarifying that a body cannot excuse a member unless required by law or at the request of the member.
6	4.136	Department of Police Accountability	Replace gendered pronoun references ("his or her designee") with gender-neutral language throughout the section.

Modernization and Clean Up

7	4.136(c)	Department of Police Accountability	Clarifies eligibility requirements for DPA employment. Existing language prohibits 'uniformed members' of the Police Department from serving as DPA employees. This change expands that restriction to all Police Department employees from serving at the Department of Police Accountability.
8	8A.102 (a)	Municipal Transportation Agency	Delete historic transfer provisions stating initial appointment dates in the year 2000 for the Municipal Transportation Agency Board
9	8A.102 (c)	Municipal Transportation Agency	Update incorrect reference from 8A.104 (k) to 8A.104(m). This change is technical and non-substantive and does not alter the meaning or intent of any provision.
10	8A.104 (o), (q)	Municipal Transportation Agency	Remove two sentences in subsections o and q which were determined to be invalid in recent court decisions.
11	8A.104 (k)	Municipal Transportation Agency	Update incorrect references from A8.346 to A8.404 and A8.409. This change is technical and non-substantive and does not alter the meaning or intent of any provision.
12	8A.113	Municipal Transportation Agency	Delete incorrect reference to 13.110. This change is technical and non-substantive and does not alter the meaning or intent of any provision.

Modernization and Clean Up

13	8A.113 (b)	Municipal Transportation Agency	Remove references to Section 16.110, which is an incorrect cross reference
14	12.200	Health Service Board	Define "ex officio" as the Board of Supervisors appointment, as that is the only appointment where the duration of the term can change. Provide a clear term duration for board members, removing reference to terms between 2011 and 2015.
15	12.200	Health Service Board	Replace outdated language reference to the Controller's nomination and the limitation of a 2 year term from 2013 with language regarding the 5-year term, which in in the code as well and is the ongoing practice.
16	12.204	Health Service Board	Clarify who votes for the two trustees elected from among active employees and retired members in (b).
17	A7.204	Contractors and Employees	Delete requirement "that any person performing labor in the execution of the contract shall be a citizen of the United States" for every City contract for any public work or improvement.
18	A8.420	Health Service Board	Change inaccurate references from Human Resources Department to Health Service System.
19	A8.423	Health Service Board	Remove duplicate statement: "In January of each year, or at such other time consistent with the Plan Year set by the health service board, or at such other time consistent with the Plan Year set by the Health Service Board"
20	A8.425	Health Service Board	Remove out of date provision: "As used in this section, and for the purpose of this section, the terms "City and County employees" and "employees of the City and County" shall include officers and employees of the Parking Authority of the City and County of San Francisco."

Modernization and Clean Up

21	A8.428	Health Service Board	Remove out of date provision: “the Parking Authority of the City and County of San Francisco”
22	A8.429	Health Service Board	Update to include non-gendered language
23	Various sections		Update references in the Charter (which is the 1996 Charter, adopted at the November 1995 election, and effective July 1, 1996) from the 1932 Charter, which the 1996 Charter replaced
24	Various sections		Fix gendered language in sections that are otherwise being amended
25	8.103	Law Library	Replace the word “Bookbinder” with “Technical Services Manager”
26	8.103	Law Library	Replace “books and periodicals” with “legal research materials”
27	8A.101 (b)	Municipal Transportation Agency	Clean-up historic and outdated provision allowing the Board of Supervisors to abolish the Taxi Commission and transfer its duties to the MTA; replace with language stating that MTA has jurisdiction over the former Taxi Commission.
28	8B.120	Public Utilities Commission	Update description of SFPUC functions and operation with current functions, which has not been updated since 2000
29	8B.126	Public Utilities Commission	Change title of section to Appointment of the General Manager and update language.
30	16.114	City Administrator	Modernize by replacing references to “books and papers” with “documents and data”

Department-Specific Pain Points

31	4.127	Police Department	Change deadline for Police Commission policy of methodologies from July 1 to April 1 of the reporting year.
32	5.104	Asian Art Museum Commission	Allow the majority of the Asian Art Museum Commission to vote and set the number of commissioners, aligning their structure with the Fine Arts Museum.
33	5.106	War Memorial	Explicitly authorize the War Memorial to work with a non-profit or other legal entity to operate and raise funds for the department, similar to what is currently in the charter for Fine Arts Museum and Asian Art Museum Commission.
34	8A.104 (r)	Municipal Transportation Agency	Revise noticing/disclosure requirements before ratifying a tentative agreement with labor from 15 to 14 calendar days.
35	8B.123	Public Utilities Commission	Remove requirement for an annually updated Long-Term Strategic Plan.
36	16.130(f)	City Administrator	Reduce reporting requirements from every three years to every five years
37	F1.104	Controller	Update the last sentence to say “shall consider” instead of “shall give preference to.”
38	F1.104	Controller	Delete “no two successive years” clause.
39	F1.106	Controller	Change “shall have the duty” to “shall have the authority.”
40	F1.106	Controller	Update list to include nonprofit monitoring

Department-Specific Pain Points

41	6.102	City Attorney	Amend subsection 5 to allow approvals of legal settlements by resolution rather than ordinance.
42	9.109	Controller	Allow the Board of Supervisors to refund debt, provided it either results in net debt service savings, removes obsolete provisions, or the Controller certifies that it is otherwise financially advantageous.
43	4.105	City Administrator	Delete language about Planning Department consulting with City Administrator; not a core function of the City Administrator.
44	8A.100	Municipal Transportation Agency	Delete preamble.
45	8A.103(c)(1)(2)	Municipal Transportation Agency	Update on-time reporting requirement to reflect subsection 8A.103(e) which are Board of Director approved industry best practices.
46	8A.105 (c)(3)	Municipal Transportation Agency	Make consistent with parcel tax language and MTA's ability to report.
47	8A.105 (f)	Municipal Transportation Agency	Make consistent with parcel tax language and MTA's ability to report.

Department-Specific Pain Points

48	8B.124	Public Utilities Commission	Update authority to allow a range of financing tools and authorities including issuing indebtednes subject to the Board of Supervisors; issuing debt refunding in conformance with SFPUC debt policy, subject to approval by Controller
49	8B.121	Public Utilities Commission	Update PUC purchasing authority to reflect current conditions; including power and sewer as well as water.
50	8B.125	Public Utilities Commission	Update parameters for utility rate-setting.
51	9.114	Controller	Move mission driven budget section to administrative code
52	9.115	Controller	Move departmental budget commitments section to administrative code
53	9.116	Controller	Move departmental savings and revenue gains section to administrative code
54	9.119 (b)	Controller	Move last sentence about department-specific strategic goals to administrative code
55	Admin Code Article IX	City Administrator	Allow the Board of Supervisors to amend by supermajority Article IX of the Administrative Code, addressing Official Newspapers, provided that the Board keeps in place a process for providing support to local news organizations. The current language does not take into consideration changes due to online ciruclation, and there are now unintended consequences (like the SF Chronicle being ineligible to be awarded a contract) This keeps a public process to select an official newspaper, but modernizes it and reduces administrative burden

Department-Specific Pain Points

56	F1.101	Controller	Replace detailed nine service areas with language stating, “The City Services Auditor will evaluate San Francisco’s major service areas.” Requirements are out of date with current industry standards and department needs.
57	F1.102	Controller	Revise Street, Sidewalk, and Park Cleaning maintenance performance audit to be conducted once every five years instead of annually.
58	F1.103	Controller	Replace detailed management and employment practices section of the City Services Audit Unit with language stating “conduct analyses of the City’s management and employment practices.” Duplicative with more general audits the Controller conducts.
59	F1.105	Controller	Remove language about the designation of “confidential employees” to avoid confusion. There’s no clear definition of what “confidential employee” is in the context of the Controller’s audit unit.
60	F1.108	Controller	Move customer service plan section to administrative code
61	Section 16.107(h)	Recreation and Park Department	Revise deadlines for the Capital Plan (currently Jan 15) and Operational Plan (currently Feb 1) so both can be reviewed by the Commission at the same time.
62	Section 16.107(h)(3)	Recreation and Park Department	Remove the sentence: 'The Capital Expenditure Plan shall further address irrigation, water conservation, and urban forestry.'
63	Section 16.107(h)(3) and (4)	Recreation and Park Department	Clarify reporting requirements so progress reporting occurs at the midpoint of the five year Strategic Plan rather than during each annual or biennial budget cycle.

Commissions

64	4.121(b)	Abatement Appeals Board	Department of Building Inspection	Move from charter to administrative code
65	4.121(b)	Access Appeals Commission	Department of Building Inspection	Move from charter to administrative code
66	4.121(b)	Board of Examiners	Department of Building Inspection	Eliminate <i>Inactive</i>
67	Administrative Code SEC. 5.30	Citizens' General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee	Controller	Change name to 'Council' <i>Aligning with Prop E ordinance naming standard</i>
68	Administrative Code SEC. 5.30	Citizens' General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee	Controller	Move from charter to administrative code
69	4.121(b)	Code Advisory Committee	Department of Building Inspection	Move from charter to the administrative code
70	4.121(b)	Code Advisory Committee	Department of Building Inspection	Change name to 'Council' <i>Aligning with Prop E ordinance naming standard</i>

Commissions

71	Administrative Code § 20.50	Delinquency Prevention Commission		Eliminate <i>Inactive</i>
72	Charter § 16.128-11(e); Administrative Code § 5.34-1	Dignity Fund Service Providers Working Group	Human Services Agency	Eliminate, replace with agreed upon language obligating the department to work with service providers.
73	13.11	Elections Task Force		Rename to Redistricting Board to avoid confusion with Elections Commission
74	A8.409-1, A8.409-6	Employee Relations Board	Department of Human Resources	Eliminate <i>Inactive</i>
75	5.105	Fine Arts Museums Board of Trustees	Fine Arts Museum	Reduce from up to 62 trustees to up to 20 trustees
76	5.105	Fine Arts Museums Board of Trustees	Fine Arts Museum	Adjust quorum language
77	SEC. 2A.242	Historic Preservation Commission		Remove Legacy Business application review <i>Reduce duplicative review; keep it with the Small Business Commission</i>

Commissions

78	4.111	Human Services Commission	Human Services Agency	Move from charter to the administrative code
79	ARTICLE XLI	Our City Our Home Oversight Committee		Allow the board to amend the body by majority vote <i>Makes no changes to body at this moment, but gives the board the ability to amend via ordinance in the future</i>
80	8A.111	Municipal Transportation Agency Citizens Advisory Council	Municipal Transportation Agency	Move from charter to transportation code
81	16.107	Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Advisory Committee (PROSAC)	Recreation and Parks Department	Change name to 'Council' <i>Aligning with Prop E ordinance naming standard</i>

Commissions

82	Article XV	Public Utilities Citizens' Advisory Committee	Public Utilities Commission	Change name to 'Council' <i>Aligning with Prop E ordinance naming standard</i>
83	Article XV	Public Utilities Citizens' Advisory Committee	Public Utilities Commission	Move from charter to administrative code
84	8B.124	Public Utilities Rate Fairness Board	Public Utilities Commission	Change name to 'Council' <i>Aligning with Prop E ordinance naming standard</i>
85	8B.124	Public Utilities Rate Fairness Board	Public Utilities Commission	Move from charter to administrative code
86	4.141	Public Works Commission	Department of Public Works	Eliminate
87	SEC. 3.1-397	Refuse Rate Board	Department of Public Works	Move from charter to administrative code
88	4.139	Sanitation and Streets Commission	Department of Public Works	Eliminate

Commissions

89	A8.346	Special Strike Committee		Eliminate
90		Street Artists and Craftsman Examiners Advisory Committee		Eliminate; include language authorizing the Board of Supervisors to modify by ordinance the section of the code that references and creates the program
91	SEC 16.128-11	Structural Advisory Committee	Department of Building Inspection	Eliminate
92	XXXIII	Sugary Drinks Distributor Tax Advisory Committee		Sunset the body when the tax sunsets
93	XXXIII	Sugary Drinks Distributor Tax Advisory Committee		Clarify administrative support: support provided by DPH not ADM/CON
94	XXXIII	Sugary Drinks Distributor Tax Advisory Committee		Change name to 'Council' <i>Aligning with Prop E ordinance naming standard</i>

Commissions

95	4.102	Annual Statement of Purpose	Remove requirement for annual statement of purpose (all commissions)
96	4.102	Commission Secretary	Remove obligation to appoint a secretary (all commissions)
97	4.103	Annual Report	Eliminate section (all commissions)
98	SEC 12.204	Retiree Health Care Trust Fund Board	Clarify how elected members may be removed if they engage in serious misconduct <i>There is currently no process</i>
99	4.120	Disability and Aging Services Commission (DASC)	Move to code <i>There is a legal requirement for the body to exist, so this is not threatening its existence</i>
100	ARTICLE XXXIV	Dignity Fund Oversight and Advisory Committee (DF OAC)	Combining Dignity Fund Oversight and Advisory Committee (DF OAC) with Disability and Aging Services Advisory Council (DAS Advisory Council), merged as the Disability and Aging Services Advisory and Oversight Council

Commissions

101	4.133	Homelessness Oversight Commission	Expand qualifications to be desirable at the body level; except for the qualification for one seat to be someone who has personally experienced homelessness
102	4.133	Homeless Oversight Commission	Make Mayoral appointments subject to 8 vote rejection by BOS
103	4.112	Public Utilities Commission	Expand qualifications to be desirable at the body level; except include at all times at least one person is a member of organized labor
104	12.100	Retirement Board	Clarify how elected members may be removed if they engage in serious misconduct <i>There is no current process</i>
105	67.30	Sunshine Ordinance Task Force	Expand qualifications to be desirable at the body level; except for the seats filled as nominations from the League of Women Voters and Society of Professional Journalists. Generalizes the other seats to be desirable at the body level for the Board of Supervisors
106	67.30	Sunshine Ordinance Task Force	Update language to mitigate legal risk and comply with State Law
107	4.100.1	Commission Streamlining Task Force	Repeat Commission Streamlining Task Force Process every 10 years; removing the requirement for a BLA report and a draft charter amendment to be prepared by the City Attorney