

Member, Board of Supervisors
District 10



City and County of San Francisco

SHAMANN WALTON

July 14, 2026

TO: Budget and Legislative Analyst

Re: Budget and Legislative Analyst Request for Independent Cost Analysis of Charter Reform Ballot Measures in Advance of the November 2026 Election

Dear Budget & Legislative Analyst,

I am writing to request that the Budget & Legislative Analyst prepare an independent cost analysis of the three Charter reform measures proposed by Mayor Lurie for the November 2026 ballot:

- **Changes to Executive Branch Management**
- **Extending the City Administrator's Duties and Changes to City Contracting**
- **Changes to Ballot Measure Process**

Legal text for each measure is linked below for reference:

- Changes to Executive Branch Management:
https://media.api.sf.gov/documents/LT_ExecutiveBranchAccountability.pdf
- Extending the City Administrator's Duties and Changes to City Contracting:
https://media.api.sf.gov/documents/LT_ModernizingCityContracting.pdf
- Changes to Ballot Measure Process:
https://media.api.sf.gov/documents/Legal_Text_Changes_to_Ballot_Measure_Process.pdf

These measures are currently in the verification process of the signature submissions phase at the Department of Elections, and given the timeline to Election Day on November 3, 2026, I am requesting that this analysis be completed by **September 8, 2026**, so that voters, city officials, the press, and community organizations have time to review and act on this information well ahead of ballots being cast, not after the fact. Below are specific questions organized by measure, several of which are drawn directly from the language and stated findings in the legal text itself.

Changes to Executive Branch Management

- The measure's findings state that the Mayor currently has direct hire-and-fire authority over only a small fraction of department heads despite them controlling the vast majority of City staff and resources. *Please estimate the administrative cost or savings of shifting a much larger number of department heads to direct mayoral hire/fire authority, including transition costs such as severance, recruitment, and onboarding.*

- The measure removes the Charter's current express prohibition on the Mayor designating "deputy" positions, opening the door to deputy mayor appointments with no defined cap on number or salary. *Please provide a stand-alone projection of salary and benefits packages for the proposed deputy mayor positions, benchmarked against comparable private sector roles, including the prior compensation of individuals named in connection with these positions, such as Alicia Jean Baptiste's prior compensation at SPUR.*
- New Section 4.132 allows the Mayor to reorganize or consolidate departments by notice, which takes effect automatically unless the Board disapproves within 30 to 60 days. *Please estimate the cost of implementing department consolidations under this expedited process, including staff transfers, system integration, and potential severance for displaced department heads.*
- As a case study in what this new coordination authority is intended to prevent, *please analyze the Potrero Yard NOFA process, including the value of the 465-unit affordable housing proposal that was not realized, set against the projected cost of the roughly \$1 billion Muni yard rebuild that replaced it.*
- *Please estimate the total annual cost of health insurance and stipends for mayoral-appointed commissioners, in light of the shift to at-will removal for most commission members.*
- *Please estimate the additional staffing, overtime, or administrative burden costs associated with implementing this measure across affected departments.*

Extending the City Administrator's Duties and Changes to City Contracting

- The measure's own findings state that the City oversees over \$5 billion in annual contracts, that a single procurement process costs roughly \$25,000 and can take six to 12 months, that more than 14 departments can be involved in approving one contract, and that the City runs five separate Microsoft contracts, 20 training systems, and 14 document management platforms. *Please verify and update these figures and estimate the actual projected savings from centralizing procurement and technology purchasing under the City Administrator.*
- The City Administrator's term is extended from five years to ten, removable only by the Mayor rather than requiring Board concurrence. *Please assess the cost/benefit tradeoff of this reduced accountability, decade-long term structure.*
- The Board approval threshold for contract expenditures rises from \$10 million to \$25 million, the contract/lease revenue threshold rises from \$1 million to \$4.5 million, and the "Major Amendment" standard requiring Board review is changed from a \$500,000 increase to a 50% cumulative increase. *Using historical contract data, please estimate how many contracts over the last five years would have escaped Board review under these new thresholds, and their aggregate value.*
- The City Administrator would gain authority to procure and execute contracts "without interference from the Mayor or Board of Supervisors," along with sole authority to introduce procurement ordinances that are deemed approved after 60 days absent action. *Please identify what oversight or audit mechanism, if any, would replace Board review for these contracts, and the cost of implementing it.*

- The thresholds above are set to auto-adjust for CPI every five years beginning July 1, 2032.
Please project the cumulative effect of this adjustment schedule on the volume of contracts exempted from Board review over the next 10 to 20 years.
- *Please provide, to the extent available, an analysis of the market cost of reduced institutional certainty when procurement authority and department structures can be altered administratively rather than through a stable process, drawing on developer commentary from the inclusionary TAC process and the recent SFAC/GFTA/Film Office consolidation as comparable examples.*

Changes to Ballot Measure Process

- *Please summarize existing research on the relationship between rising campaign spending, independent expenditure activity, and voter turnout or disengagement, as it relates to raising the signature threshold for citizen initiatives from 2% to 8% of registered voters.*
- *Please estimate the practical cost and organizing capacity required for a grassroots or non-profit-backed campaign to meet the proposed 8% threshold, compared to the current 2% threshold.*

Given the September 8, 2026, deadline, I would ask that your office confirm receipt of this request and let me know as soon as possible whether any of the above items require narrowing to be feasible on this timeline. My legislative aide, Natalie Gee will be staffing on this and I would welcome the chance to discuss further.

Thank you for your consideration,



Supervisor Shamann Walton
San Francisco Board of Supervisors, District 10