




**COUNCILMEMBER CHRIS CATE  
CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
SIXTH DISTRICT**

**M E M O R A N D U M**

**DATE:** January 28, 2019  
**TO:** Council President Gomez, Chair, Committee on Rules  
**FROM:** Councilmember Chris Cate   
**SUBJECT:** 2019 Rules Committee Priorities

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I appreciate the opportunity to share my goals and priorities for 2019. I look forward to working collaboratively to move toward a more efficient, effective, and transparent City to provide the best quality of life possible for our residents.

**Ballot Measure to Maximize the San Diego Sports Arena**

Housing continues to be the number one issue in San Diego. Since population growth has outpaced housing development by more than double, the City of San Diego now needs 150,000-200,000 new units by 2028 to meet local demand. The City must explore innovative solutions should we hope to address this crisis. For over 50 years, the Sports Arena has been part of San Diego's cultural fabric. In September 2018, the City Council voted unanimously to paint an updated vision for this property that includes housing, retail, office, and entertainment. Nevertheless, any development plans for this City-owned parcel are permanently constrained by the voter-approved 30-foot height limit. The Rules Committee should begin drafting ballot language to remove the height limit for this site to maximize the vision of the current community plan and ensure the addition of critical housing stock.

**Proposed Amendments to City Charter Article VI, Section 66**

March 21, 2017, the City Council was presented with an item to amend City Charter Article VI, Section 66 concerning the Board of Education. These amendments would have instituted term limits and district-specific elections for San Diego Unified School Board members, bringing much-needed accountability and voter efficacy to this government body. Nevertheless, the City Council decided explicitly not to include district-specific elections within Measure H in the November 2018 general election. In order to enact true election reform and ensure compliance with the California Voter Rights Act, the Rules Committee should reconsider the question of district-specific elections in both primary and general elections for the San Diego Unified School Board of Education.

**Short-Term Vacation Rental Ballot Measure**

Over the past four years, the topic of Short-Term Vacation Rentals (STVR) and Home-Sharing has received over 40 hours of public comment from various committee hearings, community group forums, and full City Council meetings. Despite this effort, the City Council has failed to bring clarity, consistency, and certainty to the Short-Term Vacation Rental industry. Though an ordinance was passed in July 2018, it was subsequently rescinded by the Council in October due to a referendum. Over the course of this debate, the

Council has agreed on multiple occasions that the STVR industry should be regulated with a strong enforcement framework and not be banned. Due to the City's inability to act on this topic, the Council should consider a ballot measure to define, regulate, and tax the Short-Term Vacation Rental industry in the City of San Diego.

**Consider Additional Local Election Reforms to Increase Voter Participation**

As a result of San Diego voters approving Measures K and L in 2016, the City of San Diego has drastically changed its local election process with regard to ballot measures and candidate elections. These reforms were advocated by a constituency that hoped to decrease the influence of money in local political races and increase voter participation through the elimination of an outright winner in municipal primary elections. However, these ballot measures will maintain a June primary election, thus ensuring a longer campaign season that will require continual financial support and solicitation. Furthermore, June primary voters will have the ability to decide the top two vote-getters, continuing the influence over November-only voters who are forced to decide between one of the two pre-determined candidates. This Committee should consider subsequent ballot measures that will address these outstanding issues through: eliminating an unnecessary June primary and instituting Ranked Choice in November general elections. Ranked Choice provides voters the opportunity to rank candidates in order of preference until one secures a majority after the conclusion of multiple voting rounds. This voting model would give San Diegans the ability to choose from a wider selection of candidates in a single general election, thus increasing voter participation and eliminating an unnecessary primary.

**Establish a Minimum Standard for Public Outreach and Notification of City Projects**

Increasing communication with the public about City construction projects taking place in their communities that have the potential to affect their daily lives is critical to maintaining good relations with the public and ensuring a great quality of life for San Diegans. Currently, each City department has their own standards and methods in which they provide information to the public about upcoming projects. This committee should work with City departments that schedule, execute, and manage construction projects, as well as the Communications Department, to establish uniform communication collateral materials, and a minimum standard of required outreach and communication efforts to the public about projects affecting their neighborhoods.

**Explore Existing Standards of Customer Service Within City Departments**

The City of San Diego has a duty to provide its residents with a high level of customer service and information availability. It would be prudent for this committee to request information and reports from City staff in departments that actively interact with customers to determine what standards for customer service are currently in place, and how well those standards are being met. Additionally, it would be helpful to receive a report from the Performance and Analytics Department regarding any data collected on customer service to aid this discussion and the effort to provide the highest possible level of customer service to San Diego residents.

CC:jeh