

COUNCIL AGENDA: 10/16/2018  
ITEM: 3.9 (18-1393)

# Memorandum

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**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Toni J. Taber, CMC  
City Clerk

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** October 16, 2018

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**SUBJECT: Ballot Measure to Hold Mayoral Elections Concurrent with Presidential Election.**

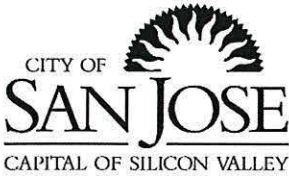
**RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt a Resolution amending the City Charter to hold San José mayoral elections concurrent with national Presidential elections. (Vice Mayor Carrasco, Jones, Jimenez, Rocha)

CEQA: Not a Project; File No. PP17-010, City Organizational & Administrative Activities resulting in no changes to the physical environment. (City Manager)

[Rules Committee referral 10/03/18 - Item G.6]

AGENDA:



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Vice Mayor Magdalena Carrasco  
Councilmember Chappie Jones  
Councilmember Sergio Jimenez  
Councilmember Don Rocha

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** September 27, 2018

**APPROVED:**

**DATE:**

Sept. 27, 2018

**SUBJECT: BALLOT MEASURE TO HOLD MAYORAL ELECTIONS CONCURRENT WITH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Agendize for the City Council meeting of October 16th, 2018, the attached resolution calling for a ballot measure to amend the city charter to hold San Jose mayoral elections concurrent with national Presidential elections.

**BACKGROUND**

Currently, the City Charter states that elections for Mayor in San Jose shall be held every four years beginning in 1994. The effect of this provision is that Mayoral elections are never held concurrently with presidential elections which are held every four years based on a date two years after 1994.

The problem with this arrangement is that it fails to encourage high levels of voter participation in elections for Mayor. As is noted in the citations included with the resolution, simply changing the date of the elections to a presidential year is likely to dramatically improve turnout. Those cities in California which have mayoral elections at the same time as presidential elections have – by far – the highest levels of voter involvement. In contrast, San Jose has the dismal record of having mayoral turnout about eight percentage points *below* the statewide average.

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

9-27-2018

Subject: BALLOT MEASURE TO HOLD MAYORAL ELECTIONS CONCURRENT WITH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Citizen involvement in the electoral process improves governance. Candidates recognize they must appeal to a broad electorate. Residents become more knowledgeable about city policies and issue because they have paid attention to mayoral campaigns. Elected Mayors can lead with the understanding that they have been chosen by a substantial part of the voting population.

It is not possible to have all of the City Council elections in a presidential year because we require the stability and continuity associated with staggered city council terms. However, we can and should place the election of our Mayor – our only official elected citywide – at a date which leads to broad public interest and high levels of voter engagement. This change can be achieved by approving the following two modifications to the charter:

1. Extending the term of the Mayor that begins in 2019 for two more years; and
2. Beginning in 2024, holding the election of Mayor every four years concurrent with presidential elections.

We value our electorate and believe that with increased voter turnout we will be able to elevate the Office of the Mayor and capture a more diverse constituency that is reflective of our city.

*The signers of this memorandum have not had, and will not have, any private conversation with any other member of the City Council, or that member's staff, concerning any action discussed in the memorandum, and that each signer's staff members have not had, and have been instructed not to have, any such conversation with any other member of the City Council or that member's staff*