

Term:	Definition:	Election used:
Affordable housing	Residential units that persons or households within a certain range of incomes would be able to afford.	Nov-13
Affordable housing fund	The Citywide Affordable Housing Fund was established by the City to collect fees from residential development projects to fund affordable housing projects in San Francisco.	Nov-13
Charter amendment	A change to the City's Charter. The Charter is the City's Constitution. The Charter can only be changed by a majority of the votes cast.	Nov-13
Declaration of policy	A statement or expression of the will of the voters.	Nov-13
Early voting	Voting in person at City Hall before Election Day or mailing a vote-by-mail ballot before Election Day. See page X for more information.	Nov-13
Facilities	Buildings or structures used for particular purposes.	Nov-13
Fully funded	A trust fund account is fully funded when assets in the account are sufficient to pay then-projected retiree health care costs as they come due.	Nov-13
General Fund	That part of the City's annual budget used for basic City services such as public safety, health and human services and public works. Each year, the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors decide how the General Fund will be used. Money for the General Fund comes mainly from property, business, sales, and other taxes and fees. Currently, the General Fund is 50% of the City's budget.	Nov-13
Initiative	A proposition placed on the ballot by voters. Any voter may place an initiative on the ballot by gathering the required number of signatures of registered voters on a petition.	Nov-13
Inpatient services	Services provided to a patient who is admitted to a hospital or clinic for treatment that requires at least one overnight stay.	Nov-13
Institutional health services	Health services provided at the San Francisco Jail.	Nov-13
Jurisdiction	The authority to develop, manage, and maintain property.	Nov-13
Legal building height limits	Limits set by the City as to how tall a building may be built.	Nov-13
Mixed-use building	A building that has more than one significant use, such as housing, restaurants, recreation and retail shops.	Nov-13
Ordinance	A local law passed by the Board of Supervisors or by the voters.	Nov-13
Outpatient services	Services provided to a patient who does not remain in a hospital or clinic overnight.	Nov-13
Proposition	Any measure that is submitted to the voters for approval or disapproval.	Nov-13
Provisional ballot	A ballot cast at a polling place that will not be counted until the Department of Elections verifies the voter's eligibility to cast that ballot.	Nov-13
Qualified write-in candidate	A person who has completed the required paperwork and signatures for inclusion as a write-in candidate. Although the name of this person will not appear on the ballot, voters can vote for this person by writing the name of the person in the space on the ballot provided for write-in votes and following specific ballot instructions. The Department of Elections counts write-in votes only for qualified write-in candidates. See page X for more information.	Nov-13
Referendum	The process by which voters can approve or reject legislation enacted by the Board of Supervisors.	Nov-13
Retiree Health Care Trust Fund	An account that is kept separate from other accounts and contains assets that can only be used to pay retiree health care costs.	Nov-13
Revenue	Income.	Nov-13
San Francisco Port Commission	The City commission responsible for managing and maintaining the seven and one-half miles of the City's waterfront along the San Francisco Bay	Nov-13
Site	A specific plot of land	Nov-13
Special use district	An area where some rules, including zoning, can be different from those that would otherwise apply	Nov-13
Trust fund	See "Retiree Health Care Trust Fund."	Nov-13
Vote-by-mail ballots	Ballots mailed to voters or given to voters in person at the Department of Elections. Vote-by-mail ballots can be mailed to the Department of Elections, turned in at the Department of Elections office in City Hall, or turned in at any San Francisco polling place on Election Day. Also known as absentee ballots. See page X for more information	Nov-13
Walkways	Any passage for walking, including sidewalks, paths, and trails	Nov-13
10-year Capital Plan	The San Francisco Administrative Code requires the City to prepare and adopt a 10-year plan describing a strategy to meet the City's capital infrastructure needs. The plan includes a timeline for issuing new bonds.	Nov-12
Administrative Law Judge (ALJ)	A hearing officer who presides over hearings and appeals involving government agencies.	Jun-10
Affordable housing	Residential units that persons or households within a certain range of incomes would be able to afford. See "low income" and "moderate income." Residential units that persons or households within a certain range of incomes would be able to afford. See "low income" and "moderate income."	Nov-12
Affordable Housing	Residential units that persons or households within a certain range of incomes would be able to afford.	Nov-10
Amend	To change.	Nov-10
Amend	To change a law.	Nov-12
Applicable codes	Laws and regulations, such as the Education Code or the Building Code, that apply to certain structures and activities.	Nov-11

Term:	Definition:	Election used:
Area Median Income	A level of income based on all incomes earned within Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo counties. Half of all households in this area have incomes above this level and half have incomes below this level.	Nov-12
Areas with lowest average test scores	Specific areas in the City where the average test score is in the lowest 20% of standardized test scores, when compared with other areas in the City.	Nov-11
Assets	Anything owned, such as property or a bank account, that has monetary value.	Jun-10
Attendance area	Geographic boundaries drawn around elementary schools for the purposes of student assignment. Middle and high schools do not have attendance areas.	Nov-11
Audit	A formal examination of financial or management accounts and information.	Nov-12
Bond	A bond is a promise by the City to pay back money borrowed, plus interest, by a specific date. If the City needs to raise a large amount of money to pay for a library, sewer line, school, hospital or other project or program, it may borrow the money by selling bonds. (See also "General Obligation Bond.")	Nov-12
Calendar year	A 12-month period, beginning on January 1 and ending on December 31 of each year.	Nov-11
California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS)	CalPERS is a State-run system that provides pension benefits for California public employees. Some City employees receive pension benefits through CalPERS rather than the San Francisco Employee Retirement System. These employees include sheriff's deputies, probation officers, district attorney and public defender investigators, juvenile court counselors, and institutional police officers.	Nov-11
California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS)	Manages retirement benefits for California public employees. Some San Francisco City employees participate in CalPERS retirement plans.	Nov-10
CalPERS	The California Public Employees Retirement System, which manages retirement benefits for more than 1.6 million California public employees. Some San Francisco City employees participate in CalPERS retirement plans.	Jun-10
Campaign consultant	A person who provides campaign services, such as hiring campaign staff, supervising the use of campaign funds, directing the solicitation of campaign contributions, selecting vendors, producing campaign literature and advertising, seeking endorsements, or advising on public policy positions.	
Cause (As in "Removed for Cause")	Official misconduct. Commissioners who may be "removed for cause" can be removed from office only for official misconduct.	Jun-10
Citizen Advisory Committee	A committee created by the City to obtain the input and views of San Franciscans. The following citizen advisory committees are created by the Charter: Municipal Transportation Agency Citizens' Advisory Council; Public Utilities Commission Citizens' Advisory Committee; Park, Recreation and Open Space Fund Citizens Advisory Committee; and Citizens Audit Review Board.	May-09
City Administrator	The City official responsible for managing services within the City's executive branch.	Jun-09
Combined Election	An election that includes a combination of municipal, district, state or federal candidates or measures.	Nov-10
Commercial value	Monetary worth, the ability to be sold for money.	Jun-12
Community college	A public institution of higher education that provides general education and workforce training. San Francisco's community college is called City College of San Francisco.	Nov-12
Community College Board	A seven-member body, elected by San Francisco voters, that oversees City College of San Francisco (also known as the Board of Trustees or Governing Board).	Nov-12
Compensation	Salary and certain other payments to an employee. For the purpose of calculating retirement benefits for City employees, compensation generally excludes overtime pay. For some San Francisco employees hired before November 1976, compensation includes overtime.	Nov-11
Compostables	Organic matter that will decay over time, such as food scraps, food-soiled paper or plants.	Jun-12
Constitutional amendment	An amendment to the U.S. Constitution may be proposed by a two-thirds vote of both houses of Congress or by a constitutional convention called by at least two-thirds of the States. To become effective, a proposed amendment must be approved by three-fourths of the States.	Nov-12
Cost-of-living adjustment	An annual increase in pension benefits. San Francisco Employee Retirement System pays a basic cost-of-living increase of up to 2% based on inflation. It may also pay a supplemental cost-of-living increase up to a combined total of 3.5% annually.	Nov-11
Covered compensation	Employee compensation that is considered when calculating pension contributions and benefits.	Nov-11
Deferred Loans	Loans that postpone principal and/or interest payments for a period of time.	Nov-10
Defined benefits	A set monthly amount qualified employees are entitled to receive after they retire from public service.	Nov-11
Designated feeder school	Elementary school from which students normally are assigned to a specific middle school.	Nov-11
District Election	An election for officers or measures of a district, such as the Community College District, San Francisco Unified School District or BART. Does not refer to Supervisorial district elections.	Nov-10
Electronic filing	Providing or submitting information through the electronic transmission of data (e.g., e-mail).	Nov-11
Emergency Operations Center	The citywide emergency operations center at 1011 Turk St. Some city agencies have their own departmental emergency operations centers.	Jun-10

Term:	Definition:	Election used:
Environmentally sustainable	Furtheres the long-term well-being of the environment.	Nov-11
Ethics Commission	The City's Ethics Commission is responsible for administering, interpreting and enforcing City ethics laws, including laws regulating campaign contributions, conflicts of interest, lobbyists, campaign consultants, whistle-blowing, public records, and public meetings. The Ethics Commission also provides educational materials and advice on ethics questions. The Ethics Commission consists of five members, appointed by the Mayor, the Board of Supervisors, City Attorney, District Attorney, and Assessor-Recorder, respectively.	Nov-11
Exempt	Free from an obligation or requirement that others must follow.	Nov-12
Exemption	Freedom from an obligation or requirement that others must follow.	Nov-10
Expenditure Plan	A written report describing how funds will be used. The Expenditure Plan for the Vehicle Registration Fee is included with the legal text for the measure.	Nov-10
Federal Election	An election for candidates to federal office, such as President of the United States or members of Congress.	Nov-10
Feeder school	see "designated feeder school."	Nov-11
Felony	A major crime or offense that is punishable by a fine and/or a jail sentence of more than a year.	Nov-10
Final compensation	The average of an employee's highest annual compensation over the relevant period.	Nov-11
First Amendment	This provision of the US Constitution states: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."	Nov-12
Fiscal Year	The City's 12-month budget period, starting July 1st and ending June 30th of the following calendar year.	Jun-10
Garbage	Trash, recyclables or compostables.	Jun-12
General Fund	That part of the City's annual budget that can be used for any City purpose. Each year, the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors decide how the General Fund will be used. Money for the General Fund comes from property, business, sales, and other taxes and fees. Currently, the General Fund is 47% of the City's budget.	Nov-12
General Obligation Bond	A promise issued by the City to pay back money borrowed, plus interest, by a certain date. When the City wants to raise money to pay for a large public project, it can borrow money by issuing General Obligation Bonds. The City then repays the money plus interest over a period of years with property taxes. General obligation bonds must be approved by the voters.	Nov-10
General obligation bond	A promise issued by a government body to pay back money borrowed, plus interest, by a certain date. The government body repays the money, plus interest, over a period of years with property taxes. General obligation bond measures must be approved by the voters.	Nov-12
Gross receipts	The total amount a business receives, in whatever form, for its products and services.	Nov-12
Groundwater	Water beneath the earth's surface that supplies wells and springs.	Nov-12
Health Service Board	A seven-member City board that oversees the Health Service System.	Nov-11
Health Service System	A City-run system that provides health benefits to eligible employees, retirees and dependents of the City, Unified School District, Community College District, and Superior Court.	Nov-11
Hetch Hetchy Regional Water System	Facilities owned and operated by San Francisco for the storage, treatment, and distribution of water located in the Counties of Tuolumne, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, Alameda, Santa Clara, San Mateo and San Francisco. The Hetch Hetchy Regional Water System provides water to 2.5 million Bay Area users and generates 100% greenhouse gas-free energy that meets all of San Francisco's municipal power requirements.	Nov-12
Hydroelectric power	A term referring to electricity produced through the use of the force of falling or flowing water.	Nov-12
Infrastructure	The basic facilities and services needed for the functioning of a community, such as transportation and communications systems, and water and power lines.	Jun-10
Initiative	A proposition placed on the ballot by voters. Any voter may place an initiative on the ballot by gathering the required number of valid signatures on a petition.	Nov-12
Legally Recognized Caregiver	A person who is at least 18 years old, lives with a minor child, and completes a form to enroll the minor in school and consent to school-related medical care on behalf of the minor.	Nov-10
Local campaign	A campaign for or against local ballot measures or candidates for local offices, including Mayor, Board of Supervisors, City Attorney, District Attorney, Treasurer, Sheriff, Assessor-Recorder, Public Defender, Board of Education of the San Francisco Unified School District, and Governing Board of the San Francisco Community College District.	Nov-11
Local Election	See "municipal election."	Nov-10
Low income household	A household whose combined annual gross income for all members does not exceed 60 percent of Area Median Income (currently \$61,800 for a four-person household).	Nov-12
Moderate income household	A household whose combined annual gross income for all members does not exceed 120 percent of Area Median Income (currently \$123,600 for a four-person household).	Nov-12
Municipal Code	City law, which includes San Francisco's Admin-istrative Code, Planning Code, Elections Code, Business and Tax Regulations Code and others.	Nov-09
Municipal Election	An election that involves only San Francisco offices and ballot measures. Generally, municipal elections are held in San Francisco on the first Tuesday immediately following the first Monday in November in odd-numbered years.	Nov-10
Net Revenues	The amount of money left after expenses of a transaction have been paid.	Nov-09

Term:	Definition:	Election used:
Official Newspaper	A newspaper or newspapers selected annually by the Board of Supervisors to publish required public notices. They must be published for the dissemination of general local or national news, have a bona fide general circulation of at least 50,000 copies per calendar week and be printed in the City and County on three or more days in a calendar week.	Nov-09
Off-site units	Housing units provided somewhere other than the primary development project.	Nov-12
On-site units	Housing units included as part of the primary development project.	Nov-12
Operator	A person who drives a MUNI vehicle or performs related functions.	Nov-10
Oversight	Monitoring activities to ensure that the purposes of a program are followed.	Nov-12
Oversight	Watchful care or management; supervision.	Nov-11
Parcel tax	A tax that is based on a flat fee for each unit of real property that receives a separate tax bill.	Nov-12
Park forestry programs	A program that performs park reforestation work, such as hazardous tree removal, pruning and tree planting under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Parks Commission.	Nov-12
Parole	Period of supervised release after a prison term.	Nov-10
Pass through	To recover an increase in property taxes by passing on a portion of the cost to tenants.	Nov-12
Pavement to Parks Program	A City program that installs temporary parks and plazas on portions of City streets.	Nov-10
Payment for a room and related charges	Payments subject to the hotel tax, including charges for a guest room, for additional guests, including pets, to occupy the room, or for use of a safe. Related charges include no-show charges; cancellation charges; charges for early or late arrival or departure; hospitality suites; and charges for parking for hotel guests.	Nov-10
Payroll costs	The amount a business spends as compensation for services, including payments in the form of salaries, wages, bonuses, commissions, and property. Also known as payroll expense.	Nov-12
Police Command Center	Police Department headquarters, which houses command staff, departmental emergency operations center, and administrative and planning functions.	Jun-10
Programs for children and seniors	Programs designed to benefit children and seniors, such as delivering meals to seniors, providing in-home assistance to seniors, establishing adult day care, supporting child care, and paying for health care for children and families.	Nov-11
Proposition H	A Charter amendment passed by the voters in November 2002 that increased retirement benefits for City police and firefighters.	Nov-10
Public safety programs	Programs designed to safeguard the public, such as community policing, police officer and firefighter salaries, police academy classes, and replacement of police vehicles and firefighting equipment.	Nov-11
Rate Board	Employee compensation that is considered when calculating pension contributions and benefits.	Jun-12
Rate Tables	A set monthly amount qualified employees are entitled to receive after they retire from public service.	Jun-12
Recovery and processing	Elementary school from which students normally are assigned to a specific middle school.	Jun-12
Recyclables	Providing or submitting information through the electronic transmission of data (e.g., e-mail).	Jun-12
Recycled water	Former wastewater or sewage that is treated to remove impurities for the purpose of reuse.	Nov-12
Renewable energy sources	Energy that comes from natural resources such as sunlight, wind, water flow, tides, and geothermal heat.	Nov-12
Repeal	To remove a law, so that it no longer has any effect.	Nov-11
Required valid signatures	The number of signatures of voters registered in San Francisco required on a petition to qualify a measure for the ballot, according to state and local law.	Nov-11
Reservoir	A natural or artificial place where water is collected and stored for use, especially to supply drinking water to a community, irrigate land, and generate power.	Nov-12
Retirement Benefits	Primarily pensions paid in retirement based on employees' age, years of service and final compensation. Benefits, which are administered through the Retirement System, also include disability and survivor benefits. Retirees may also receive health benefits through the Health Service System.	Nov-10
Retirement of bond debt	Paying off bond debt.	Nov-12
Revenue bond	If the City needs money to pay for something, such as the construction or repair of a facility, the City may borrow the money by selling bonds. The City pays back the money with interest. Revenue bonds are bonds that are paid back using money such as fees collected by the department that issued the bonds. These bonds are not repaid with property tax money. (See also "General Obligation Bond.")	Nov-12
Rolling Two-Year Budget	The estimated revenues and costs of operating the City for two years, to be reviewed annually.	Nov-09
Roof Sign	A sign or any portion thereof erected or painted on or over the roof covering any portion of a building, and either supported on the roof or on an independent structural frame or sign tower, or located on the side or roof of a penthouse, roof tank, roof shed, elevator housing or other roof structure. (San Francisco Planning Code Sec. 602.17.)	Nov-09
Sales tax	A tax added to the sale of certain retail goods.	Nov-11

Term:	Definition:	Election used:
San Francisco County Transportation Authority	The Transportation Authority is a public agency that is separate from the City, although the 11 members of the Board of Supervisors serve as members of the Authority's governing board. The Transportation Authority uses a portion of sales tax money to pay for transportation projects approved by the voters.	Nov-11
San Francisco Employees' Retirement System (SFERS)	A City-run system that provides pension benefits to most City employees. SFERS also provides pension benefits to some employees of the Unified School District, Community College District, and Superior Court.	Nov-11
San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC)	The City agency that provides water, wastewater, and municipal power services to San Francisco.	Nov-12
School facilities	Buildings and structures that house schools or activities that support schools.	Nov-11
Seismic	Relating to earthquakes.	Nov-12
Seismic upgrade	Improving or renovating a structure to protect it from potential earthquake damage.	Nov-11
Service retirement	A pension benefit available to employees who meet age and years of service requirements. Employees who qualify for service retirement receive defined benefits determined by final compensation, retirement age, and length of service.	Nov-11
SFERS	The San Francisco Employee Retirement System, which manages retirement and deferred compensation plans for City employees.	Jun-10
Sign with Illumination	Direct-ly illuminated sign: A sign designed to give forth artificial light directly (or through transparent or translucent material) from a source of light within such sign, including but not limited to neon and exposed lamp signs. (San Francisco Planning Code Sec. 602.4.); <u>Indirectly illuminated sign</u> : A sign illuminated with a light directed primarily toward such sign and so shielded that no direct rays from the light are visible elsewhere than on the lot where said illumination occurs. If not effectively so shielded, such sign shall be deemed to be a directly illuminated sign. (San Francisco Planning Code Sec. 602.11.)	Nov-09
Single-Room Occupancy	A type of housing with only one room per unit. Also known as SRO.	Nov-10
Special district	A government body with limited powers formed to provide a specific service. (This is not related to Supervisorial districts.)	Nov-11
State Election	An election for California offices or ballot measures, such as the Governor, members of the State Senate or Assembly, or an amendment to the State Constitution.	Nov-10
Storm water discharge	Storm water is water from rain, snow or hail. In San Francisco, storm water that does not go into the ground is collected, treated and discharged into the bay or ocean.	Nov-12
Street corridor	A number of consecutive blocks of a street, including the sidewalks and medians.	Nov-11
Streetscape	Features that collectively make up the visual appearance of the street, alley, or pedestrian way, including trees, landscaping, lighting, street furniture, paving materials, curb alignments, utilities, and other miscellaneous elements.	Nov-12
Tax rate	The percentage of gross receipts or payroll costs that is paid as a tax.	Nov-12
Tax revenue	The amount of money the City receives from a particular tax.	Nov-12
Term	The period of time for which a public official may hold his or her office.	Nov-12
Transbay Joint Powers Authority (TJPA)	A local government agency created to design, build, and operate the Transbay Transit Center. The TJPA was established by state law and includes San Francisco and Bay Area representatives.	Jun-10
Transit Employees	Persons who work for the City's Municipal Railway transit system (MUNI). This includes MUNI operators and mechanics.	Nov-10
Trash	Furtheres the long-term well-being of the environment.	Jun-12
Video Sign	A sign that dis-plays, emits, or projects or is readily capable of displaying, emitting or projecting a visual representation or image; an animated video, visual representation, or image; or other video image of any kind onto a building, fabric, screen, sidewalk, wall, or other surface through a variety of means, including, but not limited to: camera; computer; digital cinema, imaging, or video; electronic display; fiber optics; film; internet; intranet; light emitting diode screen or video display; microprocessor or microcontrolled based systems; picture frames; plasma display; projector; satellite; scrolling display; streaming video; telephony; television; VHS; wireless transmission; or other technology that can transmit animated or video images. (San Francisco Planning Code Sec. 602.21A.)	Nov-09
Wall Sign	A sign painted directly on the wall or placed flat against a building wall with its copy parallel to the wall to which it is attached and not protruding more than the thickness of the sign cabinet. (San Francisco Planning Code Sec. 602.22.)	Nov-09
Water filtration	A method of purifying water for drinking purposes.	Nov-12
Wind Sign	Any sign com-posed of two or more banners, flags, or other objects, mounted serially and fastened in such a manner as to move upon being subjected to pressure by wind or breeze. (San Francisco Planning Code Sec. 602.23.)	Nov-09
WPA-era	A period of time in U.S. history – approximately 1933-1943 – marked by the Great Depression and the government's efforts through the New Deal to combat chronic unemployment. WPA stands for "Works Progress Administration", a New Deal agency which employed millions of Americans to carry out public works projects, including construction of public buildings and roads as well as large arts projects.	Jun-12