



September 2024 News

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CSFN members voted on the following: Positions are in Red

Bonds

A - Schools Improvement and Safety Bond (PDF) 55% to pass - **YES**

B - Community Health and Medical Facilities, Street Safety, Public Spaces, and Shelter to Reduce Homelessness Bond (PDF) \$390 million need 2/3rds to pass - **No Position**

Charter Amendments

C- Inspector General (PDF) - **YES**

D - City Commissions and Mayoral Authority - **NO** (list of commission to be cut p. 6)

E- Creating a Task Force to Recommend Changing, Eliminating, or Combining City Commissions (PDF) - **YES**

F- Police Staffing and Deferred Retirement 5 years (PDF) - **YES**

G - Funding Rental Subsidies for Affordable Housing Developments Serving Low Income Seniors, Families, and Persons with Disabilities (PDF) Revenue Bond? **No Position**

H- Retirement Benefits for Firefighters (PDF) - **YES**

I- Retirement Benefits for Nurses and 911 Operators (PDF) - **No Position**

J- Funding Programs Serving Children, Youth, and Families (PDF) set aside? Adds a community needs assessment. Adds oversight of this program. - **NO**

Ordinances

K- Permanently Closing the Upper Great Highway to Private Vehicles to Establish a Public Open Recreation Space (PDF) - **NO** - CSFN Signed onto an environmental ballot argument.

L- Additional Business Tax on Transportation Network Companies and Autonomous Vehicle Businesses to Fund Public Transportation(PDF) - **NO**

M- Changes to Business Taxes (PDF) - **NO**

N- First Responder Student Loan and Training Reimbursement Fund (PDF) - **YES**

O- Supporting Reproductive Rights (PDF) - **YES**

RM 4- Regional Measure 4, was withdrawn!

State Propositions

Prop 5 - California Proposition 5, Lower Supermajority Requirement ... **NO**

Prop 33 - Costa Hawkins - **YES**



President Glenn Rogers Message:

On August 20, 2024 the radio station KALW at 220 Montgomery Street, S.F. hosted a discussion on The Future of San Francisco's Great Highway (Proposition K). Present were Joel Engardio, Lucas Lux, Supervisor Chan and Richard Corriea. Mr. Lux incorrectly claimed the panelists present supporting the Great Highway to remain open did not live in the neighborhood.

Important in the discussion was the fact that an oligarch of Yelp donated \$300,000 to close the Great Highway. Money is often donated to politicians that support a wealthy constituent's desires also. **1**

I was invited to this meeting after submitting my most recent article in the Westside Observer, *Keeping The Great Highway a Highway.* **2**

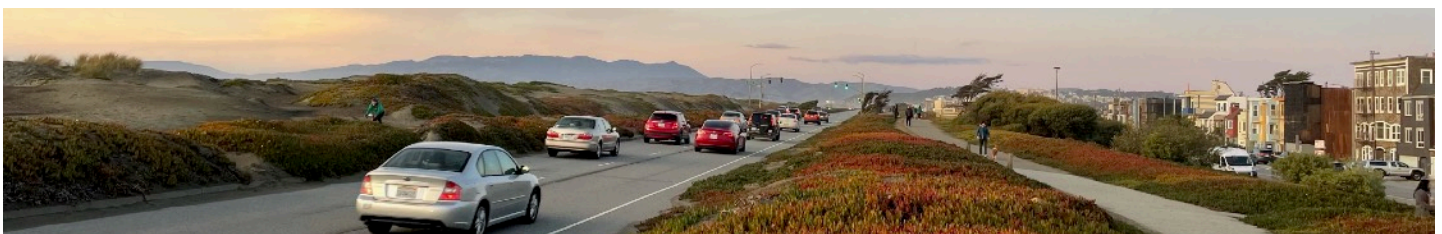
I was disappointed that none of the questions I had for the panelists were answered. My questions were:

- Did you know there is a 40'0" median beside the Great Highway that could be used for a park?
- Is the interest in creating the Great Highway into a park an opportunity to develop the 40'0" median into housing since fast moving traffic will be eliminated?
- Remember the development of housing on private property present on Sunset Blvd. that Supervisor Engardio supported?
- Did you know there is a need for an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to discover the impact of the Great Highway closure on the Snowy Plover habitat which is a threatened species there?
- Did you know having access to the beach the whole length of the Great Highway adds more sand on the Great Highway, not less, as more pedestrians enter the beach from all directions trampling vegetation? Presently, pedestrian traffic enters the beach from crosswalks present at Judah, Noriega and Taraval Streets.
- The [San Francisco Estuary Institute](#) (SFEI) claims the trampling of vegetation by pedestrians is contributing to an increase in sand on the Great Highway, leading to more clean-up requirements.
- Do you realize it is unfair to have all of the voters of San Francisco weigh in on the closure of the Great Highway when this is a really a neighborhood issue causing unwanted increased traffic and adding increased sand into the sewer system as well as resident's homes?

FOOTNOTES:

1. <https://www.kalw.orgsearchs=1&q=Deciding+the+Future+of+the+Great+Highway#results>
2. <https://westsideobserver.com/24/8-keep-the-great-highway-a-highway.php>

SPUR 2012 - document with cost analysis - [Page from Ocean Beach Master Plan](#)
What the healthier dunes and median looked like before the Great Highway closed.



SF: Brace yourselves for skyrocketing water and sewer rates, too

By Peter Drekmeier

Utility revenues were long used to subsidize general city services rather than maintain and upgrade water and wastewater systems. That bill is about to come due.

Hetch Hetchy Reservoir in Yosemite National Park supplies most of the water for San Francisco. The city Public Utilities Commission is planning costly programs for severe droughts and increased demand that may not come to fruition. - Carlos Avila Gonzalez/The Chronicle 2023



San Franciscans: Brace yourselves for skyrocketing utility rates. Combined water and sewer bills will increase by [8% annually](#), tripling over the next 20 years. Hetch Hetchy customers outside of San Francisco will get hit hard, too, and the situation is likely to get much worse.

The current rate crisis is the result of decades of deferred maintenance, and the failure to recognize and adapt to changing water use patterns. Over many years, utility revenues were used to subsidize general city services rather than to maintain and upgrade the Hetch

Hetchy Water System and wastewater infrastructure. At the same time, per capita water use declined and population growth slowed, reducing revenues. The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission is now playing catch-up on a massive infrastructure backlog.

In 2008, the commission launched a [Water System Improvement Program](#) that included more than 80 major infrastructure projects to ensure water would continue to flow from the Sierra to the Bay Area after a major earthquake. The cost was \$4.8 billion, plus 30 years of debt service. Water rates more than tripled to pay for these investments, sending a strong price signal to consumers to use water wisely, driving down demand. In 2018, water demand was 30% lower than projected.

Now it's time to upgrade San Francisco's aging sewer system — much of it more than 100 years old — at an even greater cost. The problem of raw sewage releases into creeks, the bay and the Pacific Ocean has gotten so bad that the Environmental Protection Agency, California Regional Water Quality Control Board and San Francisco Baykeeper have all [sued the city](#) for failing to act.

The problem with selling less water than expected (which also leads to reduced wastewater revenue) is that fixed costs to operate and maintain the water and sewer systems remain the same, so rates must increase to cover those costs. Higher rates trigger more conservation, leading to even greater rate increases, and the cycle continues. This dilemma is known as a financial death spiral, and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission is mired in one of the worst.

Having failed to build up a cash reserve for infrastructure upgrades, the commission has been forced to take on high debt. By 2047, the commission's [annual debt service](#) alone will be greater than last year's entire budget. According to the city's [Budget and Legislative Analyst](#), "Debt service for the proposed \$3.05 billion in Water, Wastewater and Power bonds (just in the next two years) over 30 years is approximately \$221.5 million (per year), over \$6.6 billion in total debt service."

Here's how the problem could get a whole lot worse. The commission recently released an [Alternative Water Supply Plan](#) that suggests it might need to develop \$17 billion to \$25 billion worth of recycled water and other alternative supplies. This would double its budget (and rates). The commission is basing this plan on three flawed assumptions.

First, they are planning for a hypothetical 8½-year mega-drought — far beyond the most conservative planning scenario used anywhere else in California. This "Design Drought" might be expected once in 25,000 years, according to an internal commission document obtained through a Public Records Act request. In 2022, based on the Design Drought, the commission imposed a [drought surcharge](#) on city ratepayers even though there was never less than four years' worth of water in Public Utilities Commission reservoirs during that drought.

Second, the commission is planning for water demand to increase significantly despite the decline during the past three decades. Current demand is half what projections in the 1980s suggested it would be today. Despite population growth, the [three lowest years of demand](#) over the past half-century all occurred in the past decade.

Third, the commission bases demand projections on [Plan Bay Area](#), a blueprint for growth sponsored by the Association of Bay Area Governments. The plan assumes that 2 million more people will live in the Bay Area by 2050. The California Department of Finance (the standard-bearer for population growth projections) expects the [population of California to remain relatively flat](#) for the foreseeable future.

Reforming the Design Drought and demand projections would provide the additional benefit of enabling the commission to improve flows in the Tuolumne River (the source of Hetch Hetchy water), providing ecological and water quality benefits to the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta and the bay. The Tuolumne's salmon population is currently worse than in any other river in the Central Valley.

Unlike other major public utilities, San Francisco's commissioners are appointed, making them less accountable to the public. They don't seem to grasp just how dire the financial situation is.

Our best hope for reining in future out-of-control rate increases is to engage the city's Board of Supervisors. It approves the Public Utilities Commission budget and should condition its consent on an independent audit of the agency. By adopting a reasonable drought planning scenario and using realistic water demand projections, future rate increases could be reduced dramatically. With budget decisions imminent, time is of the essence. Please make your voice heard.

Peter Drekmeier is a former mayor of Palo Alto and serves as policy director for the Tuolumne River Trust.

Driving San Francisco - Part One By Mari Eliza



Photo by Thomas Deschaine

Every day I drive in San Francisco, I see a city in turmoil. I see a city that is slipping away from its glorious past. San Francisco was a city of peace and freedom and we were drawn to her. Now she is a city on sale. Stripped of her most treasured assets, her beautiful views and her once friendly countenance, San Francisco is fading. Her empty once grand buildings are shifting into the discount aisle.

How do we motivate people who feel as we do to help us stop the machine that is dismantling and buying our city? We are not relics from the past. Attention must be paid if we are to stop the demise.

How do we refocus and turn this ship around without taking back our streets?

Many believe traffic reduction is where the problem started so that is where we must return. We must shine a light on empty Market Street and all the other failing commercial corridors that were once teeming with traffic and street life, clubs with live bands and performances we could afford. We could drive to Folsom, park and walk between 7 or more clubs and restaurants in a night. My LA friends were envious of our night scene. What happened to kill those clubs and how can we bring them back?

It all started with cyclists stopping traffic and getting away with it. They called their monthly escapades critical mass and the media ate it up. Someone decided to let them run rampant on the streets and now they are everywhere, like flies, flitting between traffic lanes. Many don't use the protected bike lanes they demanded, preferring to stop cars. Since cyclists got away with it, it is open season on traffic, with scooters and cars getting into the act. Flash mobs bring guns and fireworks and like to set cars on fire. Let's not forget it started with critical mass. Now voters are demanding an end to lawless streets. How does the government react?

Government does not appear to be as interested in stopping the criminals as in writing laws to turn us into criminals. Every year they write hundreds of ever more restrictive bills to force us into a lifestyle of their choosing.

We don't need an excuse to drive our cars any more than a cyclist needs an excuse for riding their bikes. We need to quit apologizing and demand a reset. We need to overturn the laws turning citizens into criminals and letting the criminals off. We need representatives who will help us change the laws to benefit us. Traffic has to flow again to return business to the city and stop the destruction that is ruining it. Everyone needs to get where they need to go however they choose to do so.

The number one thing that all the voters want is to be left alone. Which of the candidates gets that?

People are asking about Propositions D and E so we are including this in the newsletter and planning a Town Hall with Commissioners so they may let people know what they do and what will be lost if Proposition D passes.

List of commissions removed by Together SF from charter: Human Rights, Health, Human Services, Entertainment, Environment, Status of Women, Building Inspection, Youth, Homelessness Oversight, Small Business, Historic Preservation, Sheriff's Department Oversight, Sanitation and Streets, Public Works, Arts, Juvenile Probation, Library, MTA Citizens Advisory Committee, PUC Citizens Advisory Committee, PUC Rate Fairness Board, Parks Rec and Open Space Advisory Committee, Children Youth and Families, Our Children Our Families, Office of Early Childhood Education, Dignity Fund Oversight Committee. (To pass this requires 55% of the votes)

No on D Opponent Prop D claims to make government more effective but will in fact drastically reduce public oversight and accountability:

- **Written in secret**, with no public hearings or public input
- **Billionaire-funded**, with paid petition gatherers providing misleading information
- **Eliminates Arts, Library, Health, Youth, Environment** and 19 other voter-approved commissions, undermining key city services
- **Ends citizen oversight over police** conduct policies including use of deadly force
- **Reduces checks and balances** in city government
- **Gives future Mayors virtually unchecked control**, shifting power away from voters
- **Reduces citizen engagement** by setting an arbitrary cap on commissions
- **Puts city government back behind closed doors**, creating a new breeding ground for corruption
- **Empowers five unaccountable commissioners** to determine the future of San Francisco government

Prop D takes a meat ax to dozens of commissions which provide for public participation, oversight and accountability, checks and balances in government, citizen engagement, and transparency.

Yes on E. It streamlines our commissions mandates by establishing an independent, public cost and benefit analysis of every San Francisco commission. After this review, recommendations for eliminating, consolidating and streamlining lower-level commissions will be adopted by the Board. Recommendations for Charter commission reforms will be placed on the November 2026 ballot *so that voters can decide..* **Please join us in voting Yes on E and No on D.**

CFSN – Yes on E Proponent There are two Charter Amendments that will streamline San Francisco's commission system. Vote Yes on E to reform our commissions *the right way*:

- **Crafted in public**, with citizen input and full public hearings
- **Placed on ballot by public vote** after open debate and review
- **Ensures citizen oversight over police** conduct policies
- **Keeps checks and balances** in city Charter
- **Gives voters power** to maintain government oversight and accountability and to determine the appropriate number and function of commissions
- **Maintains and improves sunshine**, transparency, and openness of city government
- **Lets voters decide** the future structure of our city government

CFSN voted (Yes on E, No on D) Save our neighborhood voice! Yes on E, No on D. Commissions are the main avenue in San Francisco for public participation, oversight, and accountability. They provide checks and balances in government, citizen engagement, and transparency. Neighborhood groups actively participate in Commissions to help guide city policy on issues in their neighborhoods. Yes on E preserves the commissions that are crucial to our neighborhoods such as the Library Commission. Historic Preservation Commission and the Small Business Commission.

The Chronicle and KQED will co-host San Francisco mayoral debate - Sept. 19

The front-runners to lead City Hall will discuss ideas for San Francisco's most pressing challenges
By Sarah Felberg : sfchronicle - excerpt... At 7 p.m. on Sept. 19, Chronicle senior political writer Joe Garofoli and KQED political reporters Scott Shafer and Marisa Lagos will moderate a debate at KQED's Mission District event space. The five front-runners in the Chronicle's polling this summer will be invited to participate in the debate, which will be broadcast live on both KQED Public Television 9 and KQED Public Radio 88.5 FM and available to livestream with [free registration](#). "This is a critical election for San Francisco voters," said Shafer. "There's nothing like seeing the top candidates together on stage at the same time to compare their positions, personalities and plans for San Francisco. We hope their answers to our questions and interactions with each other give voters the information they need to decide who to support and how to rank their choices." Candidates will be asked to discuss their policies and ideas on a range of the most pressing issues facing San Francisco, such as homelessness, public safety, the city's post-pandemic recovery and the enduring plague of drug overdoses.

Changes announced on the SF Planning website to make streamlining easier:

Here are two links you can use to track projects using the City's website if you want to keep an eye out for things happening in your various neighborhoods.

<https://sfplanning.org/page/public-notice-project-applications>.

<https://sfplanning.org/resource/streamlined-housing-dashboard>.

Six and Eight Story Luxury Condos Coming to Your Neighborhood

Mayor London Breed is pushing a huge increase in height limits for buildings all around the City, focused on certain transit corridors. The result, over time, will be walls of luxury condos six and eight stories tall — some even taller — along many of our streets, including Church Street and 24th Street. Real estate speculators will get rich, working class folks will be forced out of their homes, many small businesses will be displaced, public services like MUNI and our parks will be stressed to the breaking point, our neighborhood streets will turn into dark shadowy canyons, and San Francisco will become even more than today a playground for the rich and well-to-do. Check out the website at <https://churchstreet.blog> for renderings that show what Church Street and 24th Street



Delores Park may be surrounded by towers on the West side creating deep shadows.

Urgent: Proposed Height Increases Will Impact Our Neighborhoods

I'm reaching out to you and other friends in San Francisco to share insights on the SF Mayoral candidates based on my involvement in neighborhood advocacy. While I remain concerned about crime, safety, and homelessness, a more pernicious issue that could irrevocably change our neighborhood—yet many are unaware of—is **UPZONING (increased heights)**.

Mayor Breed, Senator Wiener, DCCC-endorsed candidates, several supervisors, and YIMBY lobbyists, funded by the real estate industry, seek to eliminate local control and bypass community input, allowing developments to proceed without public awareness. They aim to increase building height limits on commercial corridors such as Lombard, Chestnut, Fillmore, and Union **from 1-4 stories to 6-14 stories or higher** under state density bonus laws (see picture below).

Their goal is to prioritize profit over community well-being, neglecting necessary infrastructure and environmental reviews. These plans will lead to gentrification, resulting in tall, generic towers that cast shadows over properties and public spaces, threatening renters, property owners, small businesses, and the vibrancy of our neighborhood—all without delivering meaningful affordable housing.

To oppose these unnecessary and destructive plans, we've formed [Neighborhoods United SF \(NUSF\)](#), an alliance of over 60 neighborhood associations. I've spoken with and walked the neighborhood alongside Mayoral candidates Peskin, Safai, Farrell, and Lurie to understand their positions on upzoning. As you consider your choices for the November local elections, I urge you to:

- **Avoid candidates endorsed by YIMBY lobbyists and YIMBY-aligned organizations**
- **Support candidates with a proven commitment to protecting our neighborhoods**

Feel free to reach out via text or call at 415-519-7807 if you'd like to discuss specific recommendations. Please share this information widely!

Warm regards,

Lori Brooke, and your [Neighborhoods United SF \(NUSF\)](#), Your contact for up-zoning questions.

Example: Upzoning on Lombard — 8 to 14 stories along Lombard. [See the city's plans to upzone.](#)



BEFORE



AFTER

CSFN Business:

Tentative Assembly Agenda for September 17, 2024:

- Call to Order
- Spotlight: TBA
- Program: “Water Issues” with Peter Drekmeier of Tuolumne River Trust
- Tentative Draft Minutes of CSFN GA 8-13
- Officers Reports; President, Vice President, Treasurer, Correspondence and Recording
- Committee Reports: Executive, Bylaws, Government & Election, Land Use
- Unfinished Business: Bylaws amendments?
- New Business: December 11 event at Flood, with auction?
- For the Good of the Order
- Adjournment

CSFN Meetings: The public is always invited to our General Assemblies on the third Tuesday of each month, and to attend committee meetings and town halls. In addition to the members of our organizations we have many Friends of CSFN that contribute! We are transparent and cast a wide net to attract all those interested in improving San Francisco and all of its neighborhoods.

Send articles and other materials you want to share to: csfninfo@gmail.com

[Organization](#)

[Members](#)

[Resolutions](#)

COALITION FOR SF NEIGHBORHOODS CELEBRATES FIFTY-TWO YEARS OF SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES

WEDNESDAY DEC. 11, 2024, 6:30-9:00 PM
AT THE FLOOD MANSION, 222 BROADWAY & WEBSTER

HELP US HONOR THE HEROES WHO HELPED US

HORS D'OEUVRES WITH CHOICE OF WINES OR WATERS
SILENT AUCTION FROM 7:30 TO 8:30
LIVE MUSIC BY DATE NIGHTS

\$40 PER PERSON / CSFN MEMBERS ALLOWED ONE GUEST FREE
DONATIONS ARE APPRECIATED