



November 3, 2026 Election

PROS AND CONS

BALLOT MEASURE N

Ballot Measure N: Should the Alameda city council voting threshold be reduced from supermajority (four affirmative votes) to simple majority (three affirmative votes) for approval of leases of city-owned real property that are for a period of ten years or less, and the method of approval changed from ordinance to resolution?

Measure N is a proposed city charter amendment that was placed on the ballot by the city council. Passage of the measure would change how sales and leases of city-owned property will be approved by the city council. The main effect of these changes will be on the hundreds of acres of city-owned property at Alameda Point that await transfer from the city into private ownership or into leases.

Under the measure, leases for a period of ten years or less could be approved by a three-vote simple majority of the city council. Property sales and leases for a period in excess of ten years will still require a four-vote supermajority for approval.

The measure does not state what the voting threshold would be for a lease with an initial term of ten years or less, with the tenant having an option to renew or extend the lease for a period beyond ten years. That is common in commercial leases and is used in many leases on Alameda Point. If only the initial term is considered in determining the “period” of the lease, that would allow approval by a three-vote simple majority. If the option period is included, a four-vote supermajority would be required.

The charter amendment would also change the requirement of readings at two city council meetings for approval of sales and leases by ordinance to approval by resolution at a single meeting.

Requires approval by over 50 percent of the voters in the city voting on the measure.

Supporters say ...

- The measure would help Alameda fill vacant properties, generate revenue and accelerate the transformation of Alameda Point into a thriving mixed-use community, by making the process for approval faster and easier.
- The measure creates a practical and balanced process, by allowing leases of ten years or less to be approved by majority vote while retaining the supermajority requirement for leases longer than ten years.
- Changing the requirement for two public meetings to one public meeting would remove delays that serve little practical purpose.

Opponents say ...

- The city council charter review subcommittee making this proposal provided no rationale for the need for expediency and no evidence or findings that the existing approval procedures handicap economic development.
- Reducing the threshold for approval for some leases reduces the need for a broad consensus over high-stakes decisions that could alter or tie up public land for decades. The failure of the measure to state the required voting threshold for leases with an initial term of ten years or less with an option to renew or extend for a period in excess of ten years creates uncertainty that will likely hinder marketing of city property and may require a lawsuit to resolve.
- The lower simple-majority approval threshold may incentivize leasing over selling property because it is easier to pass, at the expense of achieving community benefits and infrastructure upgrades through property sales.