

City of South Pasadena

IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS of Measure ____
Appointment of City Clerk

BACKGROUND. State law requires general law cities like South Pasadena to have city clerks. The position may be elected or appointed. Over 70% of all California cities have transitioned from elected to appointed city clerks. Appointed city clerks are professional employees who perform duties including, but not limited to keeping a list of all legislation adopted by the city council, certifying official documents, responding to Public Records Act requests, publishing legal notices, maintaining city council minutes and other official records of the City, administering oaths of office, attending city council meetings, and acting as the election official for the city. The City of South Pasadena began the process of transitioning to an appointed city clerk office in 2013 when the City Council established a full-time salaried Chief City Clerk and a part-time, stipend-compensated elected City Clerk, per Resolution No. 7289.

Currently, South Pasadena has both an elected City Clerk and an appointed Chief City Clerk, resulting in a duplication of efforts between the two officials. The elected City Clerk performs only ceremonial duties of administering oaths of office and signing official city documents, while the appointed full-time Chief City Clerk performs these same ceremonial duties as well as all other daily functions of the City Clerk's office, including, but not limited to supervision of other City staff, response to Public Records Act requests, handling of claims and subpoenas, and serving as the signing officer for compliance with the Fair Political Practices Commission for all City officials. The appointed Chief City Clerk is a professional and experienced city employee who has been certified by the International Institute of Municipal Clerks as a Master Municipal Clerk. By contrast, the elected City Clerk is not required to have any professional training or knowledge regarding the position, but need only be a registered voter in the City of South Pasadena. The elected City Clerk is elected to a four-year term, with the current term expiring in fall 2020.

MEASURE __. The South Pasadena City Council placed Measure __ on the ballot to allow voters, by simple majority, to decide whether to make the City Clerk office an appointed position, rather than an elected position, so that all duties would be continued to be performed by a full-time professional employee experienced in performing all city clerk duties and eliminating the duplication of some of the ceremonial duties currently performed by an elected City Clerk.

